

Downtown Revitalization Is Gaining Momentum

By Ian Skotte
Staff Writer

Looney Ricks Kiss, (LRK) the urban planning firm hired by The Winchester Downtown Program Corporation (WDPC) held public meetings on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday this past week regarding what needs to happen in the downtown area.

The WDPC is responsible for administering the sales tax grant for a nine-block

area of downtown called the tax rebate zone.

"This is just the first step," said Chuck Downham with LRK. "Our goal was to get as much information as possible from as many people as possible, about exactly what they think should happen in the downtown area."

The idea is that a rough draft will be created from all the information gathered and from there a long-term vision will be created. Once created all decisions will filter

through this vision.

The grant comes from state sales tax dollars collected in the tax rebate zone and is refunded back to the WDPC yearly to be spent for revitalization in the zone. "I think for the first time, the realization that this is not just a benefit for downtown Winchester, but the surrounding municipalities and the county as whole, has hit home," said Brant McGill, a director with the WDPC.



EXPLAINING DOWNTOWN EFFORTS--Chuck Downham with Looney Ricks Kiss, an urban planning firm hired by The Winchester Downtown Program Corporation, is shown here explaining the process his firm will go through to make sure Winchester's long-term vision is established.