

Portsmouth Citizen's Response Task Force

Bridge Street Subcommittee Meeting

August 26, 2020

Present:

Russ Grazier, subcommittee chair and task force member  
Deb Anthony, task Force member  
Ben Van Camp, Chamber Collaborative of Greater Portsmouth  
Peter Rice, City of Portsmouth Director of Public Works  
Joseph Almeida, City of Portsmouth Facilities Manager  
Kim McNamara, City of Portsmouth Health Officer  
Stephanie Seacord, City of Portsmouth Public Information Officer  
Andrew Bagley, Secretary of Pop Up Portsmouth  
North Sturtevant, JSA, Pop Up Portsmouth Board member  
Tristin Law, Pop Up NH  
Robert Marsillia, City of Portsmouth  
Patrick Howe, City of Portsmouth  
Laura Brown, Pop Up NH Board Member

These notes are general in nature and are intended to document topics discussed and are not minutes.

**Retail Discussion:**

Russ opened the discussion with comments on his experience at Bridge Street noting that it was all very positive, people stay in their assigned seating and that spacing was greater than any places in Portsmouth. Noting that he would hope Retail could be added. He asked Andrew if there are enough retailers interested in engaging with Pop Up NH. It was confirmed that they did have people interested in the retail space. Currently Diversions and River Run Book Store are very interested.

Kim asked about the current seating being 66 in the Theater and 60 in the food area. She noted that the smaller scale has made the people in the community feel much better and supportive of the project. She also noted she has been hesitant to add retail to the venue during current hours. She asked about retail being on site on the "off" days for theater and dining noting that the site is vacant three days a week.

North noted that he did not believe the space could be "manned" for 7 days a week noting that currently Pop Up NH is just breaking even. Andrew agreed that with 4 days just breaking even 7 days would be too costly for Pop Up NH. Ben also noted that he worried there would not be enough business for retailers Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

**Concerns noted:**

Kim noted that people had concerns about access from the parking lot to downtown being limited, including the need to have open space for people to walk to the Health food store and not around the entire block. With retail space shutting off more of the access space it could be more challenging.

Kim also noted that retail may cause more people to gather around the pop-up stores. She asked how the flow of crowds would be controlled to avoid such a situation. Tristan agreed that his people could help manage the crowding, also noting there has been no issue with people over crowding the space. He noted that a volunteer would be needed to keep the numbers under control.

**Solution** There was a suggestion that Pop Up NH allow only two retailers for the first week. The retailers would be using tents outside and tables (easy to put up and down) and be closed by dark. Russ clarified that the priorities for retailers to be allowed to participate were: Brick and Mortar highest preference followed by Nonprofits, Artisans and lastly Internet retailers that are Portsmouth Based. He also noted that the same degree of safety would be expected: social distancing and mask wearing. Kim agreed to keep an eye on the plan of starting with two retailers spread apart by 20 feet. Also noting if weather gets stormy the tents need to be taken down. The City will send over extra barriers for this area.

Note: There is no demand for generators for retail

**Generator:** There are issues with the generator needing to be refueled. The City will top off every day to avoid unscheduled fueling. Peter was clear to never call for emergency services to fill the generator as it is very costly. North noted that they are saving money with the smaller generator.

**VIP Reception:** Pop Up NH would like to do a VIP reception on 9/16/20 with a rain date of 9/23/20. No impact on capacity and a mask required event. Suggested there would be 70-75 people at tables of 2 and 4. Attendees are asked to arrange their own table to keep people who are comfortable with one another (e.g. work together daily, or live together) Kim asked to discuss this further as it was worrisome to her that unrelated people would be seated together. They arranged to have a zoom meeting for further discussion on Friday 8/28/20.