

MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE
TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH, New Hampshire

Minutes of October 9, 2017

Members Present: Bob Holt, Ivy Vann, James Kelly, Cathy Lanigan and Sarah Stenberg Heller

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman: Tabled

Minutes:

A motion was made/seconded (Lanigan/Kelly) to approve the Minutes of August 30, 2017 as written with all in favor.

South Peterborough TIF District/Special Town Meeting Reminder 10-26-17:

Ms. Vann reminded the members of the Special Town Meeting October 26th at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Throop urged the members to attend “with no expenditures it should go quickly” he said.

Economic Chapter of the Master Plan Update:

“I am working on it, does that sound different?” Mr. Throop said with a smile adding “I plan to get done in the next few days, it needs to get done, it is a high priority for me.”

Housing Chapter of the Master Plan Update:

Mr. Throop reported on the status of the Housing Chapter. “We are just about ready to produce a rough draft which Ivy will produce.” He went on to say “it also is important as it will be the blueprint for the town as we move forward.”

Zoning Amendment Subcommittee:

Ms. Vann began by encouraging all members to participate in a Planning Board Zoning Workshops on October 16th and November 20th. “We put these together because this spring the Congress for the New Urbanism released templates that include descriptions of buildings and places typically found in New England and

allow you to use them to go to a form based code.” (New Urbanism is a planning and development approach based on the principles of how cities and towns had been built for the last several centuries: walkable blocks and streets, housing and shopping in close proximity, and accessible public spaces. In other words: New Urbanism focuses on human-scaled urban design. The principles developed to offer alternatives to the sprawling, single-use, low-density patterns typical of post-WWII development, which have been shown to inflict negative economic, health, and environmental impacts on communities. These design and development principles can be applied to new development, urban infill and revitalization, and preservation. They can be applied to all scales of development in the full range of places including rural Main Streets, booming suburban areas, urban neighborhoods, dense city centers, and even entire regions).

From the Congress for the New Urbanism, Ms. Vann then introduced Transect Zones for Peterborough. She noted the concept of transect zones is to describe the characteristics of built ecosystems and the transition from one ecosystem to another. Ms. Vann noted “we found examples in Peterborough of buildings we have and that clearly belong here.” She went on to note they had identified four transect zones including *T-3 Village Edge* (matching neighborhoods similar to Hunter Farm Road, Old Street Road, Pine ridge and Mountain View Terrace with smaller lots typically under a half acre); *T-4 Residential* (residential zones allowing home-based businesses by right, also with smaller lots a minimum of 50 feet frontage and connected to town water and sewer); *T-4 Village Main Street* (mixed-use zone with home-based businesses permitted and no minimum lot size or frontage but town water and sewer are required) and *T-5 Main Street* (matching the existing Downtown with no minimum lot size or frontage). When asked, Ms. Vann noted “We are leaving the Rural Zone out of it completely.” A brief discussion about the zones followed with Ms. Vann noting “we identified places willing to see growth with water and sewer. They exist, we acknowledge that and if there is an empty lot, this shows you how to fill it.” She briefly reviewed building styles (duplexes, layered cake) with parking in the rear. “Forms are house sized, not lot or block sized” she said. She also reviewed the Transect Zones as ultimately replacing the Traditional Neighborhood Overlay District 1 and II, West Peterborough, Family and General Residence Districts. “These are good matches for us” she said.

Ms. Vann concluded by noting the exercises on October 16th and November 20th will involve identifying the Transect Zones by tracing them over pre-existing town maps. “The goal is to identify where they belong” she said with Mr. Throop adding “it will be a rudimentary discussion and is part of the goal of what a form-based code is.” (A form-based code is a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical *form* (rather than separation of

uses) as the organizing principle for the code. It is a regulation, not a guideline, adopted into city, town, or county law).

Future Chapters:

Facilities: Mr. Throop noted “facilities are coming to a head this year with the Library of the Future (new building), the Fire Department (potential new building and Ladder replacement) and the Department of Public Works (particular focus on the road systems).” He told the members “the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Budget Committee process go a long way in answering what the town wants but we need a community discussion about priorities and where to spend the tax dollars they contribute.” Ms. Vann suggested member of the Master Plan sit in on the CIP meetings (Tuesdays at 3:00 p.m. through October and November). The members also briefly discussed competing narratives.

Ms. Stenberg Heller asked what CIP was with a brief explanation by Mr. Throop and Ms. Lanigan asked about the Fill the Void project for a performing arts center at the High School. It was noted the school project was just that, a school or SAU project the town was unlikely to fund.

Mr. Throop noted the following departments were due at CIP this Tuesday, October 11th: Finance, Recreation, Office of Community Development, GIS Systems and Police Department. He noted the three weeks after that scheduled The Library of the Future, the Fire Department and finally the Department of Public Works.

Ms. Vann announced noted a pilot program to test eliminating the winter parking ban on Summer Street this winter “so that we can get more use out of our paving” she said adding “right now you cannot park on the street November 1st to April 1st.” She told the members the cars would have to be moved if there was plowable snow in the forecast (“four inches or more” interjected Mr. Holt). Ms. Vann noted the hardest part of this pilot program may be towing concerns and getting people to actually park on the street after years of being told not to.

Ms. Lanigan noted she felt “Summer Street was a great street to try this out” with Ms. Stenberg Heller noting other parts of town that would not be so great. “I would worry about the top of Main Street, High Street, and the Elementary School” she said. Ms. Vann agreed, “we’d have to determine where they will be permitted but I have been excited about this for a long time.”

Citing the *Fill the Void* endeavor and noting it was not a “town thing” Ms. Lanigan reiterated “it would be a creative way to attract younger families, we have that *artsy* reputation. Ms. Vann agreed it could be a big benefit to the entire community

but questioned how easy (or not) it might be to schedule non-school related events on the school campus.

Other Business:

A brief discussion about town roads included road priorities (dead end roads); where the money is going to go (who owns what on the road and how loud do they yell); treatment options (shim and chip seal, paving, gravel de-paving) and refusing to accept new roads (as a result of new developments).

Ms. Vann concluded with a brief discussion of development in the south corridor of town. “It is likely that is here our growth will be” she said adding “and we want to make sure the development is the kind we want” (and) mentioning boulevards, “making sure the road matches what we want.” Ms. Vann noted if a town has adopted Complete Streets Policy (“Which we have”) the town may get some financial assistance from the state for development.

In closing, Ms. Stenberg Heller volunteered to do copy editing of the new Master Plan Chapters. “I would love to do it and it is a great way to learn more” she said.

Ms. Lanigan agreed and noted she would like to receive copies as well.

Next Meeting:

Monday, November 13, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton

Administrative Assistant