

Planning Board Public Meeting Minutes

December 4, 2006

8:00 a.m., third floor meeting room, Town Hall.

Master Plan Consultant Interviews.

Present: Rob Hoover, Chairman, Hugh Carter, Vice-Chairman, Jack Moultrie, Harry LaCortiglia, Sarah Buck, Town Planner.

8:00 Presentation from Daylor Consulting Group, Inc., Mr. Mitchell Fischman, Ms. Erika Johnson, Ms. Andrea Sangrey and questions from the Planning Board.

8:30 Presentation from Mr. Thomas Galligani and questions from the Planning Board.

9:20 Presentation from Communities Opportunities Group, Inc., Ms. Judith Barrett and questions from the Planning Board.

9:40 Discussion.

Motion by Mr. LaCortiglia to hire Daylor Consulting to complete the Master Plan contingent upon authorization to use the gift account for funding of the plan. Second Mr. Moultrie. 3-0 in favor. Mr. Howard, Mr. Carter absent.

Meeting adjourned.

End Meeting Minutes.

Accompanying Notes:

Daylor Consulting Group, Inc., Mr. Mitchell Fischman, Ms. Erika Johnson, Ms. Andrea Sangrey.

Mr. Fischman presented his background, including work at the Boston Redevelopment Authority, then Haverhill Master Plan in 1987 to most recently the Rowley Master Plan completion. He mentioned interest in community participation, updating of input from Community Development Plan (CDP), and use of website for interaction. Mr. Fischman states Daylor is good at being on budget and on schedule. They are also good at accessing funding for projects and up-to-date on innovative ways of achieving community goals. Mr. Fischman has been an Alderman in Newton MA for many years.

Ms. Johnson gave recap of Daylor proposal. Said they were able to bring down the cost of services to meet Georgetown's budget with the offer of participation and support from Merrimack Valley Planning Commission. Stated Daylor will keep all activities for the Master Plan process posted on their website. She said they look at the Land Use element of the Master Plan as what ties the whole plan together – an essential element. They don't expect to do much work to the existing chapters of the CDP except to review and

ensure conformity with the overall plan. They will take an in-depth look at effects from a big box store development as well.

Mr. LaCortiglia asked how Daylor intends to bring the desires of the public into the process.

Ms. Johnson and Mr. Fischman reference the updated services offered by their website during the planning process, bringing the original 50-60 people involved in the Master Plan visioning into this final process, and look to us as well for guidance on how best to involve the community.

Mr. Hoover asked if it is reasonable to find out from this process whether a big box store is or is not good for Georgetown.

Mr. Fischman said yes, but you might find yourself considering compromises/alternatives. For example some communities are looking now at a smaller box store alternative that might carry less effect on downtown merchants. Mr. Fischman mentioned trying to balance the fiscal needs and the preservation of town character.

Mr. Fischman concluded the Daylor presentation. As a 45 person firm they bring capabilities from many disciplines to the process – landscape architecture, design, engineering, and traffic support. He believes it is important to draw upon these skill sets for development of Georgetown's plan.

Mr. Thomas Galligani.

Mr. Galligani explains that he has been consulting privately out of his house in Andover for three years. Previously he was in Community Development in both Lawrence and in Lowell. Mr. Galligani distributed a hand-out of the points he would cover. In his presentation he emphasized collaboration with the Town, asking questions of community members, promised on-time deliveries. He said he is a one-man show, but can give the project his full attention.

Mr. Galligani stated the last three sections of the plan are the hardest to complete because they force the choices of allocation of scarce resources and time. He feels the Land Use section is an important tool, but the Implementation Section is the most important and would like to leave a lot of time for debate over the implementation section. Need to consider the long-term impacts of growth.

Mr. Hoover asked why we would choose a one person firm and the effects that might come from him juggling several projects.

Mr. Galligani replied that the project only requires one person and that he can do it with less overhead and give it the attention it needs.

Mr. LaCortiglia asked about how he would determine the desires of the public in the process.

Mr. Galligani answered that that depends on what you want to do. Will have conversations at the planned Board meetings. Could set up a web blog – open up access, create an idea forum.

Mr. LaCortiglia asked where he would get his data for evaluating big box stores.

Mr. Galligani replied he would look at all different aspects of the matter. He also mentioned reviewing the recent economic census data for Georgetown.

Mr. LaCortiglia mentioned he'd seen Mr. Galligani had completed Fiscal Impact Analyses at his past jobs and asked whether this would be appropriate for this situation.

Mr. Galligani said fiscal impact studies are usually site specific and would be beyond the scope of the Master Plan completion.

The Cecil Group

A call to the Cecil Group revealed that new scheduling software had apparently not transferred the appointment and they were not on their way.

The following applicant was held up in traffic on the way. The Board waited for her, but Mr. Carter had to leave at this point. (9:15.)

Community Opportunities Group, Inc.: Judith Barrett

Ms. Barrett explained she was the Community Development Director for Plymouth MA, then worked for the State, then has been with COG for past ten years. Lots of Master Plan experience. She is impressed with the current Community Development Plan. It did not seem to have a lot of boilerplate, but rather full of good information, especially in housing and open space. Since Georgetown is looking for the Land Use element, she assumes we're looking for appropriate zoning and land use tools to guide growth.

Mr. LaCortiglia asked about public vision and buy-in.

Ms. Barrett explained that her job as consultant is to give you the tools for you to get public buy-in. She has a lot of tools, using different ones dependent on the situation. She mentioned strength/weakness exercises, small group exercises and others – get people talking. She mentioned the “view from the road” which is what most people visually respond to. She said she has often found that people actually agree more than they think on what they like, but tend to disagree on how to get there. If what people like doesn't match up to what is in the community, then there are varying reasons – market weakness, or lack of design standards for example.

Responding to Mr. LaCortiglia's question on public outreach, she said despite many tools, the most effective are personal phone calls by the people involved.

Mr. Hoover asked about how the three proposed meetings would fit into her proposed services. Ms. Barrett said how the meetings were used would be up to the Board, that the Board knows best what outreach is needed.

Mr. Moultrie asked about the specific number of hours that would be allocated. Ms. Barrett said the price was based on her rate of \$95/hour and her associate Ms. Laura Spark at \$90/hour for the public facilities element.

Ms. Buck asked how she would fit in visioning meetings with public presentations of the drafts with the limited schedule of three meetings.

Ms. Barrett said she would reach out to people from the CDP visioning to ask about the continued relevance of their concerns and the outcomes from the CDP recommendations/actions.

Board Discussion comments regarding consultants

Ms. Buck liked how Daylor planned to reach out to the original 40-50 people involved in the visioning for the CDP and get updated feel.

Mr. Hoover liked how Daylor emphasized the importance of the Land Use element. Ms. Buck agreed.

Mr. LaCortiglia thought either of the groups would provide an integrated plan and clear direction, which is what we need, but he liked that Daylor had worked closely with Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC) before (on the Rowley Plan) and we are having them do that for us.

Mr. Hoover said his experience is that the Master Plan only provides the blueprint. It's better than a CDP and often gives Design Guidelines, but still doesn't tell you exactly how to do it.

Before he left the meeting, Mr. Carter had stated that he was impressed with the Daylor Group presentation.

Conclusion

Mr. Hoover said that perhaps this is not the perfect way to complete a Master Plan, due to the tight time frame and budget, but it is absolutely better than not doing a Master Plan. It will be excellent to have a Master Plan for Georgetown.

Motion to hire Daylor Consulting to complete the Master Plan contingent upon authorization to use the gift account for funding of the plan.

Mr. LaCortiglia/Mr. Moultrie. 3-0 in favor (Mr. Hoover, LaCortiglia, Moultrie). 2
absent (Mr. Howard, Mr. Carter).