

# MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday November 16, 2023 at 7:00 pm

On line via Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

**Members Present:** Bob Roemer, Panny Gerken, Stacia Downey, Mary Ciummo, Ed Sterling, Cia Boynton

**Others Present:** Pam Harding, Olivia Knightly, Heather Gould

Before diving into the agenda, Bob noted that Brian could not attend because of a concurrent Select Board meeting, so it would be wise to avoid that conflict in the future. MPSC will try for the third Thursday most months, with the next meeting to be December 21, 2023.

**Minutes.** The minutes for the October 17, 2023 meeting were approved unanimously.

**Konveio Website Ending.** Bob noted that additional funds are needed to extend the Konveio subscription and we do not have the money budgeted. Bob does not want to ask the Select Board for additional funds so the information will be transferred to the town website where it will be available and where people can still make comments. Pam Harding will be handling the technical changes on the town website. Olivia has saved all of the documents and will share those with Pam so that she can populate the town website. BSC had offered to reduce its hours to help cover the \$3500/yr cost, but Bob said their time involved with public engagement was more important.

**October 23 Forum Planning.** Prior to the meeting, Olivia had distributed to the MPSC a document summarizing the group discussions that occurred and takeaways from the October 23 Public Forum. Bob noted that the summary illustrates that people are not well informed about what has gone on in the past in town government and town planning and growth. He said the ideas are good, but people didn't understand all the conflicting and overlapping constraints and issues. MPSC members agreed with Bob that MPSC – and the town – need to do a better job of publicizing and communicating with the citizens. Members agreed that information about legal and other constraints needs to be in the Master Plan and communicated to the public. Bob emphasized that our recommendations need to be directed at the process needed to address issues and not tackle individual issues ourselves. He cited the proposed community center as an example. The Master Plan should not define it but should define the process that should be followed with appropriate committees and working groups. Members agreed the publicity needs to address pros and cons related to the various Master Plan goals. Stacia suggested one pagers be prepared on each issue. Several others noted that some such one pagers or primers have already been written.

Cia commented that one thing that was needed was a big discussion of economic development, taxes, and related matters. She noted that we need to determine the reasons that people really want more businesses. She said a lot of information needs to be developed and shared with the public, and she recommended having a forum to discuss obstacles. Bob alluded to an idea of a

walkable small business area across from the high school. It would require public-private participation and he noted that a study would be needed. Bob noted that the MPSC had put together the framework for a land use study and that could be applied to that area by the high school. Ed mentioned the need for a community center. Bob again cautioned that the MPSC cannot specifically recommend in the Master Plan for or against each idea, although pros and cons and objective discussion of ideas is certainly appropriate. The processes and studies related to such ideas can be included in the implementation matrix.

Olivia suggested that everyone comment on the different parts of the Forum summary document and that we put a response section under each topic which the MPSC can use to comment on or explain items in the summary. Pam will put the document on the town's Google Drive (as opposed to Bob's Google Drive where up to this point the master plan materials have been). Olivia will then take the lead on writing this up with inputs from everyone else and then we would release the information to the public with as much visibility as possible. She requested that comments in the Google Drive document be provided by all MPSC members by Monday November 27. Pam will provide the updated link to access the document. Then with BSC's help we flesh out the implementation matrix with specific next steps in objectively addressing issues. Bob said a third step would be getting municipal and private organizations in town to get involved in studying and implementation recommendations. Other members agreed.

Kristin DeJohn will be asked for her input and assistance in public exposure especially on social media in the town. Cia and Pam will contact Kristen and try to set up a meeting to talk about better ways to publicize this master plan material. BSC will be having one on one meetings with key town officials in the effort to complete the implementation matrix.

With no further business, Bob noted that this evening was the fourth anniversary of the first meeting of the MPSC, and the meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.

The November 16, 2023 meeting minutes were approved at the meeting of December 21, 2023.