

MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH, New Hampshire

Minutes of March 29, 2017

Members Present: Sue Chollet, Beth Alpaugh-Cote, Ivy Vann, Bob Holt and James Kelly

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

Master Plan Steering Committee Co-Chair Alpaugh-Cote (Ms. Alpaugh-Cote) called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

Minutes:

A motion was made/seconded (Chollet/Vann) to approve the Minutes of February 22, 2017 as written with all in favor. Ms. Alpaugh-cote thanked the audience for coming “as you know this is a kick-off meeting and it is great to see so many people interested in the Housing Chapter.”

MPSC Housing Chapter Subcommittee Charge:

Introductions of Housing Chapter Subcommittee members in the audience included:

Steven Graves, a builder who is knowledgeable in building codes and can offer guidance about what would make sense code-wise. Mr. Graves also thought he could be a reasonable voice in what makes sense architecturally and structurally.

Susan Howard, Case Manager at Monadnock Family Services and Monadnock Area Transition Shelter (MATS), works with the homeless and those at risk of losing their housing. Ms. Howard is familiar with low-income housing versus subsidized housing, income requirements and waitlists (and people’s struggles with them).

Corinne Chronopoulos, Peterborough’s Library Director has a good understanding of the town and its people. “Think about it” she said, think about how the Library

connects all the residents. Ms. Chronopoulos enjoys a shared eclectic living style in Peterborough where resources are shared, “we share the lawnmower, chickens and tools. If I need a drill I don’t have to go buy one I just borrow it.” She noted many younger people are interested in this type of lifestyle.

Sabrina Morresy, Business Manager at the Well School has a good idea of what the average family is looking for in housing. She noted ten families have moved to Peterborough so that their children could attend the Well School “but have struggled with affordability or having the housing market not meet their needs. I think I can bring that knowledge to the table” she said.

Brooke Charron, Human Resources Manager at New Hampshire Ball Bearing noted the bulk of her workforce commutes to Peterborough “and we are trying to resolve that” she said adding her taking advantage of the subcommittee “may be a bit (employer) selfish but I can offer that prospective and hope to gain insight as well.”

Lara Shook, CEO of Scott Farrar at Peterborough noted most of her staff also commutes. “Our biggest challenge, and I won’t be shy about it is finding employees.” Having grown up in Peterborough and bee away for several ears Ms. Shook noted her appreciation and affection for Peterborough. “It is a special town and I want to give something back” she said.

George Sterling, local businessman and active in municipal Boards and Committees began by saying “I am fascinated by what makes Peterborough unique. We have challenges not unlike other places (supply and demand of housing stock for those downsizing as well as those looking for their first, small starter homes). “We can really lead the whole charge right here” he said.

Bob Holt, Planning Board and EDA member told the audience much of his interest comes from the work being done by these two Boards. Citing the Traditional Neighborhood Overlay District (TND I) which reduces frontage and minimum size lot requirements so that people can build smaller homes on smaller lots as well as continuing to build on that with the creation of TND II. “I’ve seen the challenges as a home buyer” he said.

Mr. Throop noted three other participants (Jamie Conley, CFO of Rivermead; David Orgaz, Realtor with The Masiello Group and Kristin Bixby, Town of Peterborough employee) who were not able to be present this evening.

Ms. Alpaugh-Cote thanked all the participants once again and specifically noted the challenges larger employers are facing. She mentioned the potential for land trusts and getting businesses to work with the town. She noted the state of Vermont has had good success with the land trust approach. “It seems to be successful once you get the expensive part of the purchase out of the way” she said.

SubCommittee Goals, Expectations and Roles:

Goals: Mr. Throop began with a brief review of the goals of understanding regional perspectives and challenges related to housing; developing a clear and comprehensive understanding of the town’s housing supply as well as future needs and desires; identifying models that have been successful elsewhere; evaluation of the town’s zoning regulations and whether or not the current zoning supports what we say we want and recommendations and creating an action plan for how to meet the town’s current and future needs. He noted “you may want to refine the goals and that is appropriate with the scope of what you want to do.”

Ms. Chollet noted that they have been hearing for some time now that Peterborough does not have the housing people are looking for. She also noted that “recommendations from the EDA and the Planning Board made it clear that we are shifting directions.”

Ms. Vann noted the role of the Planning Board is make sure the zoning code subscribes to what people want. “We are working on it” she said. Mr. Sterling offered “the real challenge is not so much the zoning but the building code.” Mr. Throop replied the building codes were adopted at state, federal and even international levels.

Expectations: Ms. Chollet told the members the first thing they should do is review the existing chapter “what to you is ringing true? What sections to keep, what to get rid of and what to revise. Also think about what is missing, then figure out what it is you want in the chapter.” Mr. Throop reiterated the identification of successful models in other towns, making sure zoning supports their efforts and creating the action plan “really gets to the heart of the matter.” He also pointed out an extraordinary amount of research, data collection and analysis and information sources accessible to the group. “Get as much background information as possible” he said adding “and augment the gaps through your own outreach. One-on-one and group interviews are a great way to find what people are looking for.” Ms. Vann interjected posters at establishments and her traveling information/questionnaire booth were great ways to reach out. Mr. Throop suggested contacting New

Hampshire Housing Finance Authority as well as inviting George Regan to come and share his perspective on working with housing coalitions across the state. “Another idea is one of public/private partnerships to drive housing cost down and make them affordable to the lower level of the workforce” he said adding “to understand the complexity and segment the housing market may get us further down the road.”

Chair Sterling suggested engaging the Contoocook Housing Trust as well and followed that suggestion with a brief history of that organization. “They would be a wealth of information and having a representative here may be very valuable” he said.

Roles:

Mr. Throop noted the Committee will define the scope and topics to be addressed to update the plan. He told them they would have to come up with a meeting schedule and that the Committee was a short term one that expected to be done in 6 to 12 months. He urged the members to read and digest the data collection and analysis that exists and seek new information as needed. He said that once the data needs have been determine the Committee will coordinate with town staff to design and implement public participation and input approaches to understand (and validate) community needs, challenges and opportunities. He concluded the Committee will summarize their data analysis and implications and develop conclusions, goals and recommendations.

Mr. Throop also reviewed the guidance and support role of the Master Plan Steering Committee and the professional services and resources of the town staff.

Ms. Alpaugh-Cote suggested a Doodle Poll be sent out to determine the best weekday and meeting time for the majority of the group. She concluded by thanking the subcommittee members again. “Your willingness to work on this is very important.”

Update of Economic Vitality Chapter:

Mr. Kelly gave a brief update of the Subcommittee’s work. “The draft of the Chapter is very elaborate, it is twice as long as it should be” he said adding “that will change. He told the members hypothetical situations would be removed and goals (currently at the end) would be moved to the front of the chapter. “We wanted to start with actions and the Chapter is being edited down to the driving forces. We are also getting rid of any negativity as we add factual material” he

said. Mr. Kelly acknowledged Jeanne Dietsch and Kristin Bixby for their hard work

Mr. Throop noted it was important to clarify the goals, expectation and roles prior to the EDA meeting April. “They need to look at this and develop a budget to implement the plan.”

In closing Ms. Chollet announced that she after 13 or 14 years on the Committee she would be stepping down in May. She noted she would present a letter of resignation to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Throop and the members thanked her for her many years of service. This prompted the members to briefly discuss recruitment for the Committee. Ms. Vann suggested contacting Karen Hatcher and reviewing the *Meet & Greet* participants (a welcoming event for new residents to town). Ms. Alpaugh-Cote suggested (perhaps) a member of the Economic Vitality Subcommittee may want to step up to serve.

Next Meeting: Wednesday April 26, 2017 at 5:45 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton

Administrative Assistant