

Island Plan Implementation Group

Minutes of the meeting held on February 9, 2011

In attendance: Jim Athearn, Chris Scott, Judy Crawford, Tad Crawford, Ned Orleans, Chris Murphy, John Abrams, Christina Brown, Christine Flynn

The aim of the meeting was to discuss how best to facilitate moving forward with implementation of Island Plan recommendations.

Comments

- The plan is a very good document. We need to identify priorities, get a few successes and then build on that. We need to keep it dynamic.
- There are already some successes. Vineyard Power came out of the Island Plan process. The Arts Collaborative, based on the Island Plan, appears to be moving forward.
- Some momentum has been lost, but the benefit is that we are now able to step back and ask what we really want to do. We should clarify the five main principles of what we are trying to achieve. We need to track and motivate. We should identify some key projects.
- Many of the opportunity areas are commercial areas developed a generation ago and reaching the end of their design life. It would be useful take a few areas, work with planning boards, bring in a planner, and do imagineering about what the area could be.
- The most significant changes will have to be done at a town level, especially regulations. We need the impetus for people in a town to recognize an issue and take this to their town leaders to implement.
- It would be useful to go through the 207 strategies and identify the 10 or 20 we want to focus on, a combination of low-hanging fruit and important ones that might take longer, but should be started soon. This number could then be whittled down even more.
- It would be useful to show good models of what could be done.
- Once we've identified some key projects to work on, we need to identify champions who could discuss this with their planning or other boards. In some cases, the All-Island Selectmen might be a good forum to vet ideas; they can assign a team to act.
- For some projects, it would be desirable to mention the Island Plan, but at other times, it might be better not to mention it.
- It would be useful to include local decision-makers in these meetings – at least a few selectmen and planning board members, and representatives of non-profit organizations – so it becomes their process.
- We should wait a few months before deciding whether there should be a formal Implementation Committee, or whether it is better to remain as an informal group (Friends of the Island Plan or Island Plan Alliance).

Next Steps

It agreed to the following:

- Over the next two months, the Island Plan Work Groups (the core, any other members who are interested, and invite planning board members and the public) will be reconvened to discuss the following about each topic:
 - feedback on their section in the final Island Plan section,
 - current status of implementation of various strategies, and
 - prioritize IP strategies for the next year or two.
- Since the Steering Committee was the Work Group for Development and Growth, the informal implementation group could review the Development and Growth section.
- After this is done, MVC staff and the informal implementation group will draft an Island Plan annual report that outlines the status of the Island Plan for 2010 and outlines priorities for the coming year.

[Note: After this meeting, the MVC Planning and Economic Development Committee met and was given an oral report of the Implementation Group's recommendations. PED suggested that, in the meetings of work groups, it would also be useful to ask each group to review priority strategies for the MVC (other than the DRI Policies, such as community outreach and education) and also to identify members of town boards and or the community in each town that can help push the Island Plan strategies forward.]

The next meeting is on Wednesday, March 9 at noon at the MVC Offices.