

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

**Meeting Minutes - February 21, 2017**

**1. Call to Order**

The Dunstable Master Plan Committee meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. with Tracey Hutton serving as chair. The following were in attendance:

**Master Plan Committee Members:**

Carol Bacon, Affordable Housing Committee  
Anne Davis, Historical Commission  
Karl Huber, Water Department  
Mike Martin, Road Commission  
Paul Dalida, Safe Pathways Committee  
Leah Basbanes, Conservation Commission  
Kathy Sniezek, resident-at-large

**Others:**

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

**2. Approval of minutes of December 13, 2016**

The draft minutes of the December 13, 2016 meeting were distributed and reviewed. Paul Dalida noted that his name was inadvertently omitted from the attendance list. The minutes were unanimously approved with the correction noted by Mr. Dalida.

**3. Review of reorganized survey results**

Beverly Woods summarized the results of the survey by topical categories. She noted that the individual written responses were categorized and summarized in a way that allows for a more meaningful discussion. Under Management and Finances, taxes and the need for additional revenue, and cost containment were the most critical issues according to the responses submitted. Maintaining and improving the schools was also a high priority for residents. The need for affordable housing was flagged, with 78% of the respondents favoring the creation of additional senior housing. Creating and attracting businesses was a high priority, and many residents (70% of respondents) favored more intense economic development in strategic locations, with 88% of

respondents in favor of creating additional opportunities for small-scale neighborhood-style business establishments. Residents are generally opposed to revising the zoning bylaw to allow single-family homes on smaller lots, while 78% favor the establishment of design guidelines for new development. Over 70% of residents favor adding sidewalks and pathways. Protecting agricultural land is a high priority for 69% of survey respondents. In general, residents are satisfied with public safety services, the schools, as well as services at Town Hall and the library. Approximately 68% of residents favor improvements to the town's public water infrastructure.

A discussion ensued regarding the fiscal challenges that the Town will be facing in the future and the need for additional revenue.

#### **4. Review of draft Economic Development section**

Jay Donovan discussed the Economic Development technical paper, reviewing the demographic data for Dunstable and the region. He noted that median household income in Dunstable is significantly higher than in the State, region, and nation, with 62% of Dunstable households earning \$100,000 or more annually, and 35% earning \$150,000 or more.

The Groton-Dunstable School system is of high quality as evidenced by the high score attained by its students on the MCAS standardized test. Dunstable residents have a high level of education attainment overall. Jay noted that the Dunstable workforce is more engaged in the service-providing domain than the goods-producing domain. These changes are likely to continue over the next decade as overall employment in the manufacturing and construction industries declines, while increased employment opportunities become available in the service-providing domain. Unemployment trends in Dunstable reflect what is seen in the region, with unemployment peaking in the Great Recession (2009) and with employment levels recovering gradually over the past seven years.

Jay then discussed wage levels, Dunstable's municipal tax rate compared to surrounding communities, and infrastructure issues. A discussion ensued regarding the demographic composition of Dunstable relative to other Massachusetts communities, such as Carlisle, Harvard and Lexington.

Jay requested that the Committee review this section and provide responses to the discussion questions prior to the next meeting.

## **5. Review of draft Transportation and Circulation section**

The draft Transportation and Circulation technical paper was distributed, however, due to time constraints, there was no opportunity to discuss the paper at this meeting. Beverly Woods asked that the Committee members read and review this section and answer the discussion questions prior to the March meeting.

## **6. Adjourn**

Just prior to adjournment, the Committee agreed to schedule the third and final Visioning Session on March 21<sup>st</sup>. The session will focus on Open Space and Recreation, and Cultural and Natural Resources. The next regular Master Plan Committee meeting was scheduled for March 28<sup>th</sup>. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.