

MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Thursday December 19, 2019 at 7:00 pm

Town Hall – Board of Selectmen's Room

663 Main Street



The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

Members Present: Brian Boyle, Cia Boynton, Mary Ciummo, Panny Gerken, Bob Roemer, Mark Sprague, Ken Troup, and Kevin Weadock

Members Absent: Michelle Goulding, Molly Myers, Chris Rogers

The minutes of the November 14, 2019 meeting were approved.

Chairman Bob Roemer distributed a table of Master Plan tasks indicating a brief scope and proposed members for each task group. He also provided a draft Gantt schedule chart with initiate subtasks, timing, and sequence and dependencies among the tasks. The Committee then reviewed each task's scope, and proposed members. Members discussed a proposed Task Plan Template that the members of each Task Group will need to fill in to further describe each task. The Committee agreed that a task group should have approximately four people, but never a quorum of committee members. Task groups would gather information but come to the Committee for decisions. Action Item for next meeting: each task group needs a task plan that follows the template

The Committee identified the 5 most critical tasks as well as the next level tasks. Each was briefly discussed:

1. Survey – the proposed survey is actually part of the larger Communications and Outreach task, but viewed as very important as soon as the committee can get a survey instrument put together. Molly Rogers is interested in working on the survey. Bob has approached Liz Edwards about being involved as well. The Gantt chart shows the survey being distributed before the end of February.
2. Population and Demographics – Subsequent to the November meeting, Brian Boyle provided the committee with some excellent background information about recent population studies, noting that the UMass estimate was a lot close to 2016-18 actuals than MAPC projections had been. The committee noted that the school has just received approval for a Statement of Interest (SOI) for refurbishment or replacement of Nashoba Regional HS. We need to get the most recent population projections that the school has. We discuss a possible MAPC grant and potentially hiring a professional population consultant.
3. School Needs Assessment – As noted, the school got approval to work on an SOI for the HS. We will need to coordinate with the Superintendent about their current thinking and plans vis a vis K-8 as well as HS school facility needs. Bob talked with Lorraine Romasco about her participation on the task group along with Panny.

4. Housing Assessment – The current effort to examine Bolton’s housing needs and inventories that was started for the Planning Board and Selectmen should be finished soon. That effort will become the basis for this task.

5. Communications and Outreach – Cia and Molly will work with Bob on outreach, supported by Kristin Gaynor and Liz Edwards.

The next level of priority for tasks was then listed and briefly discussed.

1. Economic Development - Amy Balewicz was recommended to assist with this. Kevin Weadock agreed that as a business owner this would be a good fit for him. Subsequent to the meeting, however, Weadock resigned from the committee. This task effort will be coordinated with the Economic Development Committee as well as the Agricultural Commission.

2. Municipal Services and Facilities – A meeting with DPW chief Joe Lynch is planned. Bob, Panny, and Mark will contribute from the committee; Ken is interested as well. Mike Gore, a member of the now dormant Capital Planning Committee, will be contacted for input, current capital plans, and potential interest in contributing to the task. The committee agreed that exploration of regional services with our surrounding towns would be a worthwhile part of the task.

3. Water and Sewer – The committee agreed these are two separate but related tasks. Mark is going to talk with Chris Slade and Chris Rogers of the Board of Health for their input on this task. The committee noted that but water supply protection and sewage disposal will be affected by the expected population growth.

4. Transportation – Mary Ciummo and Ken Troup are co-leaders of this task. Mary described some work that has gone on with the Public Ways Safety Committee and a private initiative to obtain a MassDOT grant for “micro-transit” using a ride-hailing service. Panny noted that the COA van is used daily. Ken will obtain regional information from MART about the kinds of services that other towns are using and about the prospects for regional transportation initiatives with surrounding towns.

5. Town Finances – Brian as chair of the Advisory Committee will lead this task. Ken is interested in working on this as well and they will work closely with the town treasurer and accountant.

6. Land Use – This was listed as a second-tier task, but there was no specific discussion at the meeting about this except the 2018 Open Space and Recreation Plan. Both Cia and Ken worked on that, so will be involved in this task.

The committee discussed whether or not it would need a budget, noting that if so an article would be needed for the Annual Town Meeting. Brian noted that his committee might not approve such an article. The committee agreed that it could pursue grant funding and Erica is going to look into the timing for that and what surrounding towns have spent on Master Plans and where they obtained funding. No decision was made, but committee members agreed to think about what budget costs they might need to be decided upon at the January meeting. If an

article is proposed, the committee hopes the selectmen will sponsor it. Whether or not there is an article, the committee hopes to make a presentation on the Master Plan at the May 2020 annual town meeting.

The next meeting will be on January 30, 2020 at 7:00 pm in the selectmen's room (if available).

A motion to adjourn the meeting was, made, seconded and voted unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

