

MINUTES

Master Plan Steering Committee

TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH
Wednesday, April 10, 2013 – 5:45 p.m.
1 Grove Street, Peterborough, New Hampshire

Members Present: Sue Chollet, Ivy Vann, Alan Zeller and James Kelly.

Staff Present: Carol Ogilvie, Director and Laura Norton, Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Development

Chair Zeller called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

Minutes:

A motion was made/seconded (Chollet/Kelly) to approve the Minutes of March 13, 2013 as written with all in favor.

Statement from the Chair:

Chair Zeller welcomed new Planning Board Representative and Liaison Ivy Vann to the meeting.

Review of Draft Population & Housing Chapter of the Master Plan:

Chair Zeller noted a list of written comments from Ms. Alpaugh-Cote who was unable to make the meeting. Chair Zeller then asked “how would you like to do this? Go through the Chapter page by page?” Mr. Kelly replied “how about we start with the big picture and not dive into individual pages.” He went on to note “the main issue connected to this Chapter is the lower aged population. The decline in that as well as what is driving the problems with the low numbers of school population.” He again referred to the big picture and the major issues adding “and what to do about it. How do we up the game to the lower ages of below 44 years of age?” (Which has declined over the last 10 years).

Ms. Chollet replied “housing” with Ms. Vann adding “jobs.” Mr. Kelly asked “where does that fit? Not in terms of the Master Plan but in terms of what we need to do with our visions?” Ms. Chollet explained “that would be the Housing Chapter.” Mr. Kelly asked “are we going to talk about that Chapter?” Ms. Ogilvie replied “eventually yes. All the Chapters would be reviewed and updated.” Mr. Kelly noted the need for more affordable housing in town adding “not to help my age group but the younger age group.” Ms. Chollet replied “actually we need *both*.” Mr. Kelly went on to describe his involvement in another community to create local jobs. “It is a collaborative effort to build investment in employment” he said. Ms. Chollet replied “that would be the Economic Viability Chapter.” Mr. Kelly replied “retaining the younger population and affordable housing. That is my big picture.”

Chair Zeller suggested the members review the vision statements and goals rather than going through each page. Ms. Ogilvie responded to Mr. Kelly by explaining “in terms of what this means for us as a chapter, the primary focus is to look at housing more than the population and

get a sense about that.” She reiterated that the primary purpose of the chapter was the housing, not population issues. Mr. Kelly asked “how does housing relate to population in terms of where we are and what we are doing?”

Chair Zeller redirected the focus of discussion to the Vision Statement and Goals of the 2003 Master Plan. He noted the task was to identify which statements were still valid, which have been accomplished (and thus removed) and any new visions as well as related or pertinent comments. The members reviewed the statements and then the goals.

Goals #1 (A through D): This goal supports the goals and objectives of the Open Space Subcommittee on the protection of open space, wildlife corridors, forests, farms, aquifers, rivers steep slopes and wetlands. The members agreed this is a valid goal that would “always be in process.”

Goal #2 (A through D): This goal encourages the building and retention of affordable housing for both rental and ownership purposes (and) where a “starter home” is attainable for incomes of \$20-60,000.00. The members discussed the various components of the goals and agreed in (A) the work “*create* equity covenants” should be changed to “*support*” them. They also agreed in (B) the word “support the housing trust and any other relevant organizations *to* sponsor loans” to “*as they* sponsor loans.” The members had no changes for (C) and agreed in (D) the wording should be changed to “the town shall encourage or work towards the continued use for sustainable and alternative material and designs for housing. The members also agreed to add (E) to include workforce housing.

A brief discussion about equity covenants concluded this goal with Ms. Vann noting the covenants were complicated and politically tricky. “They are better set for a housing authority to manage” she said. Mr. Kelly asked about having basic information and definitions about terms like equity covenants right in the goal. He noted “again this is part of the big picture and workforce housing is a big part of that” and asked “what types of action will be taken with lower income people?” Ms. Chollet noted the Master Plan was a guide for development “and to help us understand what we stand for.” She cautioned that if the document got too long it would not be read. “It needs to be easily understood, you cannot explain everything or it will be very thick.” Ms. Vann added “throughout the chapter it is obvious that the median income does not match the median house price. We are aware of it and grappling with it. It is noted in the Vision Statements and Goals 1 and 2 address it as well.” Mr. Kelly replied that he found “one line to be insufficient” adding “maybe put in two more sentences and our problem would be solved.” Ms. Chollet asked Ms. Ogilvie if she would clarify with a sentence or two noting “put something in and we are moving on because this is settled.” Ms. Vann noted it should be clear that the equity covenants are not sponsored by the town. A brief discussion about the political will of the town and the encouragement to facilitate support for a good idea without that political will to make it happen followed. Ms. Vann noted “encouragement is good, it is not support which is a stronger word.” Mr. Kelly interjected “again, I don’t know what that means” with Ms. Vann replying “it means they are not using our money.” The members moved on to allowing smaller lots within the village while maintaining appropriate conservation and subdivision design principles. The members agreed to change (D) from *amend* the Town Construction Code to reflect the goals of the Master Plan to *encourage* the Town Construction Code to reflect the goals of the Master Plan

with Ms. Vann noting “our goal is not amend the construction code, we wish to encourage the use of sustainable and alternative materials.” They also added (E) Work force Housing to this goal.

Goal #3 (A through F): This goal encourages the model of a traditional neighborhood rather than disconnected suburban models to maintain the village atmosphere. The members agreed (E sewer, water and traffic analysis) was redundant and was removed. A through D and F were still valid.

Goals #4 (A through D): This goal encourages the use and adaptation of existing buildings to provide additional housing and maintain the distinctive character of the town. The members agreed A and B were still valid, C the adoption of a Demolition Review Ordinance) had been accomplished and D (encouraging mixed use housing over store fronts) was better sited in and moved to Goal #5.

Ms. Ogilvie noted the Implementation Strategies Matrix located at the end of the Master Plan Document. “This gets updated as the goal changes” she said. She noted it was handy for a quick look at the status of a goal. “It is a great tracking mechanism of what has been accomplished” she said.

Goal #5 (A through C): This goal encourages new small businesses in defined village districts and the downtown neighborhoods. The members agreed with the exception of Elm Street and Route 10, this goal has been accomplished. Ms. Vann note the similarity of (C) and the appropriateness to move Goal #4 D into this goal.

Goal #6 (A): This goal pertains to a Phased Development Ordinance that would allow a more orderly rate of growth so that the town’s infrastructure could adapt. The members discussed this with Ms. Vann noting “I have never seen this enacted.” Ms. Ogilvie replied “I don’t think there has been a project big enough to trigger it.” She noted the Wilson Farm development (52 units) adding “but the applicant planned to build in phases anyway.”

Ms. Vann interjected “this may be something we might want to look in to” with Ms. Ogilvie reminding the members that the zoning provision was adopted when the town had a sense of real growth and felt the necessity to have a mechanism to slow it down if necessary. “That is not so now” she said. Mr. Kelly asked for clarification of what the phasing ordinance with Ms. Ogilvie noting that at that time if a development was planned that would increase the population by more than 1% (back then about 60 people) then the project may be required to be phased to allow the infrastructure to keep up. Ms. Vann suggested leaving the goal in place adding “but I think that trigger is way too low.”

The members reviewed the tables in the chapter paying close attention to the dimensional requirements of the zoning districts. They briefly discussed accessory units and more units per acre than zoning currently permits. Mr. Kelly asked about the Traditional Neighborhood Infill with Ms. Vann briefly describing the intent of that overlay. She noted “significantly more than 50% of the houses in town are on non-conforming lots” adding with the current zoning we have

zoned ourselves out of existence. The object of the overlay is for development in the village node that matches what we already have.”

Mr. Kelly replied “there needs to be more information in this document for those not familiar with zoning.” He added “it needs to be reinforced in this document. That to me is number one.” Mr. Kelly also asked about the Economic Vitality Chapter. Ms. Ogilvie noted an advertisement for subcommittee volunteers had been placed in the newspaper “but we got no responses.” She went on to say “I began to wonder if the Economic Development Authority (EDA) might not be used as the subcommittee.” She noted she had e-mailed out a query and had heard back from a few members (so far) that were open to the idea and willing to discuss it. A brief discussion about the economic chapter followed with Mr. Kelly noting “as a community we need to be better at collaborating in creating jobs, it is a big thing.” The members also briefly discussed the EDA and its role in the economic vitality of the town. Ms. Chollet redirected the conversation with the suggestion they get back to the chapter at hand and move along.

The members continued to review the tables and the information contained therein. They compared data from the 2003 Master Plan to the current data and discussed the Colonial Square, Governor’s Square, and Southfield Village developments.

Ms. Chollet suggested some sort of community strategic planning session to take the community pulse on these issues and get a sense of what the public thinks. Ms. Ogilvie agreed and noted she would still like to do the bus tour this summer.

Other Business:

None

Next Meeting Date:

May 8, 2013 at 5:45 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton
Administrative Assistant

Approved May 8, 2013