

Great Barrington Master Plan Committee (MPC)

Meeting Minutes of August 15, 2013
Great Barrington Fire Station

Members present: Barbara Bailly, Ryan Caruso, Shep Evans, Suzanne Fowle, Michele Gilligan, Jonathan Hankin, Paul Ivory, Bill Meier, Vivian Orłowski, Deborah Phillips, and Michael Wise.
Also present was Chris Rembold, Town Planner.

Members absent: Andrew Blechman, Charles Bouteiller, Ethan Culleton, David Rutstein (alternate), David Shanahan.

Co-Chairperson Michele Gilligan began the meeting at 7:35 PM.

Minutes of June 27, 2013

Evans moved to approve, Phillips seconded, and the minutes were approved without objection.

Final Draft Master Plan

Gilligan asked Rembold to give an update of the plan. Rembold reported that the first few pages were written by Wise to incorporate the changes and suggestions following the June meeting. This is where the four key issues are addressed. Rembold said it was the Committee's hope that the introduction would be a quick and readable synopsis of the plan, and he thinks that has been accomplished. People should be able to read the first five or six pages and understand the plan.

Hankin asked if the format has been finalized. He suggested the folio size version similar to the 1973 plan would be a good way to ensure the maps are large enough to be readable. Rembold said he had not decided on the final format, but that was a good idea. The maps could fold out. Fowle suggested including a CD of the maps. Wise suggested the electronic versions of the maps be in high resolution so people could zoom in to see details.

Wise asked about the discrepancy in income data as presented in Wealth and Incomes on page 15 of the Appendix. Rembold explained that the Census uses town-specific median income data, but the housing subsidy programs use data for an entire area as the median income benchmark, and that figure is higher than the town specific Census figure. Because of this, housing subsidy programs that might be affordable to people based on the area-wide calculation, might not actually be affordable to people in town.

Gilligan asked whether there would be a third public forum. Rembold said no; he would prefer a series of smaller meetings in various parts of town, at the libraries, the senior center, and so on to review the plan. He would do media outreach in the coming weeks in advance of the September 26 meeting of the Planning and Select Boards. Meier suggested having one at Berkshire South, and they could advertise it on their sign. Gilligan said they should be posted on the Fire Station sign board as well.

Gilligan asked Rembold to let the committee members know about the small meetings and media outreach that will be occurring. Rembold asked that everyone attend the September 26 approval meeting if possible.

Ivory asked what the update protocol or schedule would be. Rembold said that the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen should periodically review the plan. And he mentioned the implementation plan is deliberately short so that it would have to be revisited in about five years.

Phillips suggested that the boards should review the plan each year to see what progress was being made and whether changes should be made. Wise suggested the following text be added to the Implementation chapter:

Goal IM 1: Regularly review progress in implementing this plan.

To be effective as a guide for town policy, this plan must be a living document. The boards, committees and officials who are charged with carrying out its recommendations should regularly check their progress in achieving its goals. We recommend that the Planning Board and the Select Board set this review as an agenda item each year, and that other town boards, committees and officials do a similar review every two or three years.

Phillips made a motion to approve the amendment, and Evans seconded. All were in favor.

Wise moved to approve the Master Plan and appendix as amended, for submission to the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen on September 22, 2013, and Phillips seconded. All were in favor.

Meier asked about any changes to the Vision statement. Gilligan said she and Wise would amend their introductory letter to include Meier's ideas from the last meeting. Gilligan said it is important and the personal tone of the letter is the appropriate place to include it.

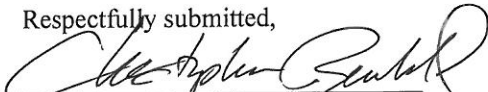
Adjournment

Gilligan adjourned the meeting at 8:20 PM.

Materials distributed or presented at this meeting:

- Draft Minutes of June 27, 2013
- Final Draft Master Plan dated August 15, 2013

Respectfully submitted,



Christopher Rembold, Town Planner