

MINUTES

Master Plan Steering Committee

TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH

Wednesday, November 12, 2014 – 5:45 p.m.
1 Grove Street, Peterborough, New Hampshire

Members Present: Mose Olenik, Teresa Cadorette, Beth Alpaugh-Cote, James Kelly, Alan Zeller and Tyler Ward

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

Co-Chair Olenik (Ms. Olenik) called the meeting to order 5:45 p.m. She welcomed the members and UNH Cooperative Extension Staff member Sharon Cowen.

Minutes:

A motion was made/seconded (Chollet/Alpaugh-Cote) to approve the Minutes of September 10, 2014 with all in favor.

Vision Survey Update:

As Mr. Throop distributed a copy of the questionnaire to the members and said “this is due to hit the mailboxes tomorrow.” He added the questionnaire was up on the website and had been tested online. Mr. Throop briefly described the question of how to get the survey back to the Town House. “A business reply envelope is well beyond our budget” he said and noted that his research suggested that asking a respondent to put a stamp on a return envelope may not significantly affect response rates . He explained there would be drop off boxes at the Town House and Library for participant convenience without spending postage.

The discussion about the questionnaire that followed included how the survey was set up and the number of boxes it entailed. Mr. Throop noted he would send out a link to the questionnaire so that members could send it along to their personal email lists.

Agriculture and Agritourism Subcommittee:

Mr. Throop spoke briefly about forming a subcommittee to address agriculture and agritourism in the Master Plan. He noted “there is no policy statement supporting the viability of agriculture or supporting accessory uses on a commercial farm such as those proposed by the Petition ordinance passed in May.”

He went on to speak briefly about abutter protection, allowing certain commercial uses in the rural zone as accessory uses to a commercial farm, and the challenges of appropriately limiting the scale and frequency of allowed accessory uses that could generate adverse impacts in some situations. He mentioned Allyson's Orchards as an example of an orchard also functioning as a wedding venue with limited adverse impact to neighbors because of its setting. He also described other farms in the region engaging in these types of uses.

Mr. Throop briefly explained the Citizen's Petition that was passed by the townspeople last May. "We need to write an amendment to that ordinance" he said adding "the statute requires that this type of ordinance be consistent with the Master Plan and our Master Plan is silent on the matter." He went on to say that the Planning Board formed a subcommittee to draft the amendment in relatively short order. "The town voted in favor of the petition ordinance, even though the Planning Board could not support it as they felt the language was significantly flawed" he said.

He went on to describe the Conditional Use Permit application for uses under the petition ordinance that came before the Planning Board and was granted a conditional use permit. The ordinance and the approval are now being challenged in court by the abutters of the approved project. Mr. Zeller interjected "it was a challenging process we went through" adding "and now we have to work towards reasonable conditions." With reference to the Planning Board's approval of the Conditional Use Permit in October, Mr. Throop added "the ordinance had no guidance and no standards" and noted that they have received a lot of public input through the permitting process and the planning board had recently convened a workshop to gather additional input.

Several examples of how other towns have addressed the issue were distributed for review. He noted the importance of a purpose statement and general policy statements in the Master Plan "that can help guide community decision making." Mr. Zeller asked "so what is our charge?" Mr. Throop replied "for our subcommittee to create a short amendment to the Master Plan that addresses the importance of agriculture."

The members then reviewed the time frame for subcommittee meetings, public hearings and submitting the amendment for town vote in May of 2015.

EDA Committee Update:

Mr. Throop began by noting the committee had been quite dormant over the past year "but there has been a resurgence and renewed desire to join the committee." He pointed out that Mr. Kelly and Mr. Galus, a Planning Board Member, had

agreed to serve on the committee and said that George Sterling, Charles “Chub” Whitten and Adam Harrington had expressed interest in joining as potential new members. He also noted that Peter Robinson, currently an alternate had expressed his desire to become a regular member. “With Cy (Gregg), Jeff (Crocker) and Hope (Taylor) that will bring us up to nine members” he said.

He also noted that a recent Chamber of Commerce breakfast featured a presentation on bringing a hi-speed broad-band network to the region made by Carol Monroe, Executive Director of FastRoads LLC. “The EDA is very anxious to make some headway on this topic” he said. Mr. Kelly noted that Mr. Robinson had also spoken at the breakfast on the benefits of the town catering to the people over 65 years of age. Mr. Throop indicated that the EDA is interested in forming a subcommittee to develop a plan for addressing Peterborough’s needs for “enhanced broadband”.

The members then briefly reviewed the need to update the Downtown TIF plan as well as proposed amendments to the TIF boundary lines and projects permitted to receive TIF funding. In closing the members discussed an update of the Economic Vitality Chapter of the Master Plan.

Next Meeting:

December 10, 2014 at 5:45 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton
Administrative Assistant