

Master Plan Steering Committee
Meeting Minutes
November 26, 2013

Members Present:

Joe Hutchinson, Chair
Janet Waldron
Lucy Wallace
Victor Normand

SusanMary Redinger
Joe Theriault
Didi Chadran

Others Present: Bill Scanlan, Town Planner

Opening: The Chair opened the meeting at 7:05 PM.

Master Plan Schedule: The Chair presented a project schedule that displayed key tasks and assumed duration to complete the task. We are now in the midst of the Acceptance Criteria task, with an anticipated completion of Feb. 14, 2014. The Devens Warrant Article task will end with a Town Meeting vote on April 4, 2014. The purpose of the vote is only to get a sense of whether the community supports resuming control of its historic Devens lands. RKG will complete the draft elements of the Master Plan by May 3, 2014, and the Final Plan will be ready for adoption by the Planning Board on June 30, 2014. The compressed schedule leaves little room for slippage.

Acceptance Criteria: The Chair opened the discussion on Acceptance Criteria with a handout that outlined the assumed RKG approach. The initial MPSC task is to generate the acceptance categories, and RKG will complete a narrative that adds important elements for a better understanding of each category, including specific measures to demonstrate whether the end result has satisfied the criteria. RKG and the MPSC will jointly prepare an on-line survey to assess community sentiments on the matter of disposition. RKG will lead a community forum that offers residents an opportunity to learn more about the issues and to engage in discussions with their neighbors. RKG will then generate a tool to assist the Town in evaluating the pros and cons of resuming control of its historic lands in Devens.

During the discussion that followed, members made the following points:

- Leo Blair, a member of the Board of Selectmen, is on a parallel track working with the Joint Boards of Selectmen (JBOS) to establish a Devens Regional Enterprise Zone (DREZ) overlay zone. Members felt it is important to coordinate efforts with Mr. Blair and wished to invite him to an upcoming meeting to learn more about his efforts.
- The Acceptance Criteria should provide sufficient guidance to residents at Town Meeting on whether to vote in the affirmative for resuming control of Devens. An important purpose of the Master Plan is to describe how and under what circumstances Harvard would be willing to accept its historic lands in Devens.
- RKG will add value to the Criteria by providing “filters” that help residents to understand the important issues in each category and by suggesting means for gauging the impact on Harvard. RKG can also identify areas for further study and help to clarify what the Town needs to know in order to accept its Devens land.
- Members discussed a matrix that was intended to help evaluate the Criteria. The matrix displayed the Master Plan Elements on the left side and impact categories along the top, including factors such as town character, economics, governance, etc. For

each cell members were asked to rate the importance of the Master Plan Elements on the Impact Categories. However the members decided that the task would not provide meaningful input to RKG. Instead, members felt that RKG has the expertise to apply the acceptance criteria to the Master Plan elements.

- The MPSC deals in broad concepts, and will rely upon the professional consultants to flesh out the details and add standards for how the Town can accomplish its goals.
- The discussion concluded with members deciding to reaffirm the Acceptance Criteria laid out in the document entitled "Devens Disposition Evaluation Criteria" adopted May 3, 2005. This document seemed to identify the most important issues for Harvard to consider and had clear criteria that can aid in evaluating the impacts of accepting Devens land. The Chair agreed to convert the text to a Word document and remove the right column labeled "Scenario 2." He will forward the document to the members for review and comment prior to sending it to the consultant.

Stakeholder Interviews: The Chair resumed the discussion from the previous meeting of listing candidates to participate in stakeholder interviews. The Committee made many suggestions regarding adding new individuals or moving names on the list to other subject areas. The Chair will incorporate these changes into the list and forward it to members for additional review.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 10, 7:00 PM, Bromfield Library. The Committee and RKG will have an in-depth discussion of the Acceptance Criteria task.

Adjournment: SusanMary Redinger made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55, seconded by Victor Normand, so voted.