



TOWN OF ADAMS

BOARD OF SELECTMEN WORKSHOP MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, July 27, 2016 – 6:00 PM
ADAMS TOWN HALL, 1st FLOOR, ADAMS, MA 01220

On the above date the **Board of Selectmen** and held a workshop at the Adams Town Hall at 6:00 p.m. **Chairman Jeffrey Snoonian** presided the meeting. Present were **Vice Chairman Arthur Harrington**, **Members Joseph Nowak, and John Duval**. *Member Richard Blanchard was absent*. Also in attendance was **Acting Town Administrator, Donna Cesan**.

The Select Board Workshop was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS DISCUSSION

Strategic Plan

Acting Town Administrator Cesan gave the Board an updated marked up draft. She pointed out some suggested changes, such as expanding the corporate park by developing land, and including the pavement management system. She noted that the Town has not kept it current and that consideration should be given to keeping what streets and sidewalks are currently in place maintained with funds and capital plans. She suggested contracting with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) to get it back up and running. She reviewed the draft document with the Board by section.

Downtown

There were no changes made to the Downtown section.

Housing

The new strategy with a focus on development of new housing was included. Actions were added regarding supporting housing productions across a broad range of incomes and types. Some of the current projects were noted as slow but active. There is a long standing goal of targeting vacant units along Park Street and trying to bring units back on line.

Community Character and Identity

Instead of being separate, it was recommended to integrate the Community Character and Identity with arts, culture and history, creating a replacement section called **Arts, Culture and Community Character**.

Open Space, Natural Environment

The *Open Space and Recreation Plan* is active until December 2018. It takes more than a year to update the plan and go through the process, so it will need to be started next year.

Responsive and Effective Local Government

Maintaining and improving the Town's financial health was set as a strategy. Several Action Items were included, such as OPEB liabilities and looking at sources of public revenues and non-property tax resources; and updating Town fees and keeping them current.

Ensuring the effective and efficient delivery of services was another strategy outlined. Action items included analyzing current administrative and operational structures to identify potential alternatives to



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save the Town money. An example was given as the sewer user fee being carefully reviewed; privatizing certain municipal services; internal and external communication improvements; developing online permitting and licensing; having a 24-hour virtual town hall and web presence; preparing a *Citizens Guide to the Budget*; and specifically talk about education. It was pointed out that the *Berkshire County Education Task Force* is coming out this year with a series of recommendations to be evaluated by the Board. A goal is to develop a meaningful and mutually helpful relationship with the Superintendent and work with the budget process in a way that is clearly understandable and accountable.

Additional discussion included protecting the health and safety of town residents and visitors, especially the vulnerable populations by supporting active participation of the Police Department in the *Berkshire County Drug Task Force* and other community resources; protecting citizens from infectious diseases due to climate change; ensuring the adequacy of the stormwater management system and roads and bridges. This is part of the MS4 Stormwater program, which is required and very expensive. Preparing and adopting a natural hazard mitigation plan with MEMA was reviewed more at length. The regional plan is not accepted and it can make funding more complicated if there was a natural disaster. FEMA and MEMA have guidebooks with a detailed step by step process on how to develop a plan at a local level. If there are no staff resources available, the Town could hire BRPC staff to assist with the development of this plan, but the Town must work on this and have it current.

Acting Town Administrator Cesan suggested Board Members submit their comments from this meeting for a final draft to be completed and sent to other department heads for review and input. Department Heads may be more aware of what is on the horizon for their departments. After input from Department Heads, she recommended the Board have a public meeting before implementation and assigning action items to parties. The Board Members will review all comments submitted before implementation.

Consensus was reached by the Board Members to submit comments to Director Cesan within two weeks prior to being sent to Department Heads.

Francie Anne Riley approached the Board and asked to have communication between neighboring communities and regionalization regarding infectious diseases and other aspects of the plan, requesting clear wording that is not frightening.

A Public Forum will be scheduled by the end of September to conclude the process.

Complete Streets

Acting Town Administrator Cesan advised that Mass DOT has talked about Complete Streets for three years and are encouraging municipalities in Massachusetts to adopt the Complete Streets Program. Park Street was the first initiation. The steps of the MASS DOT program are that the Town has to adopt a Complete Streets Program, and once adopted it is sent to Mass DOT to be scored and approved. There is up to \$50,000 to develop inventory and work toward a priority of complete streets in Town. The Complete Streets program must be formally adopted by the Board, and she recommended it be put on the Board's agenda at an upcoming meeting.



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Complete Streets are Age Friendly, and the Town will be adopting an Age Friendly Resolution next week and would like it included in the draft, which outlines what the State would like the Town to do and how to integrate it into all plans, policies, land use regulations; subdivision regulations, etc. The Town does not have a lot of subdivision activity so the policies very dated. There is a potential to update zoning bylaws. A review should be made to determine if there are portions that work against Complete Streets program, and also to look at stormwater management. Many communities are going to green infrastructure by using bioswales and rain gardens to capture rain and stormwater and discharge it into the ground, which is better for water quality. Pittsfield has done submerged rain gardens in sidewalks to capture runoff to water the plants. Adopting the policy starts the process. The plan is going to take time to develop and Acting Town Administrator Cesan will work with the Board on it. There will need to be one or two public meetings on it.

Strategic Plan

Adding *Complete Streets* into the *Strategic Plan* was recommended, as well as connecting it to the *Green Communities Program*. The Roundabout is compliant with Complete Streets, and designing engineers are automatically using the information in their designs. Complete Streets will make the Town more safety conscious for pedestrians and bicycles and can identify where traffic can be slowed down.

Core Commitment

Core Commitment of the Complete Streets program includes evaluation of existing management systems; creating best practices; creating a *Complete Streets Committee* and identification of a number of resources like MassDOT project development and design.

Next Steps

Implementation and next steps include formation of the committee, educating other departments and starting to do the work of looking at existing systems to evaluate how to make them better. The Town will need to keep track of the number of bike lanes, ADA compliant sidewalks, and other items.

Further discussion included the steps of Complete Streets requirements, current projects in play, Chapter 90 funds, correlations with the TIP program, and the contracting process. The funding agency is interested in receiving more Complete Streets projects to showcase. It was noted that the immediate cost for complying with Complete Streets parameters is marginal, but the long term cost was approximately the same. It may cost more initially depending on the condition of the existing infrastructure. Complete Streets is mostly for main streets, and not for residential areas. The advantage for the State is to make roadways in the commonwealth safer and to ensure that sidewalks and crosswalks are ADA compliant. Other more urbanized areas and roadways are focused on cars and this gives more of a balance to pedestrians and bicycles sharing the road to have the corridors serve the different modalities safely. Underground powerlines were discussed at length. Mass DOT adopted a policy that they would no longer pay for underground utilities. National Grid advised they do not want to provide underground utilities because they would not know where a break in service would be underground. It could be explored to have funds go toward underground utilities.

Acting Town Administrator Cesan was thanked for all her hard work.



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Next Meeting Agenda

Next week's agenda will include an Age Friendly Resolution, Public Hearings for Rascal's and placement of a Verizon Pole, and the Complete Streets.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Member Duval to adjourn


Second by Member Harrington

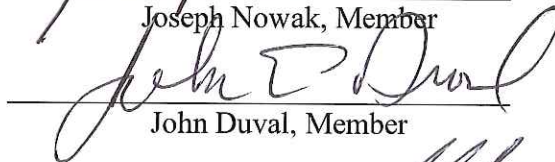
Unanimous vote


Motion passed

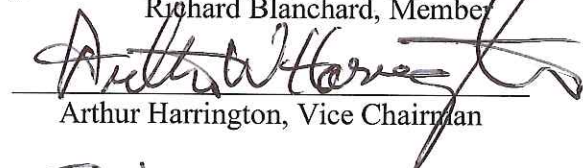
Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

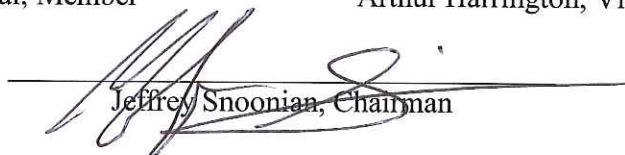
Respectfully submitted,
Deborah J. Dunlap, Recording Secretary


Joseph Nowak, Member


John Duval, Member


Richard Blanchard, Member


Arthur Harrington, Vice Chairman


Jeffrey Snoonian, Chairman