

From: [Martin Cadek](#)
To: [Jennifer Gingras](#)
Cc: [Casey Campetti](#)
Subject: Re: MPIT funds
Date: Tuesday, May 31, 2022 8:58:45 PM

In general I am against splintering of our internet content, but I understand why this keeps coming up. Separate site or social media account always promises increased flexibility and offers full control, but it's not all positive.

1) Residents - each new social media account/website is one more place for residents to follow. Here are just some online resources that an engaged resident may want to follow (there are more) - <https://town.pepperell.ma.us/588/Social-Media-and-Websites> Personally I would prefer a consolidation to less than half of those.

2) Traffic - each new website or social media account starts with zero traffic or followers. I firmly believe this uphill battle to gather interest is greatly underestimated by everyone wishing to splinter content. For example; Pepperell DPW has created a new facebook account to share rate information, flushing notices, water bans etc.. with PFAS being a major issue in Town one would think it would not be difficult to attract attention to this account from the Public, but in about 6 months they have 40 facebook followers. New standalone website will likely struggle for a while and will require frequent advertising of some sort, some of it may not be free, I'm happy to cross link from our Town site, from our social media accounts, they can create news flashes from time to time, maybe find a way to be part of some Town mailing (such as when Tax bills go out), but it will take frequent effort to keep pushing the information out there vs. using established resources that are already visited by Town residents.

3) Long-term maintenance - stale content is an issue for most websites, if this requested internship program launches the site who will maintain it afterwards? I see no specifications in the document as to how the site will be designed. For example will it be based on some wordpress template that's easier to manage? will it be completely custom and if so is there someone that can handle future updates? will it be hosted on some server that provides site building tools?

4) Long-term Funding - this isn't a show stopper by any means, but hosting will cost something each year, likely just couple hundred dollars. Any major overhauls will likely require more labor and if the B/C/C members involved lack the skills there is an expense to budget for as well. Copyrighted material such as graphics/photos will need to be purchased etc.. Backups should be created

5) Legal/Control:

A) When I discussed this idea with Ken H and Tony B few months ago I made it clear that under no circumstances should their GreenPepperell site ever refer to it as the official source for Climate Change Committee or anything else Town-government related. It must not have minutes from their meetings or agendas or anything that belongs only on the Town website. I realize this may seem as common sense, but even though I expressed this same concern to the building committee in relation to the pepperellproject.com (new safety complex) website, the site builder still found a way to ignore this.

B) Will this content fall under public records law? I suspect it would in which case whatever platform this site is built on may need to provide records of all sorts, features such as version control, access control, archives of all edits may be beneficial. This is not an easy task and gets complicated if the site is interactive with the residents through chat rooms or discussion forums.

C) The Town should have full administrative access to the site. This can be as simple as sharing the admin access passwords for the webhost/platform with me. I have no intentions of managing the site or changing any content, but it has happened in the past where the Town lost control of a social media account because previous employee managing it tied it to their personal account and the two at the time could not be separated. These unfortunate issues are easily avoidable if we have backup plans in place.

The Town of Pepperell clearly has interest in all things green, even with the concerns above I can actually support this idea as long as the site is intended to provide information and/or recommendations only. I personally see it as a how-to website. Having one place that suggest best way to get into solar, promotes the dark sky initiative, farming tips, how to reduce noise pollution etc.. that all makes sense to centralize in one spot under that green umbrella.

Sorry for the long reply :)
Martin

From: Jennifer Gingras
Sent: Tuesday, May 31, 2022 2:04 PM
To: Martin Cadek
Cc: Casey Campetti
Subject: FW: MPIT funds

Martin,

The Climate Change Council is asking for funding to hire an intern to create a website for the Climate Change Council's GreenPepperell website. The request is attached. The Planning Board needs to vote to approve the request. I would appreciate any comments that you may have on this.

Thanks,

Jenny Gingras
Town Planner
Town of Pepperell
Direct Line: 978-433-0336
<https://town.pepperell.ma.us/260/Planning-Department>

-----Original Message-----

From: Ken Hartlage <khartlage@mac.com>
Sent: Friday, May 6, 2022 10:52 AM
To: Jennifer Gingras <JGingras@town.pepperell.ma.us>
Subject: Re: MPIT funds

Hi Jenny

Please see attached. Let me know if I need to add anything else.

Also, can you let me know what the next steps on your end will be vis a vis review and approval?

Thanks

Ken