

**MEETING
GEORGETOWN PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
January 24, 2007
7:00 P.M.**

Present: Mr. Rob Hoover, Chairman; Mr. John Moultrie; Mr. Tim Howard; Mr. Hugh Carter; Mr. Harry LaCortiglia; Ms. Sarah Buck, Town Planner; Ms. Michele Kottcamp, Asst.

Absent: Mr. Larry Graham, Technical Review Agent

1. Master Plan – public meeting with Daylor Consulting Group Inc.:

Mr. Hoover- Does introduction and welcomes everyone. Mr. Hoover begins Master Plan discussion.

Erika Johnson of Daylor Consulting Group presents with Mr. Mitchell Fischman (Principal in charge.) Ms. Johnson reviews the scope and schedule. We want to involve the public but it would be helpful to keep on track with the agenda and ask for comment at the end of the presentation. This is the kick off meeting. We will talk about deliverables and issues from our research. We will also do any investigation based on the Board and public's comments. Once the base lane is established, we will revise the inventory analysis and focus on Vision at the end of February. Drafting recommendations is a natural progression- the goal is stated and the strategies put into place. At the second meeting on March 14th, we will review the recommendations we have received. We will then ask the public for feedback. On May 2nd we will present the final report to the Planning Board and the Public. The final plan will be completed by mid-May. This is aggressive but not unattainable.

Mr. Fischman - We want to make sure we get the vision right.

Mr. LaCortiglia- I would like to get feedback from the public regarding the new areas mentioned in Erica's presentation.

Ms. Johnson- Regarding the request for information - We will go on a fact finding mission and work with Sarah on this aspect for new information. We assure you we will have an up to date plan. We will also use the web for communication.

Mr. LaCortiglia- Do you take public comment from the web?

Ms. Johnson- On this plan, the website will be a great tool as it will have discussion forums for comment. We will post documents and comments on the web for the public to view and comment on at any time. The public can give feedback at any time. We find it beneficial to get the information out there. Land use, public facilities and implementation are the areas of focus for this master plan.

Mr. Fischman- One thing to mention is that there has been some discussion about having a committee to oversee this project. I understand this group will be the Board. One of the ways to keep open communication, in addition to Erika's suggestions, would be in the way we craft the draft recommendations. The intent is to bring out additional comments from the Public. We are open to suggestions to get feedback.

Mr. Hoover- There are three total meetings for public comment in addition to the webpage for your comments. The only other question to be addressed is the Big Box store re-zoning issue. It's very important that we get that information well in advance of the Town Meeting on May 7th. We need to share information with the Town prior to Town Meeting.

Ms. Johnson- Regarding the status of that project- I received the open space plan today from Sarah. Anything else we might need in order to move forward?

Mr. Moultrie- Do you remember a land use document?

Mr. LaCortiglia- You are referring to the land use document from the Conservation Commission regarding Conservation lands. Look at the build-out plans and affordable housing plan. Sarah can give originals on that.

Mr. Moultrie- I have comprehensive traffic studies from 2002-2005 which are fairly accurate. They were done for public projects. I will gather it together.

Mr. Alan McIntosh - There is a Parker River Watershed Action Plan and it is available in a digital format. I have a copy of this information if Daylor would find it useful.

Mr. LaCortiglia- Go to georgetowncpc.com

Mr. Moultrie- There is also a recent preliminary downtown study from 2005 done on sewerage which I have and I will give a copy to the Board and Daylor Consulting. (Study is on file with Master Plan at Planning Board Office)

Ms. Johnson- Has there been any movement on the Rail Trail?

Ms. Buck- A consultant, Faye Spofford and Thorndike (FST), was hired to do a feasibility study.

Mr. Joe Knapp- There are 2 areas of historic districts in the Elm Street area and the downtown section of town.

Mr. Hoover- There is also a proposal out there for a new school on our PennBrook site which is just an idea right now. It's something to be aware of.

Ms. Buck- I have talked with the Town Administrator. He said to come by the office and he'd fill Daylor in on the capital needs and school information that Planning does not have.

Mr. Moultrie- The library is under way with completion in May '07. Construction is on target and on schedule.

Mr. Hoover- Regarding Lighting in the Town– There are both metal halide and sodium vapor fixtures. Bringing consistency to the lighting is an initiative for the Town.

Georgetown resident- In '04 there was a need for a community center.

Ms. Buck- There has not been any movement on this. Sarah passes out Vision Statement document of 2004 Community Development Plan for Town of Georgetown.

Ms. Johnson- Please review the assets and liabilities document that I have passed out to the Board. This will also be on the website. This follows at the end of the Community Development Plan 2004 on the Georgetown website.

Mr. Hoover- Georgetown schools are in serious trouble. I want to put a big star on that in your recommendation.

Mr. LaCortiglia- Other groups have also said there are no active recreation land areas in the town. I would hope you consult with the Park and Recreation Committee as well as the School Committee. Park and Rec. can provide some information to you but please look into this further and in more depth. There is also a business alliance group as well as the Historic Commission working on the character of the town like entryways into the town, etc.

Ms. Johnson- We are considering making the vision statement shorter, more of a broad vision statement. We would then include other portions of the statement into the goal statements and strategies.

Mr. Alan McIntosh (MVPC) - One note of caution. There is a temptation to be dismissive of other people's work from previous years. I would remind this group that a lot of people came to the table and they represent a collective group of townspeople.

Mr. Hoover- The vision is the measuring stick that we follow. Perhaps it could be a combination of both suggestions.

Mr. Alan McIntosh– The decision then was to go with a meatier Vision that the Town could grasp and capture goals, objectives and action items all in this one document.

Mr. Fischman- We will respect this document and look at updating this document with issues that may be more important now or new since 2004. We would like Sarah copied on all email correspondence.

Ms. Johnson- We can't have sensitive matters shared on email for legal reasons. We don't want to have any violations.

Mr. Moultrie- As long as it says, "No discussion" on email, then that is sufficient.

Mr. Hoover- Any questions before we get to “Next Steps?”

Ed DesJardins (Historical Commission)- I worked on the Master Planning Board in Rowley which Daylor did. We were very pleased. I want to stress a number of things accomplished over the past several years. We met with the Boston Historical Commission to find out what is coming down the road with the older homes in Georgetown. We are rich in our history with the number of historical homes in our district. We are very active with homes on Elm Street. Harry Murch Park plays a very important role as an entrance to the Town, and we are trying to get CPC money for funding for the Master Plan of Harry Murch.

Resident- We are going for the National Register (NRC). We felt Georgetown deserves this.

Ms. Ida Wye (Member of Historical Commission)- Also adds the concept of neighborhood conservation districts to the Master Plan discussion.

Mr. LaCortiglia- Does that incorporate a village overlay?

Ms. Ida Wye- The Village Center zoning has come up.

Ms. Buck- If you can loosen the downtown zoning, you add value to the properties in the commercial district. Then they have greater ability to invest in their properties.

Ms. Ida Wye- Reads from Preservation through Bylaws and Ordinances as an excellent source of information for the Master Plan. There is an Historic Commission in Georgetown in place.

Mr. Jim Crosby- When it comes to economic development, do you look at the environmental impact to the town?

Ms. Johnson- We have been asked to look at Big Box Retail. We will do an assessment if Big Box Retail is appropriate and factor into the analysis the impact of this financially to the town and other businesses. If there is a chance that Big Box development would not impact downtown, then we would look at ways to make it compatible.

Mr. Tardif (Chairman of The Finance Committee)- Is Daylor going to give projected revenue from the types of businesses that will be successful and provide revenue to the town for tax revenue to the community? What will generate the biggest bang for the buck to the town on these open spaces in the town? i.e. Lowe’s vs. commercial office space. What are the potential revenues to the town?

Mr. LaCortiglia- It would be helpful to also look at the Town as a whole and how it impacts the community.

Ms. Johnson- We must look at the value judgments of the Town to decide what is in the best interest of the town.

Mr. Tardif- We have rejected overrides in the past. If we want to maintain rural characteristics, then taxes will have to increase without commercial development. You can't have it both ways. Boxford does it by paying higher taxes.

Tim Ruh- I want to understand if the study will look at active recreation sites and affordable housing sites. Is that part of this?

Ms. Johnson- We usually work this out with the Town. We can pick out specific sites to look at. If the town is at a point where they want to look at these components and the Board wants us to look into them, then we will do so.

Mr. Hoover- I assume there will be a land-use plan covering Georgetown in it's entirety with all areas designated as something.

Mr. Howard- How do you determine the economic benefit of a Big Box Retailer versus for example a hotel?

Ms. Johnson- That will come out of the extensive research and the Town's finances. We will also gain that information in talking with the Public and the Board. That's when we look at market vs. values of the economic base in this town to determine the best course of action.

Mr. LaCortiglia- Will it be specific as to the type of industry?

Ms. Johnson- We can throw out some options that might work.

Mr. Hoover- National Avenue is really the only large area for commercial development and is Georgetown's future. Sewers are also important to the progress of downtown.

Mr. Fischman- Retail use could also be a mixed-use development.

Mr. Tim Ruh- The parcel we are talking about borders Rowley. We need to look at what's happening there as well. Last question – As areas are designated for open space, do you make recommendations for CPC?

Mr. Fischman- No, that becomes a political decision.

Louise Richardson, resident- It would be beneficial if you look at the traffic impact to the town. I already live on a busy street- Rte 97. How do we keep from getting more traffic?

Ms. Johnson- There is a transportation section in the Master Plan and also detailed studies in the 2004 Development Plan. Specific stretches of road will not be addressed. The purpose of the plan is not to go into that level of detail.

Mr. Hoover- The public will have an opportunity to provide comment/input on a project by project basis at the time of a vote.

Mr. Moultrie- Rte. 97 is the busiest artery in the town and will be affected. I don't foresee any housing projects coming to Rte. 97. I would hope that safety is also addressed. To improve the sidewalks and connect to Groveland is being worked on. We want to improve the sidewalks so that that they are all inter-connected throughout the Town.

Mr. Tardif- Regarding the open land-use issue- Daylor mentioned that it is generally a multi-use land use for the piece of open space available land. I was shocked that Lowes puts up a new store every 3 days. I would like to see something more definitive than Multi-use. I want to see something specific as to the type of business that is recommend for that open space.

Mr. Moultrie- Right now tax rates can be changed in the town, correct.

Mr. Tardif- Yes.

Mr. Hoover- I don't think this plan is going that far and will be that specific as you suggest.

Mr. Tardif- Because we don't have much land left, it's important to get the biggest bang for the buck.

Mr. LaCortiglia- Can Daylor tell us the highest revenue generating use for that parcel?

Mr. Hoover- Each land use has a different feasibility use. The Master Plan can tell us the best use for this property financially.

Resident- We have to look at how this affects the other businesses of the town.

Ms. Buck- We don't have any more public meetings.

Mr. Moultrie- We are focusing on one parcel. There are a couple other areas that can be easily re-zoned for commercial/mixed use. National Avenue is not the only land available for commercial use.

Ms. Buck- The land use plan will address this. We need more information and that is why we are doing the Master Plan and have the website available for feedback. Perhaps we can weigh in the website for public opinion for different alternatives. How do you keep the downtown vibrant while increasing tax revenue?

Mr. Tardif- Jack is right. We need to look at the other open land zoned for commercial use and look at those areas very specifically.

Mr. Fischman- Brookline identified 10 sites and formed a committee to look at those 10 sites. We can provide general recommendations to help guide the town. We did the city plan of Haverhill. He gives some similar recommendations and suggests that the Town do further studies. You will need to form a committee and find funding to look at our recommended sites for future development.

Mr. Hoover- Asks Daylor to provide a cost for looking into the best use of National Ave. specifically.

Ms. Buck- I will provide minutes to Daylor on the discussion of the National Ave at Town Meeting.

Mr. Hoover- Maybe we consider doing a tax revenue study on the best use of open space land.

Mr. Moultrie- It has been established that with the implementation of sewers, the entire town would benefit and prosper. There was a general study done and Jack agrees to provide to Daylor for their review.

2. Board Business

Ms. Buck- Can the Board extend the decision date for Pine Meadows to June 30th, 2007.

Mr. Moultrie- Motion to extend decision date of Pine Meadows to June 30th, 2007.

Mr. Howard- Second

All in favor? 5-0/ unam

3. Potential zoning amendments for Town Meeting:

Ms. Buck- You all have a list of the potential amendments that have been suggested from all board members. Please also add a new item - #13a - "Demolition by Neglect." In addition, Tim Howard adds contiguous lot area as #16 on the list in addition to the lot width issue. I am hoping the Board will pick 3-5 potential amendments for discussion.

Mr. Moultrie- I think if it's a complicated issue, limit to 1-2 difficult issues.

Mr. Hoover- Can we identify major and minor points?

Mr. Howard- Senior housing density seems to be an issue (for Parish Road). That seems to be a sore spot.

Ms. Buck- The lawyers came back and said that two times the underlying zoning did not mean two times the yield plan, but rather half the acreage requirement, which was not what we meant.

Mr. Howard- Continuous buildable area is a separate issue.

Ms. Ida Wye- I would like to be involved in the "Demolition by Neglect" discussion.

Mr. LaCortiglia- It sounds like we want to minimize the amount of warrant articles. Right now there is not a definition of yield. Perhaps we should modify some definitions.

Mr. Hoover- The answer is yes. If there is no objection, let's follow the order. Look at the second page. Any tree taken down should be replaced by the developer. The town needs to have some recourse.

Mr. Moultrie- We have to interject somehow with that. The tree warden is dictated under state law. We are working on a tree planting plan for the town now.

Mr. Hoover- We have no building to building setbacks. What you see in town is 30ft. That one is straight forward.

Ms. Buck- Don't we have side yard setbacks on single family homes?

Mr. Hoover- Yes.

Mr. Moultrie- The RA district is only 15ft on either side. There are no lot lines.

Mr. Hoover- Regarding parking setbacks in residential zones – need a 5ft. setback there. Landscape parking setbacks- establish that in public records that affect the Town. There is a setback that allows trees.

Mr. Moultrie- These people can get waivers from the Board of Health.

Mr. LaCortiglia- When we speak of 10ft. setbacks, it is a Board of Health regulation. (Regarding septic systems)

Mr. Moultrie- The state regulation is 50ft. regarding wetland setbacks. New installations are 100ft.

Mr. LaCortiglia- The Board of Health can give you 50ft.

Mr. Moultrie- The town can go stricter on this issue.

Mr. Hoover- It's a straight forward ordinance.

Mr. LaCortiglia- Has the Board given any thought to the maximum size of a parking lot?

Mr. Hoover- That could go on a wish list. There are a lot of ordinances that address size of parking lots.

Ms. Buck- Parking setback in residential zones, what does that mean? We will need to look at parking calculations and include employee parking.

Mr. Hoover- Planting is under Zoning, I think, but Sarah will need to check for sure. Storm water management – It is saying that you can no longer use the cul-de-sacs for storm water management.

Mr. Moultrie- I would like to see the rain garden concept put into subdivisions to treat water and use as buffer strips where the drainage could drain into in addition to that.

Ms. Buck- The APA Planning Advisory Service offers advisory reports on zoning recommendations. You can subscribe for \$700/yr or there are individual reports that you can also order.

Mr. Hoover- There is a more “Green” approach to storm water management.

Mr. Moultrie- Also, the erosion control bylaw and storm water management should all go under one heading.

Mr. LaCortiglia- I would like to make a motion to authorize Sarah to purchase publications from the Planning Advisory Service at her discretion up to \$300.

Mr. Moultrie- Second
All in favor? 5-0/unam

Mr. Moultrie- Can we jump to Demolition by Neglect bylaw?

Ms. Ida Wye- I understand we have a demolition delay. Here’s an opportunity for the Town to take action before a building goes down. This has to do with recognizing architecturally significant buildings in town of historical importance in order to keep them from deteriorating. This ordinance could prevent something from happening to these old buildings.

Mr. Moultrie- What about unsound structures?

Ms. Ida Wye- This would be a building that can still be repaired before it becomes unsound. Usually it is a building not occupied and repairable.

Mr. Moultrie- I think it should be under the Demolition Delay amendment. I believe it’s only used in Historical Districts.

Ms. Ida Wye- However some Towns adopt minimum maintenance bylaws. It could be used for empty buildings in this town. Without ordinances and bylaws we can do nothing for these buildings. Historical buildings in Town are sitting empty right now and can be used for other purposes.

Mr. Moultrie- That may be a better alternative.

Ms. Ida Wye- The other thing is it is encouraging people to turn those buildings into something. The demolition by neglect is very common in the US but not in Mass. You do see it in Lowell and Nantucket.

Mr. Moultrie- My concern is that for Georgetown we may have to fine tune it as a maintenance aspect because we don't have a lot of historical properties. We need to find out more about this issue and I will do some more research.

Mr. Hoover- Next on storm water management, it broke down to two camps. 1) Cul-de-sac retention 2) A green type development which is separate. Lighting #5 – make sure it is clear and that it applies to single family residential homes. It just needs to be cleaned up.

Ms. Buck- Exterior lighting only pertains to Site Plan Review under Design Guidelines.

Mr. Moultrie- Does it apply to lighting in rural sections of the town?

Mr. Hoover- That was all excluded.

Mr. Moultrie- Is there something mandated? Would Wayne Snow know something? They (Georgetown Lighting) are talking about using the same type of lighting just like Rowley. It takes away light pollution and uses less wattage.

Mr. Hoover- Building Height- I want to verify if it ties into all residential. Is there anything the Town has to make it more restrictive?

Mr. Moultrie- The ANR on East Main Street was approved prior to the zoning change.

Mr. Hoover- Next is subdivision entry signage.

Mr. Moultrie- If the sign is not approved with the subdivision plan, they have to come back and re-file the plan.

Ms. Buck- Signs are addressed for subdivisions and single family homes in the Zoning Guidelines.

Mr. Moultrie- The Building Inspector enforces the building of the signs.

Mr. Hoover- Why is the Building Inspector responsible for site signage?

Mr. Moultrie- We could say the Board is the enforcing agent and put it under the subdivision regulations.

Mr. Hoover- To conclude, site signage would go to Subdivision Regulations. Entry sign requirements would be a subdivision regulation change.

Mr. Hoover- Big Box stores- If we create permitting on that, we have a lot of authority. It would be very simple. It comes under Special Permit.

Ms. Buck- She refers to a Major Development Review ordinance used in Gloucester and shows a printed copy of the ordinance which is on file with the Minutes.

Mr. Moultrie- What do we do?

Ms. Buck- I would try hard to get three good examples but that takes a lot of research.

Mr. Moultrie- If we required a special permit for the sq. footage only, it would be easy to add it to the subsection of the site plan review.

Mr. LaCortiglia- As long as we tie it into the size of the floor space, then that is important.

Mr. Hoover- Sarah will do some research on this.

Ms. Buck- It is all in the wording.

Mr. Hoover- It really is not appropriate for a volunteer board to be writing these ordinances.

Mr. LaCortiglia- We need to ask the public to give this board discretion and the right to say, "No." That comes in the bylaws. There are just a few changes regarding the OSRD – It's written in the form of a warrant article which is on file. He reads a document that is attached to Minutes as a file copy. The first paragraph in existing zoning ordinance is suggested to be deleted. It refers to maximum number of units that trigger the affordable housing component in the open space residential bylaw.

Mr. Moultrie- What it says is you have to do 10% of the project for OSRD only.

Mr. LaCortiglia- What it says and I suggest it be deleted is "15 or less approved units beyond the basic maximum number shall not be subject to the inclusionary housing bylaw.

Ms. Buck- They are talking about the Bonus Units which you only get for increased Open Space and Affordability which provides some public benefit.

Mr. Howard- I think it is straightforward as it is written. It only addresses modification of the OSRD.

Mr. LaCortiglia- Are we only talking about the bonus units which are 15?

Mr. Howard- Yes. It says, "15 or less approved units beyond the basic maximum number which is determined from the Yield." In order to get that, they have to give us more affordable housing or open space. OSRD is still 10%.

Mr. LaCortiglia- Second paragraph suggested to be deleted means you can't buy your way out of providing the Affordable Housing. It makes sense.

Ms. Buck- We may have to check state law.

Mr. Howard- The money could be used to repair or upgrade existing public housing.

Mr. Hoover- Can we expand on the word, “may?” “The Planning Board may choose to allow the applicant” should read, “The Planning Board could choose.”

Mr. Howard- Leave it up to the Planning Board.

Mr. Hoover- I read the Board has to say “Ok” instead of having the option to say “No.”

Mr. Howard- It must be up to the Board to determine the cash amount.

Mr. Moultrie- There is a formula to be used to determine what range is affordable.

Mr. LaCortiglia- The next part talks about Yield. Only time it is used is in the OSRD. You could change the maximum yield used. He reads from his proposed draft article to amend the OSRD bylaw submission that is attached to the Minutes as a file copy and states that the Planning Board shall be the final arbiter of the Yield number. I think it just tightens it up as to what Yield is.

Mr. Howard- I don't think we can legally do this.

Mr. Hoover- Let's decide as a Board that Sarah may need to research this some more.

Mr. LaCortiglia- #12 – simple change of 10% TO 5% where we calculate total number of Senior Housing units.

Mr. Moultrie- I need to look at the Federal regulations. In the density area around ponds, needs to coincide with the document. We can be more restrictive than the Federal document. I will get back to you with some different scenarios.

Ms. Buck- The only one to bring up is the lot width. There is an example of “Lot regularity” done in Boxboro. Other towns don't define lots as well as we do. It would be nice to have a clear statement in the regulation.

Mr. Howard- I would seek out the help from Larry Graham on this issue.

Ms. Buck- Maybe we should be looking at the drawings of the old ordinance from 1997 regarding lot width. I will pull up the old ordinances and find what we're missing.

Mr. Howard- I have nothing written. The contiguous building area is being addressed which is the lot width issue. The only other thing is parking requirements for employees. You see this problem at Crosby's. Parking requirements or calculations got removed years ago and it doesn't consider employees. We can change it without it going to Zoning.

Mr. Moultrie- It needs to be put back in there. How is that being figured? Standard is 9' X 20'.

Mr. Howard - With Senior Housing, we have no yield. Look what happened with Parish Road. I think we need to say, "buildable area" and it should exclude buffer zones.

Mr. Hoover- In addition, it should also say, "easements, lands over a 25% slope and public ways."

Mr. Howard- You can't build in buffer zones.

Ms. Buck- I will research it. I need direction on which ones you want me to pursue.

Mr. Hoover- Big box stores is major, the lot width definition under #14, parking calculations to be verified, Jacks points on both issues were legitimate. Numbers 1-5 are all minor. Tim's #17- Senior Housing Density issue and calculation are also important.

Mr. Moultrie- We will reserve 5 spots at the next meeting.

4. Minutes –November 8, 2006; December 4, 2006; December 20, 2006

No decisions were made on Minutes due to the fact that 2 Board members (Mr. Hoover, Mr. Carter) had to leave the meeting early.

5. Vouchers:

Mr. LaCortiglia- Motion to approve vouchers totaling \$576.47

Mr. Moultrie- Second

Mr. Howard- It has been motioned and seconded to approve vouchers totaling \$576.47.
3-0/unam (Mr. Hoover and Mr. Carter not present)

6. Correspondence:

Mr. LaCortiglia- Motion to adjourn @ 10:48 PM

Mr. Moultrie- Second

All in favor? 3-0/unam (Mr. Hoover and Mr. Carter not present)