

Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting February 6, 2012 - Old Library

Present: Tim Clark, Joe Hutchinson, Michelle Catalina, Lucy Wallace, Ron Ostberg, Rich Marcello

Meeting opened 9:35am

Approval of Minutes

Unanimous approval by the committee to accept the minutes of January 30, 2012 as amended. JH will take edits, incorporate and hand off to Liz.

Ayer Road/Commercial District Focus Group

Brown/Walker provided notes from the focus group they facilitated - MC provided additional inputs to clarify. MC will develop revisions which include more detail of concerns voiced by adjacent neighborhoods that were not fully developed in the notes. More detail needed around the relationship of the commercial development at Devens and how it affects Ayer Harvard Shirley.

RO - Having a regional planner servicing the parties may be a good strategy however the politics may provide different guidance

MC - identified the challenge of actually engaging business/property owners and getting them to work together.

RM - Is there a collaborative approach to making utility improvements - private co-op or independent developer?

RO - Regulations, land ownership, marketing of the development needs to be considered in concert with each other to actually develop a plan before any capital will be committed (very long and complicated process).

RO - Goal of MP not to define what the C-district should be, but identify a process by which we can tackle this issues - Tax revenue, infrastructure, character, services. EDC has not recognized the other participants - Planner, Developers, Investors - what are the 3-5 scenarios we need to develop to tackle the development of the C-District. We have a number of goals for the C-district, some of which are in conflict. We don't know how to resolve this, because we are limited by the market conditions. Through a planning process we put out an RFP? Opportunities are tremendous - Create concrete alternatives and test them in the market. Opportunities Tax revenue, services & conservation - if we want these assets to accrue to use we need to take a more systematic approach and engaging. This is a project based approach.

RO - Current forces of market and energy are leading forces changing the landscape. We have to make intelligent decisions about land use and define what is consistent with our character as a rural village.

RM - Should the project develop 3 options - low density, high density, high revenue, service based and put up the analysis to engage the market.

RO Who leads the process? The Developer or the MPSC?

LW - can we articulate a recommended approach? Phase 1 is identifying the visions and conflicts. Phase 2 is to flush out the prime components.

Survey closed 1/31/2012

MC reported some initial findings, in particular for zone 2 neighborhood (around C-District). Where greater concerns were evident (traffic, appearance) than other neighborhoods not abutting the district.

MC also reported significant support for dealing with Devens sooner, rather than later and that the public saw Devens as a gating issue that affects housing, the C-district and conservation/land use efforts in Harvard.

Raw Data to be distributed by MC

TC suggested we release initial findings to the press/public sooner rather than later - results that are clear. JH will speak to Press about possible article.

Working group reports

RO provided an overview of approach to leading the Conservation working group scheduled for 2/15. Group to identify Threats and opportunities - If there are issues that are bigger than or cross over that need to be resolved in Phase 2?

LW - Housing group to be rescheduled - maybe split into two groups to achieve the goal of meeting with all stakeholders.

TC - recommended we focus on validating boards for the 3/3 meeting as part of working group responsibility. Refinement, not reinvention.

Vision/Goal update

Draft work product continues to evolve. Survey inputs may change hot points - to be reviewed at monday meeting with BW.

ATM Presentation

Work products from BW include - the boards for each area, a executive summary, a task list for phase 2. LW also asked for a board listing the goals/visions themselves.

MPSC debated Scenarios proposed for pursuing Phase 2 based on current findings. Possible paths include:

- 1) Are Devens/C-district are gating items to finishing the Master Plan? - 2 yrs process. First Devens, then the C-district then do the write up on the MP based on outputs.
- 2) Split the tasks between consultant teams and take parallel approach - Devens team, C-district team running in parallel to write up of compulsory MP pieces.
- 3) Do phase 2 of the MP without addressing Devens and C-District with those elements to follow in subsequent years as outlined by the implementation plan of MP.

MPSC consensus - to pursue scenario 1 and articulate this to CPIC - Survey data supports pursuing planning effort to address Devens (scope to be determined - many opinions on WHAT, but not WHEN it should be done). There is a sense of urgency and attention drawn to the issue by Vicksburg Square. Suggested that \$75K be allocated to the Devens Effort (what does Harvard want, how do we partner with Mass Dev, partner with the towns etc) with \$25K remaining for MP write up based on outcome of Devens project.

Deliverables update

JH to check-in with BW this week and outline of tasks/costs that will comprise budget request for Phase 2 ASAP in preparation for CPIC.

RO - consider defining a 2 year scope, but only define funding for first year, and out of this work, identify the elements are contingent upon Devens.

March 3, 2012 forum update 9-1pm - (8:30-9am coffee time)

Task update:

Baby sitting at Congo confirmed - LW reserved room - MC has arranged sitters - age 2-9 8:15 drop off.

TC refreshments - Chef Paul is a yes.

MC - will update flyer for forum - with baby sitting (landing at schools next week before vacation)

LW - Ad in the Press Ad to run in 2/24 edition (Press deadline 2/21)

MC - Contact Maureen Babcock to reach Devens residents

Primary goals of the meeting - report out by MPSC validation of what we heard and report on survey data - display of revised boards - next steps.

Process for the meeting - Recommended BW follow these recommendations:

- 1) MPSC needs to hone the first 5 minute story by MPSC - (foundation to be tested at CPIC) Meeting intro by JH.

RO suggested - map out the story for the process MPSC has pursued - Suggested that the goal was to not only affirm what we believe but to identify critical points that need more emphasis. These are the 5 primary areas of validation that have emerged (the boards). The good news is that the other MP elements are solid as one might have predicted etc.

2) Next leverage credibility of consultants. Following Intro by JH, pitch to BW - explain elements that the professionals brought to the process - The Survey, BW's extraction of these 5 elements. BW discusses their data collection (stakeholder interviews, public forum, board updates, survey build, survey analysis and key discoveries (Report back on Survey and how data correlates/ or doesn't relate to the vision and goals)

3) Overview of the boards by BW (save detail for break out groups). Discuss goal for the day. 5 breakout groups. Each MPSC member will spend 20 minutes with their working group subject area and rotate each breakout group through - the task will be to confirm/understand goals identified for each subject area, identify errors or omissions and gather input on clarity of each board following a walkthrough by a MPSC member.

4) Regroup - report any revelations or serious errors, concerns uncovered.

5) MPSC to describe recommendations for Phase 2 (next steps) - articulating the request of town meeting.

CPIC meeting - Time for MPSC to their meeting on Feb 16 TBD

Meeting Adjourned 12:10pm Minutes drafted by TC