

March Minutes - Town of Otis Revitalization Committee
Otis Town Hall Meeting Room
Monday, March 24, 2025

Members Present: Stacey Silkey -Schultz, Chair, Glenn Steinberg, Vice Chair, Susan Ebitz, Secretary, Dr. Tim Wighton, Cynthia Fletcher (Contributing volunteer)

Absent: Sue Brofman, Jackie Gentile, Celeste Watman, Hal Kobrin (alternate)

Guests: Robert Rich and Angela Nikituk

Stacey called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM.

A motion was made to accept the February minutes. The motion was unanimously approved.

The combined Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) document was revised with two additional suggestions from Cynthia in the "Opportunities" category. The SWOT document was unanimously approved with the understanding that items may be added in the future. (document attached). In a separate meeting, Stacey shared that she and Cynthia had met to discuss the suggestions for how to organize the priorities of the S.W.O.T document. It was agreed that Stacey, Cynthia, and Susan E. will meet before the next meeting to discuss aligning the SWOT categories with the TOWS matrix for the purpose of determining priorities in the service categories.

Tim summarized *The Town of Otis Economic Strategy* published in 1998. A discussion followed which included a mutual consensus on the importance of considering signage, roadways, being a welcoming community for both children and adults, all forms of skiing, hiking and improving the appearance of the town center. Completed by the town

In identifying the next steps, Glenn asked, "What's different this time?" In the last 30 years there have been numerous studies completed by the town with only some of these goals realized. The members were unanimous in their agreement that close collaboration with the select board and planning board, and involving the community was key to the success. Stacey has requested that our committee along with the planning board approach the select board and get approval to look for grant funds to pay for an update to the *Master Plan* of Otis, adopted in January of 2016. The group agreed that identifying "quick wins" would garner enthusiasm and momentum for future revitalization plans. Organizing a community clean-up, with a waiver for fees plan, enforcing local speed limits, and sponsoring an event were a few ideas offered. Increased visibility for events in newspapers, on social media and via a community bulletin board were a few of the ideas offered.

Stacey shared that the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) would be invited to our May meeting, One Berkshire to our June meeting and that in July a development meeting would be held with local officials.

Glenn did an overview of his four Workstreams reflected in the PowerPoint presentation, suggesting they were fluid and that this document was a working draft.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 AM.

The next meeting is scheduled for **April 28th at 10:00 AM in Town Hall*.**

Respectfully submitted, Susan Ebitz, Secretary

