Blue Ribbon Committee to Reopen Portsmouth 2021
James Petersen, Petersen Engineering, Co-Chair
Mark Stebbins, ProCon Construction, Co-Chair
Karen Conard, City Manager
Kim I. McNamara, City Health Officer
Councilor Petra Huda, City Council Representative

John Akar, Cava Tapas & Wine Bar
Deb Anthony, GATHER
Ann Birner, Pharm D
Karen Bouffard, real estate & Kaffee VonSolln
Martha Fuller Clark, citizen at-large
Rich DiPentima, BSN, MPH
Alan Gold, EDC, strategy consultant, nonprofit board member
John Golumb, Poco's
Jeffrey Goss, Clipper Tavern
Jim Lee, real estate
Kathryn Lynch, RN
Valerie Rochon, Chamber Collaborative
Anne Weidman, JSA Inc.

June 7, 2021

The Honorable Mayor Becksted
City Hall
One Junkins Avenue
Portsmouth NH 03801

Dear Mayor Becksted,

At its Wednesday, May 26, 2021 meeting, the Blue Ribbon Committee to Reopen Portsmouth voted to shift operations to an Ad Hoc basis, having fulfilled the charge set in January: to develop a plan to include all Portsmouth businesses in the 2021 Reopening, to create ways to support businesses by using Portsmouth resources, to encourage collaboration and to reach out to businesses to ensure inclusivity in the Reopening Plans.

The highlights of the Committee's efforts over the past six months include:

1. **Encouraging the City to place accessible picnic tables in prominent spots** (North Church, Pleasant Street, Market Square and Vaughan Mall) for late winter outdoor dining.

2. **ReOpening outdoor dining "in the streets" -- "better than ever" --** through streamlined permitting by the Planning and Health Departments and placing concrete barriers to ensure the safety of diners. Having purchased the 69 barriers that were used last year, the City joined the Committee in making them a more attractive feature in the downtown streetscape. Collaborating with three Portsmouth advisors, the Department of Public Works painted the barriers in a complementary grey-blue suggested by Mary Jo Brown of Brown & Company and placed barriers and designated 15-minute takeout parking spaces to allow outdoor dining for 49 restaurants. The BRC also turned to the resources of the Career Tech Education (CTE) program at Portsmouth High School. Working with CTE instructor Steve Jones and 15 of the program students, local architect Brian Murphy of Placework coached the students to design and build 42 mahogany planters (and secured discounted materials from Ricci Lumber). Once completed and placed by a team of volunteers and trucks from Gather, McNabb Properties and Clipper Tavern, another group of PHS Eco-Club students filled the planters with flowers and herbs chosen for their suitability by Jacquelyn Nooney of Jacquelyn Nooney Landscape. The planters are reusable and will be removed and stored for the winter when the barriers are removed.

3. **Meeting with and facilitating discussions with restaurants and small businesses throughout the City** to ensure their voices were heard and interests served.

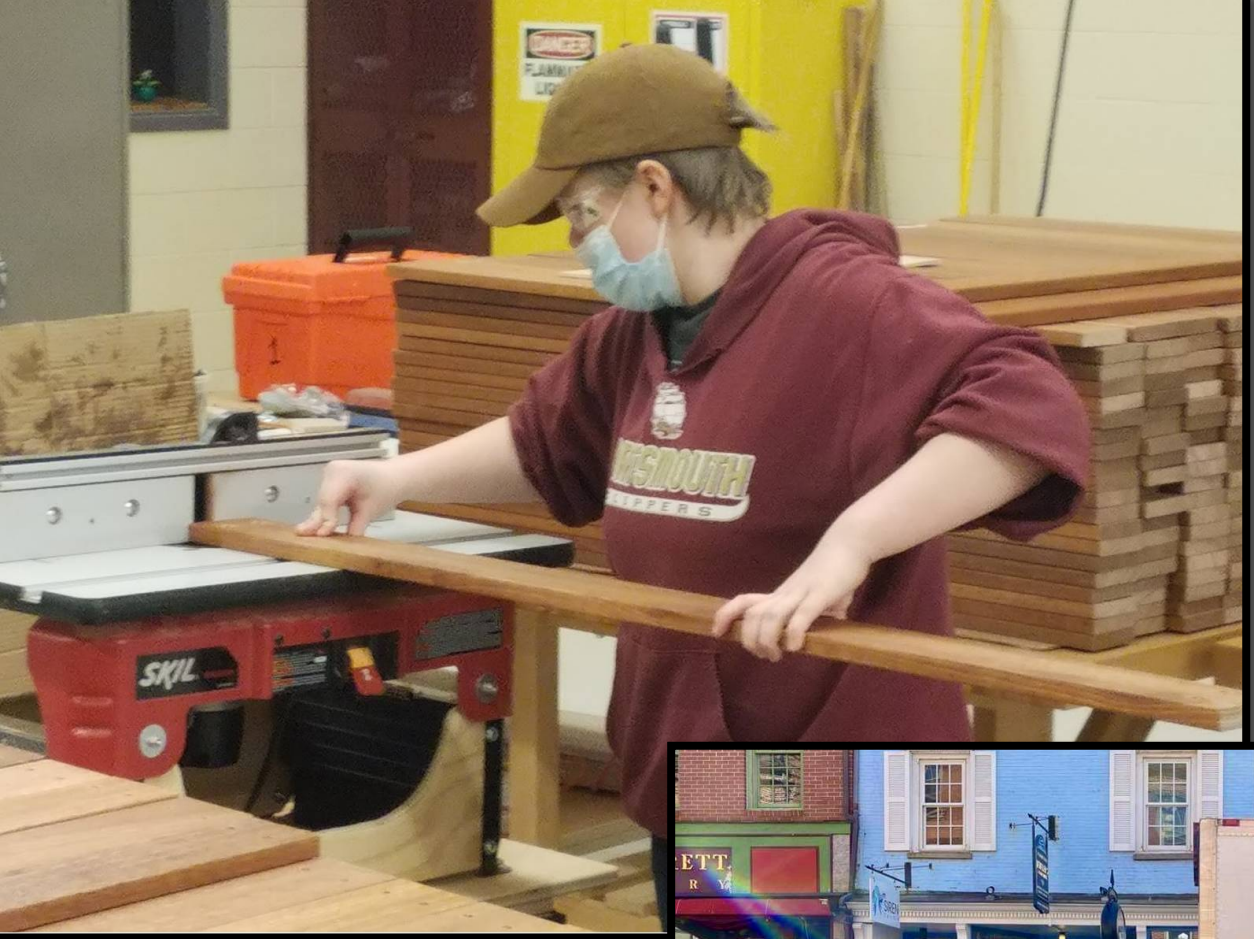
The Blue Ribbon Committee to Reopen Portsmouth remains at your service should a need (or pandemic concern) arise that the members of this team can help you address. We all continue to serve at your pleasure.

Sincerely,

James Petersen
Co-Chair

Mark Stebbins
Co-Chair




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