

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING
January 6, 2020, 7 PM
Town Hall, Room C

MINUTES

Members present: Gordon Harris, Chris Sandulli, Linda Alexson, Shelia Taylor, Carolyn Britt, David Feldman, Andy Brengle, Willie Whitmore, Kathleen Spinale, Clark Zeigler, Jim Warner, Ingrid Miles, Christopher Morse, Kerrie Bates

Planning Staff & Consultants present: Kristen Grubbs, Ethan Parsons

The Committee reviewed and adopted the meeting minutes from December 9, 2019.

The Committee proceeded to discuss Phase 1 deliverables, including comments and analysis of the vision statement and needs assessment. Several committee members had reviewed sections of the draft documents and shared comments and questions by email directly with Ethan and Kristen. The town's consultant, JM Goldson LLC, also provided responses to the individual committee members who had raised questions in writing, which were shared with all committee members and discussed as being very helpful. Additional areas of data gathering and research were identified.

Various committee members raised specific questions and issues to focus on as the project moves forward in Phase 2. Comments included:

- The 2003 plan does a good job addressing housing concerns, including identifying strategies. What is needed is to evaluate these prior objectives relative to what has been achieved to date.
- Transportation information and strategies, specifically including bike and pedestrian concerns, were less well addressed in the 2003 plan and should be developed further.
- The way Ipswich residents see themselves was captured well in the Phase 1 public meetings and engagement process, however, this may be different from how the public *beyond Ipswich* sees Ipswich.
- A new MBTA proposal is to increase train service to the North Shore to run every half hour, all day, to/fro Ipswich. This would be a game changer in terms of impact on transportation for Ipswich residents and the region. Town should stay in touch on where this proposal at the state level goes.
- The 2007/8 amendment with recommendations regarding climate change are still good, and should be reviewed and enhanced. Today, there is an important discussion going on about the concept of "Reduction and Retreat", which is a newer emphasis in climate adaptation and mitigation planning. We know more in 2020 about sea level rise and future projections of coastal inundation and need to incorporate this information to the 2020 CDP.
- Questions were raised and there was a brief discussion of the history of the town's current CDP. The State originally provided funding to communities to develop Community Development Plans, which were required to cover the three components of Housing, Economic Development,

and Transportation. The Town's CDP Updates since then have continued to focus on these primary areas, while also encompassing all other areas of community development including historic preservation, education, and more. The Climate Resiliency and infrastructure discussion was added in 2007/8. In 2018 the Town decided not to develop a completely new master plan due to consensus that the current plan was excellent and should instead be updated. Our new 2020 plan update should and will include all components of community master planning as identified and prioritized in Phase 2.

- It will be important to consider and incorporate the community's goals regarding education and schools into the new plan. This may include both capital/infrastructure goals (such as new buildings) and also more non-traditional educational goals regarding programming, curriculum, and education of all ages.
- A priority of the new plan will be attracting diverse housing to town. Additional research may be needed on that topic.
- It will be important to pull all of the town's other recent planning documents into the new implementation plan. This should include assessing whether there are any conflicts between plans.
- It was discussed whether all of the recommendations in all of the plans could be consolidated into one spreadsheet and incorporated into a digital tool. The ultimate goal is to have a tool that displays all of the new strategies and goals in an interactive, web-based format. The committee wants to be sure to stress this outcome in Phase 2.
- Phase 2 should include a thorough discussion of growth. Our current growth has been at the two extremes: multi-million dollar mansions and dense 40b developments. Looking ahead we need to proactively focus: What do we want? Do we want to grow? How much and how do we want to grow? Where do we want to grow? How do we "control" growth while retaining and emphasizing equity and diversity?
- The process should think about services for the aging population that Ipswich has. Elderly services will be more and more important.
- We need to look closely at in-town residential growth and evaluate whether our land use and density regulations are appropriate for the future.
- Ipswich should review and incorporate state-level planning and data, including the recently published Massachusetts Housing Partnership report card. What are the other regional forces at work that impact the growth and development of Ipswich?

Committee members discussed the challenges of wordsmithing the Vision Statement and discussing specific information in such a large group, and concluded that it would be great to have the large committee break down to smaller working groups for Phase 2 discussions, so as to better review and discuss particular focus areas of the Plan. Committee members identified interests and areas of expertise for the purpose of breaking into smaller working groups at future meetings:

Vision Statement: Sandulli, Feldman, Spinale, Nylen

Housing: Morse, Spinale, Miles, Taylor, Ziegler

Economic Development: Weatherall, Eliot, Frost, Nylen

Climate & Public Infrastructure: Britt, Brengle, Nylen

Transportation: Harris, Taylor

Historic: Harris, Miles

Culture: Bates

Staff updated the committee that the deadline for proposals from consultants for the Phase 2 CDP project is Jan 13th. The selection subcommittee will review proposals and interview applicants in late January and make a recommendation to the full CDP committee at its next meeting.

Next Meeting: February 5th, at 7pm, in Town Hall Basement Meeting Room.

Minutes approved and adopted: June 23, 2020