



Town of Pepperell

Master Plan Advisory Committee

1 Main Street, Pepperell, Massachusetts 01463-1644

Meeting Minutes-April 19, 2018

Public Visioning Session

Committee Members Present:

Diane Cronin
Nancy Lebedzinski
Paul Lonergan
Joyce Morrow
Roland Nutter
Robert Rand
Stephen Themelis
Jack Visniewski
Charles Walkovich
Stephen Witmer

Committee Members Absent:

Tracie Ezzio
Kenneth Morgan
David Sears
Mark Vasapolli

1. Visioning Session

Roland Nutter welcomed participants to the Visioning Session and introduced Beverly Woods and Jay Donovan from Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG). He then turned the meeting over to Beverly Woods, who provided an overview of the Master Plan process. She outlined the purpose of the plan, requirements outlined in State Statutes, the components of a master plan, and the process for gathering public input. She noted that the Planning Board is the entity responsible for adopting the Master Plan.

Audience members asked to discuss the process for forming the committee. Roland Nutter responded that everyone will participate in the discussion this evening, and the composition of the Committee is not on the agenda this evening. He noted that the Committee is here to drive the process and listen to the input provided by others. A resident expressed concerns over the demographics of the Committee. Roland Nutter noted that the Town does not use a quota system for committee formation, but selects members based on interest expressed and the willingness to commit to working on the Committee for the next 18-24 months. Beverly Woods noted that a conversation on Committee composition is not consistent with the agenda that was posted with

the Town Clerk for the Visioning Session, and that the Open Meeting Law requires that the conversation follow the posted agenda. She suggested that any further discussion about committee composition take place at the next Master Plan Committee meeting, as part of the agenda. Roland Nutter stated that this topic can be included on the agenda for next month's Master Plan Committee meeting. Rob Rand asked about the process for selecting the Committee members, and inquired as to how the agenda was set for this evening. Roland Nutter stated that the Master Plan Committee discussed the visioning process at last month's meeting, and added that the Board of Selectmen made the Committee appointments based on recommendations provided by the Town Administrator and Planning Administrator. He noted that the next Master Plan Committee meeting will be held on May 10th at 6:30 pm.

Jay Donovan then led the attendees through the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) exercises. Participant input was recorded on flip charts, and participants were asked to indicate their personal priorities on the flip charts using color-coding dots at the end of input portion of the exercise.

Once the color-coding exercise was completed, the meeting reconvened briefly for a wrap-up, with Beverly Woods thanking participants for their input and outlining the process going forward. She noted that Steve Parker is the point of contact for the Master Plan.

A resident asked about the formation of subcommittees. Beverly Woods noted that NMCOG has been involved in master planning processes that utilized subcommittees, and that it can add a lot of time to the project schedule. Another participant outlined the process that was used by the Town of Groton. Beverly Woods stated that it is up to the Committee decide how they want to structure the process, and noted that it is advantageous for the Town to have a current master plan when competing for State grants and programs. Roland Nutter noted that lengthening the process can also result in committee fatigue. A resident suggested that committee members could be discussing issues via email to speed up the process. Beverly Woods stated that email discussions by committee members are a violation of Open Meeting law. A resident suggested that the Committee meet more often. A resident asked what happens with the Plan once it is completed. Beverly Woods responded that NMCOG generally suggests that the Town form a Master Plan Implementation Committee charged with tracking implementation of the recommendations, and that a brief report be provided to Annual Town Meeting on implementation progress. She noted that any future amendments to the Master Plan require a vote of the Planning Board.

2. Adjournment

The Visioning Session and Master Plan Committee meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm.