

MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE  
TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH, New Hampshire

Minutes of June 24, 2015

Members Present: Alan Zeller, Teresa Cadorette, Beth Alpaugh-Cote and Sue Chollet

Staff Present: Peter Throop, Director, and Laura Norton, Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Development

Master Plan Steering Committee Co-Chair Chollet (Ms. Chollet) called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m. and thanked the members for their effort to be present.

**Minutes:**

A motion was made/seconded (Alpaugh-Cote/Zeller) to approve the Minutes of May 20, 2015 as written with all in favor.

**Vision Chapter Discussion:**

Ms. Chollet briefly reviewed the packet Mr. Throop had e-mailed out for the meeting. She then turned the meeting over to Mr. Throop who noted the goal for the evening was to have a conversation and proceed to get a draft of the vision Chapter done. He cited work that had been submitted by both Mr. Zeller and Ms. Cadorette and noted certain parts of both could be used.

He also noted by the end of the meeting they would have a good idea of whether or not they had enough to proceed with the chapter draft or would need to meet again in July.

Getting stated Ms. Cadorette noted the word “synthesis” adding “a synthesis of public input, not a reflection of it.” Mr. Throop agreed and noted the goal of the Committee was to provide the input and guidance so that he may write the draft chapter. “Tonight I want to get the key themes and points to frame the description of the town we want” he said. He noted once the draft was completed the Committee would wordsmith it to reflect the voices that they have heard.

Mr. Throop noted trends seen in the forum and the follow-up survey of the need to attract young people and families, broadband accessibility and affordable housing. Noting the themes of Community Character, Economic Vitality and Natural, Historical, Cultural and Recreational Resources he looked up and said “it is like two mosaics, *Peterborough now* and the *Peterborough of the future*.” He suggested they review the themes for the two mosaics “using the forum’s and survey’s language rather than that of the UNH Cooperative Extension.”

In an effort to synthesize the two Peterboroughs Ms. Cadorette had made a list of the themes that really jumped out at her. She went on to list affordable housing, better communication and job opportunities. A brief discussion about the scale of focus in the Vision Chapter followed. Ms. Chollet said there should be enough detail to prevent free interpretation of the Master Plan. “It should be clear but to get into the chapter work” she said. Mr. Throop agreed adding “it should be meaningful without getting into the minutia that drives it.”

The members discussed *affordable housing* to attract young people and their families as well as retaining seniors who are down-sizing.

Ms. Chollet noted “*better communication* came up a lot as well but I am not really sure what they meant” she went on to ask “is it within the town offices? The town to the people? It is not clear to me.” Mr. Throop noted the timing of the forum to the annual town meeting and noted this issue may have been used as an opportunity by some to influence the outcome of a particular zoning amendment. He noted the (many) public hearings and workshops that were offered and had taken place. One member offered “an effective strong government has high participation amongst the people. It takes two to communicate.” Ms. Cadorette asked if the Town has an intranet that community members can access, with Mr. Throop replying “of sorts” adding “we have internal communication capabilities along with our Nixel Notification System and the Public Access Cable Television channel.” He went on to point out other town’s “chalkboard or bulletin board” approaches to announcing public information. All agreed clear, accessible communication was paramount.

The members went on to discuss job opportunities, business incentives, expanded development of the downtown and the two shopping plazas. Mr. Throop interjected “and high speed broadband trickles through all these areas, including people who work from their homes.” Ms. Chollet asked about the time frame involved in acquiring high speed broadband with Mr. Throop replying “two to five years.” Ms. Chollet replied “clearly this is a high priority.”

*Connection of Downtown to the Plazas* was discussed with Mr. Throop reporting the connection of the Plazas via the Village Commercial District years ago “and nothing has really happened” he said.

Also themes discussed were *Maker Spaces*, the town having a *sense of safety* and being a good place to raise a family, *excellent recreational facilities* including municipal pool and town pond with a beach and access to local food (“a huge selling point”) said one member. Mr. Throop noted the protection of farms and open spaces through land use ordinances. Ms. Chollet continued with a brief discussion on themes such as *vibrant nightlife*, *arts and culture center*, *beauty of the town*, *businesses selling goods to meet every day demands* and *mixed use in the downtown*. Mr. Zeller interjected “that is really one thing that we need and don’t have.” Ms. Chollet noted the small town feel of the town and its sense of community, sense of belonging. One member noted “people watch out for each other” with another interjecting “kids can still go trick or treating in the neighborhoods.” Ms. Chollet concluded by noting the importance of keeping Peterborough affordable for all. She went on to say that while it was not mentioned per se at the forum “there is also a silent voice we can speak” noting the collaborative efforts of the town’s commitment to and pursuit of sustainable energy.

A brief discussion about good communication and citizen involvement followed. Mr. Zeller pointed out the communication conundrum is something every town is exposed to every town exposed to. “If it is not fun they won’t come” he said.

Mr. Throop noted an aspiration to improve ways in which we communicate. “It is *not* about the town not doing enough” he said adding “Town government is all of us, there are rights and responsibilities that come with the democratic process, people have to be willing to come out and engage to have their voices heard.”

### **Proposed Change in Meeting Schedule:**

Mr. Throop explained why he would like to shift the meeting date to the last Wednesday of the month so that he would have more time to focus on preparing for the meeting and getting things done. “In general I need to have a separation to give the Committee the attention it deserves” he said. Ms. Chollet noted the obvious problems that may cause in November and December with the Holidays but otherwise the members agreed to the change.

## **Reports from Other Committees:**

### *Planning Board:*

Mr. Zeller reported the Board had met to discuss and make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen regarding the acceptance of a donation of land on Jaffrey Road and the best use for land accepted by taxed deed on Granite Street.

Mr. Throop reviewed a Preliminary Design Review for Global Montello Group for advice regarding proposal to redevelop the existing Mr. Mike's Convenience Store and Gas Station. He cited the challenges of the site (very narrow with wetland and shoreland issues) and the traffic flow. Mr. Throop also noted the emphasis the Board was placing on updating land use regulations (the Open Space Residential Development ordinance in particular.) He spoke briefly about the southern portion of town with areas for increased density, mixed use residential/commercial and a possible TIF District.

### *EDA:*

Mr. Throop briefly reviewed their outreach, marketing and broadband workgroups. He noted a meeting with FairPoint Communications on July 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 in the Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room. "And then we hope to have Comcast come in and do the same thing" he said.

## **Next Meeting:**

August 26, 2015

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton

Administrative Assistant