

MINUTES

Master Plan Steering Committee

TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH
Wednesday, December 11, 2013 – 5:45 p.m.
1 Grove Street, Peterborough, New Hampshire

Members Present: Mose Olenik, Sue Chollet, Alan Zeller, Beth Alpaugh-Cote, Ivy Vann and James Kelly

Staff Present: Peter Throop, Director and Laura Norton, Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Development, Dan Reidy of UNH Cooperative Extension

Statement from the Chair:

Chair Chollet began with “I have to make a full disclosure, I have to leave at 6:30 but Beth will take over at that time.” She also noted “and I have managed to leave all my notes at home so hopefully we can pull names out of our memory because one of the goals for tonight is to have the names of the Forum Planning Committee so they can be contacted and attend our next meeting. I apologize and call you to order at 5:50 p.m.”

Minutes:

A motion was made/seconded (Zeller/Olenik) to approve the Minutes of November 13, 2013 as written with all but Ms. Vann and Ms. Alpaugh-Cote (both abstained) in favor.

Project Discussion:

Mr. Throop briefly reviewed the major components for updating the Vision Chapter of the Master Plan. He noted “we need to understand the context for updating the Vision Chapter” and further noted that “this includes summarizing the 2003 visions, what has been accomplished since, how demographic factors and environmental, social and economic trends have influenced the community and what the current conditions in town are.”

Mr Throop said that the proposed approach to the update included a town-wide forum that would be facilitated by University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension. He also suggested the potential of a survey to follow the forum and expressed the value of not just electronic distribution but also “going out and addressing the civic groups and organizations and having them complete surveys in real time.”

Mr. Throop then spoke briefly about the execution of the forum event. He touched on inviting members to serve on the Forum Planning Committee with a goal that the membership would represent all demographic groups in town. “We need to consider not only *who* should be asked but asked by *whom*” he said. The members briefly discussed the recruitment of the Planning Committee.

Chair Chollet asked who from the Steering Committee would be willing to serve on the Planning Committee as well. “They are separate identities” she said. It was noted that Chair Chollet, Ms. Olenik and Ms. Alpaugh-Cote had met with Mr. Throop individuals who would make up the

demographic groups to be represented. They reviewed a potential list with members volunteering to make the invitation based on their knowledge of or business or personal relationship with those candidates. They used a category format that included *Downtown Businesses, Working Lands, Arts, School, Library, Historic, Chamber of Commerce, Health Care, River Center/MATS, Rivermead (retirement communities)* and *Native Residents*.

The members agreed the contact should be made as quickly as possible for participation at their next meeting. Chair Chollet noted “in the execution of the forum a big part of our energy is to know the steps needed to be taken so we can all arrive on the 11th and be outstanding and organized event for the community” adding “the process is often as important as the information we get. Being organized is our job.”

Chair Chollet then asked “is there anything to be said about the clarification of the consultant’s role? Mr. Throop replied “his part is to help us to pull off the forum. He has tremendous experience in doing these things so we will look to him to help us achieve these goals” adding “we want to be well organized and well represented for a process people think is really valuable.” He briefly referred to recruitment of the Planning Committee and then turned the meeting over to Mr. Reidy (Dan Reidy is the consultant for the UNH Cooperative Extension and the Forum Facilitator).

Mr. Reidy said hello as he passed out a *Steering Committees for Profiles or Master Plan Updates* informational booklet to the members. He briefly reviewed its contents including: Developing a Steering Committee for a Community Profile, Community Profile Steering Committee Roles and Responsibilities, Civil Rights Information for a Community Profile, Community Profile Components and Developing a Steering Committee for a Community Profile.

Chair Chollet noted that for the record she wanted to make it perfectly clear “we are the Master Plan *Steering* Committee adding “we are recruiting a *Planning* Committee for this Forum.”

Mr. Reidy noted such an event “usually takes between 4 and 6 months to prepare for” adding “and we are down to 4 months.” He advised the members keep a good checklist and pay attention to all the items in the packet. When asked Mr. Reidy noted small group (breakout groups) would consist of 8-12 people “so if you get 60-70 people in attendance you would have 6-7 groups.” Ms. Vann asked “do they get to choose? (what breakout group they are in) with Mr. Reidy replying “not the first night, we count them off and send the off so we get a good mix to the groups without getting the deck stacked.” He noted this procedure “delivers a good distribution of knowledge amongst the groups” adding “and it is more about envisioning rather than subject matter anyway.” In conclusion, he reviewed the need for local small group facilitators and the need for facilitator training. He noted “we give small groups set time periods and the facilitators need to keep the groups on track so they all finish within 5 minutes of each other.”

He noted “the training provides a very good sense of the whole two days and what it should look like.” He briefly discussed the use of a historical piece or component to get started, presented by a town historian, someone from the Historical Society, or someone who has a lot of knowledge about the town. “It helps to get people in the mood” he said adding “people can see what went into their town and now decide what to do for the future.” Mr. Reidy noted maps and material

could be dispersed around the room for all to see. A brief discussion about the facilitators followed with Mr. Reidy noting they would be well trained “and preferably from the community.”

Referring to the checklist in their packets Mr. Kelly asked “is only one exposure to factual content going to be enough?” A brief discussion about additional data sets and information distribution followed. The members also discussed the timing of the event (before or after Town Meeting) with Mr. Reidy noting “it is what the public thinks about the town’s status at the moment and their wishes for the future so there is less hard data to draw on for the forum.” The members briefly discussed the Master Plan document and where to find it on the town’s website (it is a public Document on the website) with Ms. Olenik suggesting they could pull some of the data pieces from it. “That would be helpful” she said.

Mr. Reidy asked about the Main Street intersection with Ms. Vann interjecting “that does not drive the train” adding “we don’t want to start down that rabbit hole at the forum, it will suck the energy out of the room.” Mr. Throop mentioned the various road projects scheduled over the next few years including the Union Street Bridge, the Main Street Bridge and the Route 101 Bridge. “People *do* need to know about these as they will have a short term impact on the town” he said. He suggested creating posters that would identify the current issues, giving data background people might find helpful and informative.

Chair Chollet noted “let’s move the discussion to who wants to be a part of this, I assumed we all did and this *will* be the focus of the Committee for the next four months.” A brief discussion about the timeline and meeting schedule followed with the members agreeing that as the event gets closer they would likely meet on a weekly basis.

“That being said” said Chair Chollet “we have a sit down and started the planning committee selection process.” Using the categories they had identified at an earlier meeting (*Downtown Businesses, Working Lands, Arts, School, Library, Historic, Chamber of Commerce, Health Care, River Center/MATS, Rivermead (retirement communities) and Native Residents.*) The members began the list of people to invite.

The members spent a good deal of time discussing potential candidates to invite to be forum recruiters, leaders, facilitators and participants. That list is embedded at the end of these Minutes. They also discussed recruiting Laura Hanson of Fastracks to provide advice for marketing the forum

Chair Chollet left the meeting at 6:30 p.m. leaving Vice Chair Alpaugh-Cote in charge. Mr. Throop asked what the average size of the Planning Committee should be with 8-20 people being the response. Mr. Throop suggested the members prioritize candidates within each category to those “who may be most effective at planning it.” Ms. Vann disagreed noting “I would be inclined to call all of them” she said. Once finished with their list the members went through and picked who they would call or determined who would be the best member to contact particular candidates. Mr. Throop suggested “if they decline because they don’t have time, ask them if they have any suggestions.” Mr. Reidy added “and when you invite a candidate it is helpful to focus on what role they want to play.”

The members then briefly discussed a general script so that all were on the same page but were encouraged to personalize their invitation with how well they may know the candidate. Mr. Reidy noted “speak from the heart about how much you care about the community, it is critical to get broad participation for this” he said.

Mr. Throop noted the tentative dates of April 11 and 12 2014 at the regional High School Cafeteria. He noted the details were not fully worked out but the forum entailed a gathering of the community for an evening session with a meal and follow-up with a half day session the next day.

The members discussed the strategy of creating the Planning Committee and getting the word out. It was emphasized that the most direct invitation is a personal invitation. They also considered phone trees (where a member calls 10 people and ask each of those individuals to call 10 people and so on). “That is one way to get the word out” said Mr. Throop adding ‘and getting on the agendas of the civic groups like Rotary, Kiwanis and the Lions organizations.’”

Ms. Olenik asked if the candidates contacted and interested would be invited the January 8th meeting. Mr. Throop replied “that is the idea.” He then reiterated that the members should personalize their invitations and emphasize the short term commitment that was involved.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton
Administrative Assistant