

**Master Plan Committee  
TOWN OF DUNSTABLE  
TOWN HALL, 511 MAIN STREET  
DUNSTABLE, MA 01827-1313**

**Meeting Minutes - July 19, 2016**

**1. Call to Order**

The Dunstable Master Plan Committee meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mr. Vlcek. The following were in attendance:

**Master Plan Committee Members:**

Walter Alterisio, Board of Selectmen  
Joseph Vlcek, Planning Board  
Leah Basbanes, Conservation Commission  
Carol Bacon, Affordable Housing Committee  
Susan Psaledakis, Community Preservation Committee  
Anne Davis, Historical Commission  
Mike Martin, Roads Commission  
Karl Huber, Water Commission  
Paul Dalida, Safe Pathways Committee  
Stephanie Cronin, resident at-large  
Kathy Sniezek, resident at-large

**Others:**

Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator  
Jay Donovan, NMCOG  
Beverly Woods, NMCOG

Mr. Vlcek and Mr. Alterisio reported that Kathy Sniezek submitted a written request asking to be appointed as a resident at-large member. A discussion followed regarding the size and composition of the Committee, and the Committee's desire to be as inclusive as possible. Based on a motion made by Mr. Alterisio and seconded by Ms. Psaledakis, the Committee voted unanimously to add Ms. Sniezek as a resident at-large member.

**2. Review of SWOT session and presentation of results**

Jay Donovan provided an overview of the June 23<sup>rd</sup> Visioning Session. He noted that the results of the SWOT exercise provide grassroots input reflecting the needs and desires of Dunstable residents. Over sixty participants attended the session, which is an outstanding turnout for a small community. Participants identified rural character, strong schools, working farms, small town feel and walking trails as being the town's greatest strengths. Lack of a diversified tax base, traffic on Route 113,

lack of a community gathering place, a small tax base, and the need to upgrade water infrastructure were identified as the top weaknesses. The top opportunities included strengthening the schools, attracting businesses, renewable energy, housing opportunities for residents over age 55, and a plan for traffic control. The top threats included insufficient revenue to support town needs, crime and drug problems, failure to preserve community character, loss of farms and failing schools.

Committee members noted that there were some conflicting opinions and priorities. Beverly Woods responded that this is to be expected, as participants have differing experiences and perspectives that they bring to the process. She added that this input will ultimately ensure that the Master Plan document reflects the broad opinions and diverse perspectives that are heard over the course of the master planning process.

### **3. Draft Vision Statement and Goals/Strategies**

Beverly Woods reviewed the draft vision statement, noting that the language contained in the statement is intended to reflect the input provided through the Visioning Session. Mr. Huber stated that the vision statement should contain specific mention of water infrastructure, as the town's public water system now serves 101 users. Discussion then ensued regarding the condition of the current system and the capital improvements that are needed. Audience member Bob Kennedy stated that water users need to be greater advocates in order to move the project forward. Ms. Psaledakis noted that all town residents are ultimately users of the system, given that they frequent town facilities, such as town hall and the library, which are served by the water system. Mr. Alterisio added that the water system is a public utility which the town is obligated to maintain under an agreement with the Commonwealth. Beverly Woods suggested that the following sentence be added to the vision statement: "The Town has improved and developed its municipal water infrastructure". The Committee agreed that the statement should be added.

The draft goals were then reviewed and discussed at length. Mr. Alterisio noted that many of the goals reflect the input and concerns that were heard at the Visioning Session. Mr. Huber stated that there should be a goal addressing infrastructure. Beverly Woods responded that the goals will be modified to include additional infrastructure language, and the revisions will be presented at the next meeting.

Lengthy discussion followed on the Town's policy relative to alcohol sales and its role in economic development. Committee members then discussed the regional school system and whether a goal should be added to address this topic, although the town does not directly control the regional district. The Committee ultimately decided to add the following goal:

*Advocate for a stronger regional school system and improve communication between the Town and regional school district.*

Beverly Woods stated that the goals will be revised to reflect the Committee's comments and the changes will be reviewed at the next meeting.

#### **4. Draft survey document for additional input**

Beverly Woods reviewed the draft Master Plan survey with the Committee. Based on Committee feedback, edits were made to Questions 2, 4 and 7. The edited version of the survey will be made available at the next Committee meeting.

The Committee then discussed the most effective means for distributing the survey in order to ensure a solid response rate. The following options were explored:

- Neighbor to Neighbor
- Dunstable Facebook Page
- Mailing a postcard informing residents that the survey is available
- Posting on the town website
- Promoting the survey at town events
- Distribution at the monthly Senior Luncheon
- Making surveys available at the Library and convenience store

There was agreement that a postcard will be mailed to each household by NMCOG.

#### **5. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.