



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH Master Plan Steering Committee

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Approved 6.5.19

**Master Plan Steering Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 9, 2019
Northborough Free Library**

Members Present: Fran Bakstran, Chairman; Rick Leif, Vice-Chairman; Michelle Gillespie, Dave Putnam, Tom Reardon, Ashley Davies, Amy Poretsky, Jason Perreault, George Pember, Justin Dufresne, Alexandra Molnar, Norm Corbin

Others Present: Kathy Joubert, Town Planner; Geoffrey Morrison-Logan, VHB; Donny Goris-Kolb, VHB; Leslie Rutan, 2 Hemlock Drive; Julianne Hirsh, 19 Smith Road; Susan Stasaitis, 318 Green Street; Kerri Martinek, 16 Hemlock Drive; Anthony Ziton, 17 Franklin Circle; Henry P. Squillante, 72 Crestwood Drive; Paul Tagliaferri, 32 Hemlock Drive

Chairman Bakstran opened the meeting at 7:00pm.

Mr. Morrison-Logan and Mr. Goris-Kolb reviewed the third public survey that was opened on April 8th and is now closed. Mr. Goris-Kolb went through the survey and noted there will be more updates to the process.

Mr. Morrison-Logan and Mr. Goris-Kolb reviewed the Goals and Recommendation Prioritization Survey with the committee. The most common comments from the survey were as follows:

Open Space and Recreation: Indoor Recreational Centers, Community Calendars, and comments re: not developing Boundary Street;

Housing: Smaller homes on smaller lots, avoid clustering, and the trade-offs for allowing density;

Land Use: Street trees, Downtown design study, incentives for business property owners to improve their property;

Economic Development: create a Downtown Committee, create Master Plan for Town-owned buildings and land and what to do with them, connectivity of Town assets;

Natural, Cultural, Historic: Short and long-term goals for the White Cliffs, Westborough State Hospital, the old Fire Station on Church Street, and the building at 4 West Main Street; and also composting;

Public Facilities & Services: install solar at municipal facilities, repurpose, reuse and share space at Town buildings; and

Transportation: Additional sidewalks, improve traffic flow, promote biking and bike safety;

Overall: Density is a concern that needs further discussion outside of the Master Plan.

Ms. Bakstran asked the members their opinions on the outcome of the forum and the survey.

Mr. Leif stated they did a lot of work, did a good job and was pleased with the outcome. He noted the overall goals and recommendations are good and he doesn't see anything that is lacking.

Ms. Davies stated she feels it doesn't give enough attention to the education system, balancing of housing and density concerns.

Ms. Hirsh asked what "weighted average" means. Mr. Goris-Kolb will obtain a response from one of the survey planners.

Ms. Gillespie asked if the reason people responded that they don't want Boundary Street developed was because of the possibility of expanding the sewer system.

Ms. Martinek stated she thought the survey was great and comments were interesting. However, she wondered if some people just checked a box without knowing what it was about.

Ms. Rutan suggested it would be good to know what people think is not important.

Goals & Draft Recommendations Presentation 2.13.19 Public Forum – Comments from Ms. Poretsky

Ms. Poretsky explained her comments and suggested changes to this version of the Goals and Draft Recommendations. The members went through Ms. Poretsky document starting with Open Space and Recreation and Mr. Goris-Kolb stated he will incorporate the revisions approved by the members into the draft plan.

Votes on Recommendations

The members voted on their **Recommendations** for Open Space & Recreation, Public Services & Facilities, and Transportation as follows:

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

OSR1: Maintain and expand opportunities for active recreation to residents of all ages and abilities. Active recreation activities such as baseball, soccer, and pickleball demand considerable exertion and often require significant infrastructure.

OSR1-2: Consider the development of a Town Dog Park (the word building was deleted)

The members were unanimously in favor of **Recommending** OSR1-1 through OSR1-4.

OSR2: Continue to create and maintain passive recreation opportunities throughout Town. Passive activities such as walking and hiking demand less exertion and resources.

The members were unanimously in favor of **Recommending** OSR2-1 through OSR2-3.

OSR3: Promote public awareness and increased use of the recreational opportunities within the community.

This originally had four recommendations, but a recommendation to "Launch a Friends of the Parks/Fields/Trails" campaign was deleted.

The members were unanimously in favor of **Recommending** OSR3-1 through OSR3-3.

OSR4: Better link existing open spaces and use these linkage to connect community assets and create a more walkable community.

The members were unanimously in favor of **Recommending** OSR4-1 through OSR4-4.

PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

PFS1: Develop plans to improve key public facilities and infrastructure to support the Town’s operations and to meet the community the community’s current and future needs.

PFS1-2: “Gauge the” were added to the sentence to make it: “Gauge the quality of municipal services and identify opportunities for improvement”. In addition, the **recommendation** of “Conduct a citizen satisfaction survey” was deleted.

PFS1-6: The word “continue” was added to the sentence to make it: “Expand and continue to improve the timeliness of content on the Town’s website and enhance its ease of use.

Ten members of the board voted in favor of **Recommending** PFS1-1 through PFS1-6; and Mr. Putman and Mr. Pember were opposed to **Recommending** PFS1-6.

PFS2: Ensure Town Departments have the capital assets and staffing necessary to meet the needs of the community today and tomorrow.

The **recommendation** “Renovate, expand, or relocate the fire station based on the outcome of the Fire Station Feasibility Study” was deleted.

The members were unanimously in favor of **Recommending** PFS2-1 through PFS2-3;

PFS3: Incorporate sustainable development and renewable energy into municipal buildings and amenities.

The members were unanimously in favor of the **Recommending** PFS3-1 through PFS3-5.

TRANSPORTATION

T1: Become a bicycle and pedestrian-friendly community by expanding existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities and improving connectivity.

T1-1: Develop signed bike routes through out town. The words “using a combination of existing bike facilities and roadways” were deleted.

T1-3: Examine and identify key locations in Town for additional sidewalk improvements , focusing on pedestrian-oriented destinations (i.e.), schools, parks, trails, etc. The wording “such as along Route 20 outside of the town center” was deleted.

The members were unanimously in favor of the **Recommending** T1-1 through T1-5.

T1-5: Develop a plan to upgrade all existing pedestrian facilities as appropriate to meet current accessibility standards. The words “as appropriate” and “accessibility standards” were added. In addition, the words “Americans with Disabilities Act(ADA)/Architectural Access Board (AAB) standards” were deleted.

The members were unanimously in favor of **Recommending** T1-1 through T1-5.

T2: Improve Town-wide traffic flow and safety.

The members were unanimously in favor of **Recommending** T2-1 through T2-4.

T3: Work with Worcester Regional Transit Authority, neighboring communities, and the Senior Center to explore ways to enhance transit within the Town.

T3-1: Investigate/evaluate the potential for the senior and special needs shuttle service to run on a regular schedule, including during evening hours and weekends. The words “potential for the” were added.

The members were unanimously in favor of the **Recommending** T3-1 through T3-2.

T4: Plan for the future of transportation and how potential changes may impact Northborough’s transportation network.

T4-4: Look for opportunities to coordinate with neighboring communities to provide a commuter shuttle to Metro-Boston employment destinations. This **recommendation** was inserted into T4.

The members were unanimously in favor of the **Recommending** T4-1 through T4-5.

Ms. Bakstran noted at the next meeting they will work on finishing the Housing, Land Use, Economic Development, and Natural, Cultural, and Historic Resources sections.

Next Steps

It was noted that the next steps of the project will include the implementation section, a draft of the document, and the final Master Plan. In addition, the final version of the Master Plan will be presented to the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board and other boards.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Steering Committee will be held in the **Selectmen’s Meeting Room** on May 22, 2019 at 7pm.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Debbie Grampietro
Planning Administrative Assistant