

4 TOWN REGIONAL ECONOMIC VITALITY PLAN

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

MEETING NOTES – SEPTEMBER 22, 2021, 2PM – 3PM

In attendance: Eric Trott, Sam Belsito, Stephanie Crane, Patrice Carson, Ryan Aylesworth, Wendy Bury, Tim Liptrap, David Corcoran, Cynthia van Zelm

Guests: Tim Malone with CRCOG; Kyle Gregoire and Fran Kefalas with The Last Green Valley (LGV)

1) Reports from Committees

Eric said the subcommittees were on hold while taking stock of priority items and low hanging fruit that do not cost much.

There has been some discussion of a 4-Town event.

2) Expanding partnerships – collaborations

Eric noted that the group met with Metro Hartford Alliance and meeting with folks from CRCOG and The Last Green Valley today.

Patrice noted that Pauline Yoder with CRCOG has a copy of the Executive Summary for the 4-Town Plan for Economic Vitality. Tim Malone said he has not reviewed it yet but CRCOG could help with technical assistance – data gathering, mapping.

In response to a question from Wendy Bury, Tim M. said the regional CEDS is not due until 2024.

Kyle noted that he had met with the steering committee in 2019. Fran is also on the Eastern Regional Tourism District Board.

Fran reviewed the 4-Town implementation matrix and noted that there are items on the matrix that the LGV is undertaking. They have a robust GIS mapping of 500 miles of trails, and can help the 4-Town team with its efforts to promote the trails. She noted that Bolton and Tolland are on the map even though they are not in the LGV region.

Eric noted that the 4-Town team is working with CRCOG on getting all four towns on CT Trail Finder. Fran said they are also working with the CT Trail Finder system.

Fran noted that events are in their wheelhouse and suggested if an event is done that it be included in the LGV 2022 Walktober info.

LGV can also help facilitate grants if need a 501 c 3 to serve as grant administrator.

Eric said the 4-Town steering committee will also want to talk to the two chambers of commerce (Windham Area, and Tolland County). Wendy also suggested talking to the Eastern COC.

Kyle suggested talking to NECOG.

Wendy also mentioned SECTOR.

Fran suggested Jiff Martin at UConn Extension.

Cynthia will reach out to Greg Lewis at the CT Small Business Development Center.

Wendy mentioned talking to the CT Restaurant Association. She can reach out to Exec. Director Scott Dolch.

3) Grant funding opportunities – target tasks for funding

Eric said Wendy Bury with the Cultural Coalition had previously provided some information on grants.

There has also been discussion of finding a staff person to assist with our tasks.

Eric asked Tim Liptrap if there might be a possibility to have interns from Nichols College help the 4-Town team. Tim said he might be able to set up a class in spring 2023 to assist with marketing efforts.

Eric said a logo and brand for 4-Town could be a good first task if money is available through grants or other means.