

April Town of Otis Revitalization Hybrid Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 28th, 2025, Otis Town Hall* 10:00AM

Meeting was called to order by Stacey Shultz, Chair at 10:00 AM

All Members were Present: Stacey Shultz, Glenn Steinberg, Hal Kobrin, Sue Brofman, Celeste Watman, Jackie Gentile, Tim Wighting & Susan Ebitz, and Cynthia Fletcher, Volunteer

A motion to approve March 24th Meeting Minutes was made by Celeste, seconded by Stacey, and unanimously approved. A motion to approve the special meeting minutes of April 2, was made by Tim and seconded by Celeste and unanimously approved.

Report to the Selectboard

Stacey's Executive Summary Quarterly Report to the selectboard was discussed and appreciated with unanimous approval by the board. Stacey will provide the select board with a copy prior to the select board meeting on May 13th. There will be a quorum of Revitalization Committee members present so an agenda will be posted.

Needs Assessment / Environmental Scan

All committee members agree that a Needs Assessment / Environmental Scan should be developed to gather collaborative input from local businesses, residents, and visitors to identify their needs and preferences. Participants in the survey will have digital and print access.

Prioritizing Projects

The group discusses combining and organizing various initiatives and priorities for their town. They agree to merge several items, including communication technology, soliciting volunteers, and a communication pipeline. They also considered combining business support services with other categories and discussing working with the Historic Commission on renovations and historic buildings. The group then moved on to prioritizing and categorizing their initiatives, combining preservation and cultural activities with nostalgia and historical elements, as well as empty storefronts with downtown beautification. They note that some specific items, like the summer concert series, are already included in broader categories.

Working Groups

The following subcommittee working groups were formed:

Working Group 1: Needs Assessment Survey – Tim, Susan E. & Stacey*

Working Group 2: Promotion & Community Events – Jackie, Cynthia & Stacey

Working Group 3: Business Growth & Support, Outdoor Recreation, Culture and Historical, Glenn, Celeste, Susan E. Hal, Stacey

Working Group 4: Downtown – Sue B. Tim, Cynthia, & Stacey

Working Group 5: Infrastructure – Hal, Stacey, All

Working Group 6: Services & Population Retention/Growth – Stacey, Tim

*Stacey will be joining every subcommittee initially

Municipal Building Revitalization Technical Assistance

Stacey reported on her conversation with Ben Murphy from Mass Development regarding a technical assistance service opportunity. The service would analyze available municipal buildings downtown, identify steps needed for progress, and potentially suggest zoning bylaw changes. The consultant would assess historical buildings, including Harmony Hall, and provide recommendations for revitalization or changes in use. The assessment would cover the downtown area but not include the poultry farm. Stacey has filled out the town grant form to get approval to begin to apply for this grant. The committee decides to postpone inviting outside organizations until they have more clarity on their own plans. They discuss potential collaborations with organizations like One Berkshire, Mass Economic Development, and Berkshire Funding Focus, with a particular interest in grant opportunities and training sessions.

The meeting was adjourned 11:50 AM

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Ebitz

Next meeting: May 19th, **Town Hall***, 10:00 AM

Future Meetings: **May 13th, (report to the select board)**, June 23rd, quarterly report to selectboard due in July, July 28th, August 25th, September 22nd, quarterly report due to the selectboard in October, October 27th, November 24th, December 22nd, report to Selectboard due in January 2026, January 26, 2026,

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