

10/20/25 Town of Otis Revitalization Meeting Minutes
Otis Town Hall
October 20, 10:00 AM

Members Present: Cynthia, Tim, Stacey, Glenn, Hal, Jackie, & Susan

Members Absent: Celeste

Guests: Diane Dyer, Jeanne Randorf, Cathy Bezozo, Robert Schlossberg (Zoom)

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

2. **August minutes** passed unanimously as amended.

3. **Public comments:** Jeanne asked about the content of the letters for vacant properties.

4. **MA Economic Development Real Estate Technical Assistance Grant update.** Stacey and Cynthia were acknowledged and congratulated for their effective work to secure this grant. Stacey will meet with Ben Murphy to “get the lay of the land” and then meet with Brandi to discuss next steps.

5. **Working groups**

- **Needs assessment:** Since the town has received the grant, there is a possibility that the survey will be mailed by the Planning Board as part of their update of the Master Plan.
- **Promotion & Community Events:** Several members complimented this committee on bringing the food trucks to town. The food trucks provided a community gathering space, increased the foot traffic at the library and proved that a “pop up” business in Otis was viable.
- Jackie met with Eric, the Operations Director and Samantha, of Otis Ridge to discuss the possibility of hosting a community event sometime in September 2026. Jeanne noted the Cultural Council is booking Bobby Sweet, who could be available. Susan suggested there were several local musicians who could be invited to perform. Hal suggested partnering with the Celebration Committee and Rec Committee.
- A “Welcome family event” is in the initial stage of discussion. Katie Utenis and the Recreation Committee are working on a town-wide clean-up day for Earth Day in April. The fire department was contacted to see if they wanted to sell hot dogs.
- **Business, Culture, and Recreation:** On October 15th, Sharon DeLevie lead two focus groups with businesspeople from Otis. The TOR Committee expressed gratitude for her excellent facilitation of these meetings and thanked her for volunteering.
- Stacey reported that overall, the businesses who attended the focus group were happy to be in Otis. Their other business priorities included a bank and a grocery store. About half thought an exit off the MA pike would be good for business, while the other half disagreed.
- Hal gave an update on the progress at St. Paul’s Cultural Center noting that 1.2 million dollars has been raised by the OPT. \$500.000 to \$800.000 needs to be raised in this next phase with renovations taking place inside the building. There are bids to fix the roof and spires, the building has a foundation for drainage. The OHC/OPT hope that soon the fence will come down. The original organ will be brought back to St. Paul’s when the building is finished. If all goes well the cultural center will open in the spring of 2027.

➤ **Infrastructure:**

- Stacey, Cynthia, Tim and Melissa Kleinman attended a day-long virtual conference to explore Community Paramedicine. Community Paramedicine would allow nonemergency health needs in the community to potentially be administered by EMS. If this service could be available, people could age more easily in place and families with young children would be supported as well as anyone in-between.
- Discussion of affordable housing ensued. Hal noted without water and sewer it is difficult to get grants. Stacey has called *Habitat for Humanity* to discuss housing actions. She has also been trying to research by laws, and how they might impact affordable housing and soliciting new businesses.
- Concerning Terranova's, Kate M., a volunteer, has made an inquiry into UConn requesting help with our understanding of brownfields. This is a free service.

6. The Revitalization Committee will meet Nov 17th. The Revitalization Committee also discussed having a night meeting where members of the community would be able to come and suggest ideas, ask questions or express an opinion about downtown and reviving the community.

The next meeting is scheduled for 12/10 at 6:30.

7. Brandi has received a final copy of the Quarterly Report. Stacey thanked the committee for all their hard work and reminded everyone it was making a difference.

8. The meeting was adjourned at 12:03.

Next meeting: November 17th, Town Hall*, 10:00 AM

Future Meetings: December 10th at 6:30 PM Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Ebitz, Secretary