

MINUTES

Master Plan Steering Committee

TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH
Wednesday, December 12, 2012 – 5:45 p.m.
1 Grove Street, Peterborough, New Hampshire

Members Present: Alan Zeller, Mose Olenik, James Kelly, and Beth Alpaugh-Cote

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:54 p.m.

Statement from the Chair

Chair Zeller noted Mr. Monahan and Mr. Gosline would not be present and Ms. Chollet was not feeling well.

Review of October Minutes

A motion was made/seconded (Olenik/Kelly) to approve the Minutes of October 10, 2012 as written with all in favor.

Review of Revised Municipal Facilities Chapter for 2013

Chair Zeller began with “I imagine everyone has read it” and asked “would it be reasonable to go over it page by page?” The members agreed that would be fine. Chair Zeller complimented Ms. Ogilvie noting “this is incredibly accurate, it is so great. We have not had this information in the past.”

Page 1:

Chair Zeller read a portion of the Charge. “The purpose of this chapter is to identify facilities to support the future land use pattern and meet the projected needs of the community.” He noted “that conclusion is still considered valid.”

Page 2:

Chair Zeller pointed out the third paragraph and the relationship to the Capital Improvements Program. He noted “A to Z the CIP and the MPSC are almost clones. We just don’t deal with the spreadsheets and all the minutia.” Ms. Ogilvie interjected “you go way beyond the CIP” adding “the purpose of the CIP is to assist the Budget Committee and the Board of Selectmen in their annual budget preparation specifically to the capital projects that are under consideration.”

A brief discussion about the recommendation to combine Police and Fire into a Public Safety Complex followed. The members reviewed the many locations investigated as well as the constraints (wetlands, steep slopes, proximity to town, etc.) of each individual parcel. “In the end there was not a site we could recommend” said Ms. Olenik.

“So what do we do?” asked Chair Zeller. Ms. Ogilvie suggested they look to the last page of the chapter (Identification of Issues, Recommendations and Conclusions). She noted many of the issues have been identified (lack of storage, in-house dispatch, building inadequacies) “so now the work begins, let’s get the conversation started.”

Chair Zeller noted “for reason of efficiency it would be good to have everyone under one roof but if there were a fire or natural disaster everyone goes down with the ship. You cannot assume nothing bad is ever going to happen, just a thought to not put all your eggs in one basket.” Ms. Alpaugh-Cote noted an almost perfect location was identified in North Peterborough “but it was right by the South Meadow School, placing potential criminals too close to the school.” Ms. Alpaugh-Cote also noted her support for the addition of a satellite fire station on another side of town “especially with things like the bridge coming online.” A brief discussion about the costs and benefits of a town-run dispatch center and the “good sense” to unify the Police and Fire Departments in the long term plans followed with a member asking “and do the long term plans obstruct short term needs? Are we kicking the can down the road in an improper way?”

Mr. Kelly noted he saw the Police needing more storage and the Fire Department needing another story (to their station). “I am not sure this is a part of the long term Master Plan” he said. He added “I don’t understand why we can’t just do the needed stuff.” He also questioned the need and timing of the dispatch center. “Where does that fit? How does that integrate the Town?” he asked adding “and do we throw it away when a new building is built?”

Ms. Ogilvie noted the Committee has been actively researching a Municipal Facilities Complex for years “but this is the first time the recommendations of 2008 had been revisited and it is possible this Committee will come to a different conclusion.” Ms. Ogilvie added “and if it is not taken up by the Board of Selectmen and taken to Town Meeting it is not going *anywhere*. So far there has not been the political will or money to get it going.” Mr. Kelly asked “so how do we address that in our meetings?” Ms. Ogilvie replied “the physical issues and deficiencies have been documented. Your job is look at that what would a reasonable recommendation would be. Ideally we think “this”, but you might want to park the long term goal somewhere and focus on the short term solutions to facility problems while looking at the big picture.”

A brief discussion about the needs of the Police Department (segregated cells for youth and women, storage, etc.) and ideas of how to expand (up not out, using the impound lot) followed. Ms. Ogilvie also clarified that the dispatch center would be transplanted into a new building “so it is not locked in to the current Police Station.” The members also recognized the Fire Department’s need for additional space. “They are running three ambulances and they are cramped” said Ms. Olenik. She noted the building “was not getting younger” and the need for storing ambulances inside to keep life-saving drugs properly stored. With reference to the Ambulance Transfer Program Chair Zeller noted “the writing is on the wall, a fourth ambulance is most likely in the future but they will have to come up with a place to put it. It is as simple as that.” He briefly reviewed the long list of problems the building had and noted “I am motivated to make the improvements to the Police and Fire Stations versus putting them together somewhere.” Ms. Ogilvie noted “that is a tough spot to expand on, but the Fire Department likes their location.” A brief discussion about the availability of “potential” space at the Wastewater Treatment Facility followed. Ms. Ogilvie noted “so it may be Police and Fire stay where they are

with improvements and eventually Public Works ends up *there*.” Nodding his head Mr. Kelly replied “yes, I agree with that.” Mr. Kelly also noted “I am surprised there is not a more fundamental push for improvements by the Department Heads (the Chiefs). The brief discussion that followed included the budget constraints (money is tight) and the inherent expensive nature of the (especially Fire Department’s) apparatus, citing a new Engine in the CIP costing \$650,000.00.

Chair Zeller noted “so we know what we want we just don’t know how to pay for it.” The members briefly reviewed the numbers and all agreed the Municipal Facilities Complex in the CIP has no money but the virtual dollars are really playing havoc with the bottom line.

Ms. Ogilvie gave a brief update of the status of the Community Center and the award of a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to hire a consultant to do a feasibility study for a Cultural Center in Peterborough, “which may or may not have anything to do with the brick building located next to the Armory.”

This brought the conversation to Page 7, the reconfiguration and repaving of the Fire Department parking lot. Ms. Ogilvie noted to date there had not been a response to the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the job.

Public Works, Highway, Buildings & Grounds, and Recycling followed. All members agreed the town was lucky to have Recycling Manager Scott Bradford on board.

The Library was next with Chair Zeller noting “I am on the Steering Committee for a long-range master plan for the Library” adding “it is a four to six million dollar project.” He went on to tell the members about plans to build or develop a new facility in a different location “but that is not going to happen.” A brief discussion about how the facility would be funded followed with Mr. Kelly noting “it is implied but not explicitly stated that is not going to be Town expense.”

In conclusion the members discussed the Recreation Department. They noted the inadequacy of the playing fields and space for indoor programming. They spent time discussing the potential use of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Lagoons. Ms. Ogilvie noted one “cell” was off the table as it would be used for flood storage and wetland mitigation. The members also discussed access, the proximity of the Lagoons to the Middle and High Schools and the opportunity for the Town to collaborate with the School System in programming and resource sharing. Ms. Ogilvie noted the discussion would most likely start next year. “DES will have to be involved” she said adding “it will be awhile before the public and political discussion of how the land will be used is accomplished.”

In conclusion Ms. Ogilvie noted she would start to draft the “Conclusions” portion of the last page “so you have something to respond to in January.”

Ms. Olenik replied “good job on this Carol.” Mr. Kelly reiterated the building inadequacies at the Police and Fire Stations noting “the big question mark being where to balance kicking in money for a combined facility versus improving the individual facilities.”

Review of Draft Schedule of Meetings for 2013

The members agreed the 2013 schedule was fine.

Other Business

None.

Chair Zeller thanked the members for coming and noted the next meeting was January 9, 2013 “weather permitting and the creek don’t rise” he said with a smile.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton
Administrative Assistant