

The Lower Village Visioning Process: The Action Plan

April 23, 2015

Lower Village Committee

Introduction. The emerging themes and their subcomponents, which were drawn from the previous SWOT analysis, were reviewed on March 26th. The primary themes and subcomponents, all identified during the process, were then sorted out into a series of goals, policies and strategies that provide an action plan for the Lower Village Committee and the village itself.

The identified priorities, at this stage, reflect the relative importance as identified by the audience in the previous meetings. They provide a blueprint for direction and also recommend a new format in which the Lower Village Committee is organized. Each is organized as follows:

Goals Statements: guidance, designed to organize our vision statement around specific measurable areas of direction.

- a) Policies: specific targeted statements designed to achieve each of the 7 goals of this plan. Each will be converted to an action described by:
- Who (Responsibility)
 - When (Timelines, Years 1-5)
 - Priority (High, Medium, Low)
 - Cost (General Cost Assessments)

The Action Plan

1) Organization. Refine and expand the role of the Lower Village Committee (LVC).

- a) Utilize the “Main Street 4 Point approach” as an organizational model (organization, promotion, design, and communication/training) reorganizing the committee into three subcommittees: promotion, design, and communication/training. The committee of the whole shall serve as the organizational pillar.
- Who LVC
 - When 1
 - Priority High
 - Cost none
- b) Address the issues of apathy and misinformation through improved communication.
- i) Identify key technologies and methods of personal communication to get the word out to residents and businesses in the lower village (e.g. web, social media, block captains, etc.)
- Who Communication/Training
 - When 1

- Priority High
 - Cost none, with assistance of staff
- ii) Populate each of the other subcommittees with other members from the community that have interest in furthering the sub-committee work
- Who LVC/Communication/Training; Staff; chamber
 - When 1
 - Priority High
 - Cost none
- c) Maintain good relationships with some key decision makers and committees, including the Festival Committee, Chamber, the Board of Selectmen, the Land Trust, and the Economic Development Committee
- Who Communication/Promotion
 - When 1-5
 - Priority Medium
 - Cost none
- d) Monitor and address the costs of living and doing business in the village, represent issues critical to lower village constituents
- Who LVC; Staff
 - When 1-5
 - Priority Low
 - Cost none
- e) Identify funding sources, where necessary, to carry out options in this plan (e.g. Bartley's should be added to the TIF to increase the TIF pool; grants)
- Who LVC; Staff
 - When 1
 - Priority High
 - Cost None
- f) Work with the town to insure cleanup of problem properties
- Who Design; Staff
 - When 1-5
 - Priority Medium
 - Cost None
- g) Develop better relationships among property and business owners, both business to business and business to residential
- Who Communication; Staff; Chamber
 - When 1
 - Priority Medium
 - Cost None

2) The Built Environment. The community would like to protect the present integrity and sense of place of the built environment in the lower village while maintaining a diverse mixture of sustainable uses.

a) Establish a plan to create a more seamless experience, between public and private space. Convene various property owners to discuss how to better meld private and public space, as well as address the parking and pedestrian connectivity goals below.

- Who Design
- When 1
- Priority High
- Cost none

b) Develop a proactive program for developer and business owner attraction that is consistent with the interests of Lower Village

- Who Promotion; Staff
- When 1-5
- Priority Low
- Cost none

c) Develop an incentive program that could assist in attracting desirable development.

- Who Promotion, Staff
- When 1-5
- Priority Low
- Cost none

d) Develop a Lower Village Design Master Plan that further defines the Lower Village's physical and personal sense of place.

- Who Design; Staff; Planning Board
- When 1
- Priority High
- Cost \$25,000

e) Identify and protect key properties that are either of historic or of high aesthetic value.

- Who Design; Staff; Historic Commission; Brick Store Museum
- When 3
- Priority Medium
- Cost \$25,000

f) Utilizing the findings of the design master plan, develop and adopt a set of design standards.

- Who Design; Staff; Planning Board
- When 2
- Priority High
- Cost None

- g) Develop better relationships among property owners and businesses, both business to business and business to residential.
- Who Communication; Staff; Chamber
 - When 1
 - Priority Medium
 - Cost None
- h) Develop and implement a plan to maintain business diversity, discourage national chains, and incorporate the Town's buy local campaign in the Lower Village.
- Who Promotion; Staff; Chamber
 - When 1
 - Priority Medium
 - Cost None
- i) Understand and support the supply side of village businesses, support the secondary economy's growth and create stronger business to business relationships as part of the buy local campaign.
- Who Promotion; Staff; Chamber
 - When 1-5
 - Priority Medium
 - Cost None
- j) Monitor and stay involved in the Bridge design and construction process
- Who Design (LVC); Staff
 - When 1-2
 - Priority High
 - Cost None
- k) Reconsider zoning west of Cooper's Corner on Western Avenue up to Lake Brook the properties immediately adjacent to the south side of Western Avenue to be consistent with the north side.
- Who Design; Staff
 - When 1
 - Priority Medium
 - Cost None

3) The Natural Environment. Recognizing the intrinsic value of the natural environment to the sustained success of the Lower Village, develop programs that maintain that quality.

- a) Maintain or improve water quality in the [Kennebunk](#) River, Lake Brook, and at the Beach; inventory possible impact areas and establish corrective actions (including impact areas outside the village) while establishing a base understanding of the existing environment and its natural inhabitants.
- Who Design; Staff; Conservation Commission
 - When 1-2

- Priority High
 - Cost \$5,000
- b) Examine changes in the zoning ordinance, site plan review standards, or subdivision standards that could result in maintaining or improving the natural environment.
- Who Design; Staff; Conservation Commission, Planning Board
 - When 3
 - Priority Medium
 - Cost None
- c) Work with the Harbor Committee to understand Harbor Management Plans and economy of the harbor (both sides, since it is combined), and its future direction.
- Who Promotion; Staff; Harbor Committee
 - When 1
 - Priority Medium
 - Cost None
- d) Connect trails through conservation lands, easements, pedestrian walks, and bikeways, developing a plan that can be integrated with the rest of the community and promoted.
- Who Promotion; Staff; Conservation Commission; Kennebunk Land Trust; Monastery
 - When 1
 - Priority Medium
 - Cost None
- e) Identify, map and maintain important Viewsheds through the Lower Village
- Who Design; Staff; Conservation Commission; Kennebunk Land Trust
 - When 4
 - Priority Medium
 - Cost None
- f) Improve access to the river for boating, fishing, and viewing
- Who Design; Staff; Harbor Committee; Conservation Commission
 - When 5
 - Priority High
 - Cost None

4) Marketing. Working with the overall marketing strategies of the Town and Chamber of Commerce, take a series of actions to specifically address marketing issues in the Lower Village.

- a) Change the name of the Lower Village to Harbor Village and encourage those using Kennebunkport as an address to consider the Kenenbunks or Harbor Village so as to

better establish the identify of Lower Village. Make this part of a localized branding project.

- Who LVC, Communication, Promotion
 - When 1
 - Priority High
 - Cost None
- b) Using the Waterhouse Center Model, identify by place and calendar, things to do in the Lower Village and link to activities in Kennebunkport as well. Work with the web, social media, and mobile application to publish.
- Who Promotion; chamber of Commerce; Staff
 - When 1
 - Priority Medium
 - Cost None
- c) Market and manage some key events that would serve both the Kennebunk population and visitors.
- Who Promotion; Staff; Chamber
 - When 1-5
 - Priority High
 - Cost \$3,000
- d) Develop a new program around the creative economy, arts, art walks and joint advertising (already underway).
- Who Promotion; Staff; Chamber
 - When 1-5
 - Priority High
 - Cost \$2,000
- e) Take advantage of our location on a Macro level (exit 25, the new train station) and micro level (Dock Square, Beach, Monastery, historic areas) and incorporate it into our message and advertising.
- Who Promotion; Staff; Chamber
 - When 1-5
 - Priority Medium
 - Cost \$5,000
- f) Insure as part of any branding or marketing strategy that in addition to the diverse businesses of the Lower Village, we also identify key natural resources, walkability, connections to trails and connections to the beach.
- Who Promotion; Staff; Chamber
 - When 1-5
 - Priority Low
 - Cost None
- g) Develop a mentoring program to assist new business owners to assure their short and long term success in the lower village. Include educational programs that would be helpful in successful business development.

- Who Communication, Kennebunk Economic Development Committee
- When 1-5
- Priority Medium
- Cost None

5) Pedestrian Circulation. There is a need to improve pedestrian connectivity throughout the Lower Village, across both public and private properties, make these improvements consistent with earlier Lower Village work, and make it easier for the visitor and town resident to understand.

a) Complete the infrastructure improvement program for the west side of Cooper's Corner.

- Who LVC; Staff
- When 1-2
- Priority High
- Cost Focus Area 2 (Portland Road): \$470,000
Focus area 3 (Western Ave.): \$556,000
Funding Sources: MDOT, TIF, CDBG, private

b) Establish a Lower Village Wayfinding/signage program at both a vehicle and pedestrian level and wrap that into the Chamber Kiosk program (under way).

- Who Design; Staff; Chamber
- When 1
- Priority Medium
- Cost \$7,500

c) In conjunction with wayfinding, develop a pedestrian safety awareness program.

- Who Communication
- When 1-5
- Priority Low
- Cost None

d) Improve pedestrian connections throughout the lower village, including through adjacent privately owned commercial properties, where access to other businesses is made easier and the visitor experience enhanced.

- Who Design; Communication
- When 2
- Priority medium
- Cost None

e) As part of the physical design program, establish places for amenities on public and private space, e.g. Bike racks, benches, picnic tables, a better located public restroom, and overlooks with access to harbor views (include in master plan process).

- Who Design; Staff

- When 1
- Priority medium
- Cost \$3,000

6) Parking and Traffic Circulation. Similar to pedestrian circulation issues, the circulation of vehicles, especially through private parking areas, is confusing and must be improved to insure visitor and resident experience.

a) Cease the parking wars and coordinate all parking and circulation where possible, whether it is public and privately owned and link to pedestrian circulation.

- Who Design; Communication; Staff
- When 1-2
- Priority High
- Cost None

b) Build a new public parking area that can serve visitors, employees (thus freeing up private parking), and possibly buses.

- Who LVC, Staff
- When 1-2
- Priority Low
- Cost \$525,000

c) Further analyze traffic movement (two previous studies, some done, some not), especially around Coopers Corner and focused on summer deadlock issues (note: there exist two previous studies, some of it completed, some not). Coordinate these efforts with Kennebunkport, especially as it relates to bus drop offs.

- Who Design; Staff; Chamber
- When 3
- Priority Low
- Cost Unknown

d) Beware of the Bridge reconstruction!

- Who LVC
- When 1-2
- Priority High