

## Strategic Planning Session continued

Tuesday, June 12, 2012 at 7:00pm

Old library, fireplace room

Present: Chair Lucy Wallace, Bill Johnson, Ron Ricci, Marie Sobalvarro  
Town Administrator Tim Bragan/Executive Assistant Julie Doucet  
Tim Clark was unable to attend.

### Long Range Strategic Planning

#### Master Plan development process

Points discussed:

- Devens Economic Analysis Team's (DEAT) role in the Master Plan process.
- DEAT can be used as a resource for financial questions
- Share five year strategic plans with the committee
- Have all committees review Phase 1 of the Master Plan

#### C - District development

Points discussed:

- Recent survey indicates desire for restaurant and grocery store
- Investigate what is necessary to attract this type of development and understand limitations
- Economic Development Committee (EDC) liaison or member essential
- Encourage EDC to investigate sewer/water infrastructure needs
- Imperative EDC and Master Plan initiatives working toward same objective
- Request EDC report to BOS which should include response to master plan survey.

\* Devens decision may impact commercial development direction.

#### Affordable housing strategy

Points discussed:

- Affordable housing plan was updated three years ago
- Need direction on preferred area for affordable housing
- Scattered housing has been suggested in the past.
- Master Plan survey indicated desire for 1 & 2 bedroom housing
- Zoning changes will be necessary to accommodate appropriate affordable housing solutions
- Investigate best practices in other communities to be shared with Master Plan Committee
- Prepare a needs assessment

#### Town Planner

- Present needs to Planning Board (PB) for a Town Planner
- Suggest partnership with PB on this initiative

*Lucy Wallace as liaison to PB will take the lead on this.*

### Joint Boards of Selectmen (JBOS)

- Functional as an information sharing body
- Periodic meetings sufficient
- Discussed Chapter 498: Shirley's ability to retain lands west of the Nashua River and opportunity it provides.

### Financial Issues

#### Structural deficit reduction strategies

- Need to aggressively investigate ways to increase revenues
- Continue to investigate cost sharing opportunities (regionalization of services) strategic goal
- Ask School Committee (SC) to approach their budget excluding monies from the Devens contract
- Discuss strategies at an All Boards meeting

### Insurances

- Liability/Workers Compensation – Upcoming fiscal year quotes are expected next week
- Health insurance
  1. Retired Municipal Teachers (RMT) alternatives may need to be investigated
  2. Change in town/employee percentage paid
  3. Compare best practices in other communities

### Other Public Employee Benefits (OPEB)

- Formation of working group by the Town Administrator to examine all options bearing in mind the end result.
- Anticipate direction from the state in November
- Review funding mechanism along with managing variables that drive the liability
- Set as strategic goal for BOS
- Include funding in long term planning process
- Establish irrevocable trust account
- Demonstration of effort to fund OPEB is favorable for Harvard
- Update actuarial
- SC must be involved

### Tax relief/programs for elderly

- Deferral programs favorable given demographics of Harvard
- Work with the Board of Assessors and Assessing Department

### Targeted tax assessment to make up annual difference

- Discussed the idea of only recommending an override when there is no free cash

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.

