

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

**Meeting Minutes - May 16, 2017**

**1. Call to Order**

The Dunstable Master Plan Committee meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with Joe Vlcek serving as chair. The following were in attendance:

**Master Plan Committee Members Present:**

Walter Alterisio, Board of Selectmen  
Carol Bacon, Affordable Housing Committee  
Paul Dalida, Safe Pathways Committee  
Leah Basbanes, Conservation Commission  
Anne Davis, Historical Commission  
Joe Vlcek, Planning Board  
Susan Psaledakis, Community Preservation Committee  
Kathy Sniezek, At Large Designee

**Others:**

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

**Absences:**

Stephanie Cronin, At-large member  
Karl Huber, Water Commission  
Mike Martin, Road Commissioner

**2. Approval of minutes of April 25, 2017**

The draft minutes of the March 28, 2017 meeting were distributed and reviewed. Beverly Woods noted that the names of Joe Vlcek and Susan Psaledakis should have been included in the attendance list. Based on a motion made by Walter Alterisio and seconded by Leah Basbanes, the minutes were unanimously approved with the corrections noted.

**3. Responses to the Natural and Cultural Resources Discussion Questions**

The Committee discussed the responses to the Natural and Cultural Resources Discussion Questions. In response to Question 1, the Committee felt that many of the

town's historic barns and agricultural features, such as stone walls, are in jeopardy from future development or neglect. It was suggested that the Town become proactive by forming a Town Center Committee and examine mechanisms for preserving such historic attributes.

In discussing Question 2, the Committee agreed that the Town's regulations are fairly effective in protecting natural and cultural resources, although they could be strengthened by addressing the remains of historic foundations and buildings. It was the consensus of the Committee that the Town should consider creating a local historic district within the Town Center. It was noted that the application for a National Register District is pending. "Point of Pride" plaques were suggested as a means of recognizing important historic resources.

In response to Question 3, it was the opinion of the Committee that the Town could do more to promote development practices that preserve and protect natural resources, through guidelines for development projects, and regulation changes that better address erosion control, steep slopes, and restrictions on the amount of impervious surface.

In discussing Question 4, the Committee concluded that there is a need to better document some historic areas, such as Pond Street, Hollis Street, Fletcher Street, and River Street. The Committee also felt that the formation of a limited number of historic districts, in addition to the Town Center and East Main Street, should be explored. This discussion carried over into Question 5, in that the Committee generally felt that additional revenue would be needed to better address historic preservation needs, particularly given the other fiscal challenges that the Town is facing.

Under Question 6, the Committee concluded that the preservation of certain key privately-owned historic structures should be an allowable use of CPA funds, assuming certain qualifying criteria are met. The Town would need to establish specific criteria and guidance for such a program.

In discussing Question 7, the Committee found that the local wetland bylaw should be modified to limit the amount of impervious surface allowed on a lot and to address buffer zone requirements and isolated wetlands.

Under Question 8, the Committee concluded that there is a need to gather, inventory, store, display and protect historical documents, many of which are held by various private entities in town. It was noted that, in the past, some town hall documents and

vital records were stored in private residences. In addition, the holdings of the Tyngsborough-Dunstable Historical Society are of interest given their importance to the town. The possibility of establishing a town museum should be investigated, and some Committee members suggested that either the old police station or McLoon House should be considered for this purpose.

In discussing Question 9, the Committee concluded that a forest management plan should be developed for town-owned properties. A management plan was previously prepared for the Pierce Forest.

Under Question 10, the Committee determined that the Town should either adopt a Shade Tree Bylaw or reference the State's Shade Tree statute within the Scenic Road Bylaw. In addition, the Committee found that the existing Scenic Road Bylaw should be expanded, to provide additional information on the permitting process, criteria and the process for designating a roadway.

In discussing Question 11, the Committee concluded that the Town should develop a plan for addressing invasive species, as outlined in the 2010 Open Space and Recreation Plan. Under Question 12, the Committee determined that a plan should be prepared to prioritize lands classified under Chapters 61, 61A and 61B for possible future acquisition. In addition, the Town should address the parcels that do not comply with the requirements set forth in Chapters 61, 61A and 61B.

Under Question 13, the Committee found that access to Salmon Brook and Unkety Brook is adequate, although access to Massapoag Pond within Dunstable is a problem, given that the land is under the control of private property owners.

In response to Question 14, the Committee concluded that the Town should do more to promote the agricultural economy by encouraging: the preservation of agricultural lands through APRs and Conservation Restrictions; farm-to-table restaurants; a "buy local" campaign; community supported agriculture (CSA); community gardens; and agri-tourism.

Under Question 15, the Committee determined that the Town should promote and market its historical and cultural resources. Such a program would require financial resources, but would generate income for businesses and foster a greater sense of appreciation and stewardship among town residents.

#### **4. Draft Open Space and Recreation Technical Paper**

Beverly Woods provided an overview of the Open Space and Recreation technical paper. She noted that the paper includes a summary of previous open space and recreation planning initiatives, an inventory of open space lands and information on protection status. She added that information on agricultural preservation restrictions and lands classified under Chapter 61, 61a and 61B is included. Leah Basbanes asked if it would be possible to develop a separate map showing the Chapter 61, 61A and 61B parcels only. Beverly Woods agreed to provide such a map at the next meeting. She noted that information on recreation facilities and programs is also provided in this chapter, and concluded by requesting that the Committee respond to the discussion questions by June 8<sup>th</sup>. Responses should be sent to Tracey.

#### **5. Adjourn**

The next regular Master Plan Committee meeting was scheduled for June 20<sup>th</sup>. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.