



Town of Pepperell

Master Plan Advisory Committee

1 Main Street, Pepperell, Massachusetts 01463-1644

Meeting Minutes- June 4, 2020

Committee Members Present:

Diane Cronin
Renee D'Argento
Deborah Fountain
Ken Hartlage
Nancy Lebedzinski
Joe Lonergan
Joyce Morrow
Kathy Pries
Rob Rand
Sherrill Rosoff
Stephen Themelis
Jack Visniewski
Stephen Witmer

Committee Members Absent:

Tracie Ezzio
Kenneth Morgan
David Sears
Mark Vasapolli

Others Present:

Jay Donovan, NMCOG
Paula Terrasi
Beverly Woods, NMCOG

1. Review of Revised Land Use and Zoning Draft Chapter

Beverly Woods stated that there is interest in placing a solar installation on the former town landfill. Sherrill Rosoff asked where the town landfill is located. Paula Terrasi responded that the landfill is located on Boynton Street. Sherrill Rosoff requested that the location be noted in the narrative. Beverly Woods added that several sections of the land use chapter have been updated to reflect the fact that Pepperell adopted a solar bylaw.

The language on page 27 relative to lot size in the SR and TR districts was revised, deleting the reference to half-acre lots. On page 38, the third paragraph was updated to reflect the

fact that the town has addressed recreational marijuana within the zoning bylaw. Sherrill Rosoff noted that she discovered that Sterling has an agricultural district bylaw and will forward it to NMCOG.

Sherrill Rosoff requested that the language in recommendation 2 be revised, as she does not believe the Committee advocated that the delineation of zoning districts be reviewed and revised. She proposed language that focuses on mixed-use overlay zoning for multi-family and affordable housing and commercial development, within the boundaries of urban, suburban, recreational and industrial zoning districts. Ken Hartlage added that he believes that the Visioning Session focused on uses rather than delineation of zoning districts. Renee D'Argento and Jack Visniewski concurred. Sherrill Rosoff made a motion to revise Recommendation 2 to read: "Consider creation of mixed use overlay district to support implementation of multi-family housing, inclusive of affordable housing, and commercial development within the contiguous boundaries of commercial, suburban, urban, industrial and recreational zoning districts where available municipal infrastructure, compact neighborhoods and commercial activity exists." Chuck Walkovich suggested that the recommendation read: "Consider mixed-use district where applicable". After extensive discussion, the Committee voted to delete Recommendation 2 based on a motion made by Steve Themelis and seconded by Sherrill Rosoff.

Joyce Morrow made a motion to keep the original language in recommendation 2, which was seconded by Steve Themelis. Following discussion, it was agreed that the word "revise" would be changed to "examine" in the narrative under Issues and opportunities as it pertains to the deleted Recommendation 2.

Renee D'Argento asked that the Healthy Chapter from the Open Space and Recreation Plan be referenced in the section that discusses glare in the Community Design narrative. She also requested that additional language be added to the section on the Sewer District regarding treated effluent entering the river and causing algae blooms. Renee agreed to send the revised proposed language to Beverly.

Rob Rand stated that the reference to marijuana dispensaries in Recommendation 7 should be deleted. Beverly Woods concurred and will make the needed edit.

Diane stated that a motion was made at the April meeting to consider form-based code which should be reflected in Recommendation 6.

Based on a motion made by Steve Themelis and seconded by Diane Cronin, the Committee voted to accept the Land Use Chapter as amended.

2. Address Comments on the Introductory Chapter

Chuck Walkovich stated that he and Beverly Woods discussed the best approach to presenting this chapter, given the extensive comments received, many of which were conflicting. Beverly Woods described the extent and nature of the comments received. Deb Fountain stated the chapter could be revised visually, and that a bit more could be said about the various chapters and the themes. Diane Cronin stated that she feels the chapter is well written as is. The majority of committee members concurred.

Renee D'Argento stated that she prefers the vision statement written by Deb Fountain. She then proposed additional language focused on sustainability and climate change. Jack Visniewski and Sherrill Rosoff stated that they were in favor of adding the additional language. Based on motion made by Renee D'Argento and seconded by Sherrill Rosoff the Committee voted to insert the language, which Renee agreed to forward to Beverly Woods.

Diane Cronin stated that, on page 5 at the end of the third paragraph, there is additional language that she would like to add language to the Vision Statement regarding cultural/historic preservation and tourism. Steve Themelis made a motion to accept the edits offered by Diane, which was seconded by Sherrill Rosoff. Deb Fountain noted that some of her re-write on the vision statement contains the language Diane is suggesting. Chuck Walkovich suggested that Deb Fountain, Renee D'Argento and Diane Cronin collaborate on a revised vision statement prior to the next meeting. It was agreed that this would occur before the next meeting.

Renee D'Argento suggested additional language under *the Climate Change Impacts in Pepperell* section, including inclusion of the state's sustainable development principles. Deb Fountain stated that the Committee agreed to incorporate the sustainable development principles within the document. Beverly Woods stated that she will provide a call-out box listing the state's sustainable development principles.

Renee D'Argento stated that the Top Ten "Themes" of the Master Plan should be changed to the Top Ten "Priorities". It was agreed that the change would be made. Renee then proposed inserting additional language under the description of the Open Space and Recreation chapter. Chuck Walkovich stated that this narrative is intended to be a brief discussion of the content of the chapter. She then offered additional narrative for the description of the transportation and the economic development chapters. Deb Fountain offered alternative language for the description of the economic development chapter. Diane Cronin stated that she liked the way the description is written presently. Based on a motion made by Renee D'Argento and seconded by Deb Fountain, the Committee voted to incorporate the changes proposed by Renee.

3. Draft Implementation Plan

Beverly Woods explained that each recommendation contained within the implementation matrix appears in other chapters of the Master Plan, although some revisions will need to be made to the land use recommendations to reflect tonight's discussion. She then reviewed the timeframes outlined in the matrix and asked for feedback from the Committee regarding the identified timeframes and primary implementation responsibility.

Renee D'Argento asked about the composition of the Implementation Committee, given that earlier discussions focused on including one person from each entity with implementation responsibility. She suggested also including one or two members of the public and representatives of the Master Plan Committee. Beverly Woods responded that she prepared a draft outlining the composition of the Implementation Committee as discussed at earlier meetings. The draft was reviewed by the Town Administrator and discussed at a meeting between the Master Plan Committee chair and the Town Administrator. The process now outlined in this chapter represents a revised process that the Town Administrator feels better suits Pepperell.

Chuck Walkovich stated that the Town Administrator did a thorough job identifying all of the town departments that will be involved in implementing the recommendations. He added that the master plan is a Planning Board document that should be controlled by the Board. The previous Planning Board chairman favored this approach. He noted that all boards will be consulted and that members of the Master Plan Committee serve on a number of these boards, and that he believes the Plan will be most effectively implemented by those boards rather than through a separate steering committee.

Deb Fountain stated that she is fine with what is outlined for the most part. However, the document says that the Planning Board will appoint one member to be the Leader and she requested that instead of appointing a "member" the wording be revised to read "individual", in the event that there isn't a Planning Board member willing to fill that role. Chuck Walkovich stated that the Planning Board member was designated as the leader as it is an elected rather than appointed position and has the backing of the Town, and noted this person has an understanding of the workings of the planning board, is familiar with the issues discussed at the board's meetings, and will provide regular direct feedback to the board.

Deb Fountain noted that the Board of Selectmen and DPW should be included on the list of implementers that will be consulted. Beverly Woods noted that they were both previously

on the list but were removed by the Town Administrator and that she assumes there was a reason they were deleted.

Deb Fountain stated that there needs to be a written status report that is submitted to the Planning Board and posted on the town website. This would help make the boards and committees more accountable for implementation. Sherrill Rosoff concurred and noted that the Agricultural Advisory Board has been left off the list. Beverly Woods stated that the Board was included on the original list but was deleted. Sherrill noted that the Agricultural Advisory Board is now active and needs to be added to the list.

Discussion ensued as to the role of the Town Administrator, Planning Board and Master Plan Advisory Committee in the implementation process. Steve Themelis asked Beverly Woods to outline how other communities structure the implementation committee. She responded that usually the committee is comprised of boards and committees that have implementation responsibility, and the committee meets two to four times per year to hear from those entities, in terms of where they are with the implementation of each recommendation. She also suggested providing a five-minute presentation to Annual Town Meeting to update voters on the implementation status of the Master Plan recommendations, noting that this provides some level of accountability. Diane Cronin stated that she prefers a Committee approach so that there is synergy and collaboration. Kathy Pries stated that she prefers that the simpler approach so that the process does not get bogged down.

Steve Themelis stated that the list should include all committees and boards with implementation responsibility and added that the Master Plan Committee chair should go back to the Town Administrator with a list of entities to be added. Deb Fountain agreed with Steve and stated that the process now outlined is too burdensome for the Town Administrator to handle. Chuck Walkovich agreed to talk with the Town Administrator on this issue.

4. Climate Change and Sustainability Work Group Update

There were no updates.

5. Open Forum

No comments were received. The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.