

Unofficial

**TOWN OF HOOKSETT
Community Profile Committee
Town Hall, Council Chambers
Thursday, June 19, 2014, 6:00 pm**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:15 P.M.

PRESENT: Todd Rainier, Joanne McHugh, Joan McDonald, Charlene Baxter, and Sharon Cowen, Andrew Zanotti, Maura Ouellette, Mark Miville, Sarah White, Trisha Guglielmo, Patrick Guglielmo, and Mike Horn (via telephone).

EXCUSED: Tom Young

STAFF: JoAnn Duffy (Town Planner) and Carolyn Cronin (Assistant Planner).

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

C. Baxter (Community Development Specialist, UNH Cooperative Extension): Some of you were here a month ago. Some of you are new and I would like everyone to introduce themselves.

J. McDonald: I have been in Hooksett since 1994. We are downsizing to a condo but decided to stay in Hooksett.

A. Zanotti: I have lived in Hooksett for about one year. I am currently a member of the United States Airforce so I am a temporary Hooksett member.

T. Rainier: I have lived here for 14 years. I am currently the Town Clerk and Deputy Tax Collector here in Hooksett.

C. Baxter: Sharon and I are both at Cooperative Extension. I am in Durham and Sharon is in Goffstown.

J. McHugh: I have lived here for 40 years come this July. Part of our assignment last time was to get recruits and I brought two.

M. Miville: I have been living in town for eleven years and am kind of a town government groupie. I am currently Chairman of the Budget Committee in town.

M. Ouellette: I have lived in town for 27 years. We have raised our three children here. I have been involved in various things throughout those years and am currently working at Underhill school.

T. Guglielmo: We moved here in August of last year. I am originally from Goffstown and we are due with our baby in the Fall.

P. Guglielmo: We lived in Manchester for 5 years, but currently live in Hooksett.

M. Horn: I have lived in Hooksett for a month shy of 30 years. I have been active in HYAA sports and Boy Scouts and then got recruited to work on the master plan of which I was the Chair for the recreation and conservation piece. I have been active in a lot of things such as parks and recreation, advisory board, cemetery commission, and trails with the Kiwanis.

S. White: I am 16 years old and will be going into my junior year at Manchester Central High School. I am a member of the Key Club at Central and was a member of the Builder's Club at David R. Cawley Middle School. I am really involved with my school but wanted to get more involved with the community and that is why I am here.

J. Duffy: I am the Town Planner. I have been here almost 21 years. We are so glad you are helping us with this project. We did this before in 2001. It was very successful and we are planning to do some updating this coming year with the master plan and this will be a great lead in. We are hoping to get more community volunteers to participate.

C. Cronin: I am the Assistant Town Planner. It will be one year next month since I have worked here. This will be my first Hooksett Community Profile and I am excited to see what happens.

C. Baxter: We are going to show you a video. It is about 13 minutes long. It is also on the UNH extension website for anyone interested that has internet access. Our website is extension.unh.edu. When you get to our home screen there is a menu across the top banner. Click on Community, then Community Profiles and Visioning. That is where you will find the video. I will also provide the link so it can be posted on your town website.

The video was shown.

C. Baxter: Hooksett did a Community Profile in 2001? How many of you had been involved in an aspect of that?

M. Miville: There was a charette in 2004 that I was involved in that was similar to the video and that was very well attended and very well run.

C. Baxter: Was that related to the master plan?

J. McHugh: Wasn't that the village charette?

J. Duffy: Yes.

C. Baxter: We have different levels of processes that we do in town. Some are community envisioning, some are just for the master plan and some are a full blown profile. Some of the things you heard were the ten components. Right now there are eleven components. I will send around a paper that explains these. What you saw in the video were some large group sessions, and then they were broken down into

smaller group sessions. What happens initially is they get broken down into components and then dug down deeper. The eleven components you see on the paper are probably the eleven that we will use. There might be some things that you think might fit and some things on the list that won't. The eleven are generic enough that they fit most plans but feel free to change them in place of or in addition to. The groups that meet the first night divide up into these groups and brainstorm about issues in their town before they get to solutions. The groups are: community leadership; informed citizen participation; sense of community; fostering healthy families, individuals and youth; lifelong education and learning; community services, facilities, and learning; recreation and cultural heritage; working landscape and the natural environment; economic vitality; growth and development; transportation. Is there anything that you see that you can resonate with? There are some communities that do a smaller planning process that use only six components but the larger towns like to address all eleven so that everyone has a topic they can embrace in this process. The link to the profile that you did in 2001 is on-line. The other communities we did profiles with are also there. Last month we talked about what came out of the profile in 2001 and the results. It is more than a day and half of talking about things. It is a day to work through issues and address and implement them. I am guessing as citizens you have questions. We talked about doing it in November, but we have to make other types of decisions. What kind of things are running through your mind about this process?

J. McHugh: I participated last time and thought the process was excellent. My concern is that some things were done, but we don't always follow through on some of the things. I don't know whether they are financial burdens to overcome or perhaps the will is not there to engage the community. We had quite a few people come out and support this. There was enthusiasm and feedback, but my concern has been the follow through. We have done some of the things. Some have been done by volunteer organizations, but there is a piece of it, and I don't know how it works, to make sure that people in charge of government follow through, so it eventually looks like and is the way the people of Hooksett want it.

C. Baxter: You said there was a lot of interest and enthusiasm, during the process or after?

J. McHugh: During. Maybe we did not know what to do after. There were some volunteer organizations that got things done but there were a number that didn't get done. There was no follow through on some of it and were some things we should have done further.

C. Baxter: As you have experienced in various things, there may be enthusiasm initially and other things may crowd in and take our attention. It is good to think about that in case there is a lag and how we hang on to that enthusiasm. Communities realize that a lot of things will cost money so that could be a barrier. We try to match up a community's resources with funding through grants, volunteers and other things. The process can break down for a lot of reasons but we try to make sure there is forward momentum. We talked about the working groups and about half of the projects Hooksett identified got done which was good. I don't think there is any community that batted 100%. One of the indicators for us on the Saturday afternoon of the Profile is when we ask people to sign on for the working groups. If there is a great sounding project and no one signs up for it that is a clue it will not go anywhere. Usually people will rally around the causes that have the most meaning to that particular town.

J. McHugh: I think one of the suggestions was the Tiff District and it brought in a lot of commercial

business that helped the tax base. Some of the volunteer organizations have done things but others have not gotten done. Do you contact the community and ask if it is still a priority?

C. Baxter: It wouldn't surprise me if some of those things got put on the docket again. Hooksett today is a different town than in 2001, and it is exciting to come back and work on that so many years later. Does anyone have questions about what this is all about?

A. Zanotti: What are some examples of the most successful community profiles?

C. Baxter: There are some consistencies. Some are how towns communicate with the citizens. That has changed drastically over the years. For example, how a website is working. Some working groups focus around youth. How you feel about your youth and how to sustain your youthful generation is something almost every community deals with.

S. Cowan: I think there is a lot of enthusiasm and interest and people who step up that have never been involved in the community. They get engaged when they have never been involved before. It is kind of intense because it goes from Friday night through Saturday. It is a commitment of time and energy but is a fun process to watch.

C. Baxter: I think almost every community finds something around nature and the outdoors. We frequently see the working landscape and the natural environment, how to maintain green space and how to feel safe and welcome. The thing that is inspiring is that every town is unique and some towns have issues that are dissimilar from other towns.

J. McDonald: Do you ever address the naysayers? You have people come out and it is all said and done and then you have other people that come out and they say no.

C. Baxter: There are naysayers in every town so how to incorporate positive energy and play down negative energy is a challenge. Usually people attend an event like this because they want to contribute. It is not like a town meeting. A different audience will come to this. Naysayers may come to this event but we tend to see people that want to contribute their ideas. When you talk about marketing you will decide how to get people to feel welcome. You will get people to come to this that have never gone to anything in town. They don't have to sign up for anything. We hope they will choose to but they don't have to. We think in terms of marketing to have them come and meet their neighbors.

J. McDonald: I just felt once people chose their programs it comes down to money. That is when the naysayers come out.

C. Baxter: One of the things that is exciting is we have a couple of people who are good at facilitating the process when the people get together. We have a person who will get the positive energy out and make sure people have a voice. They are good at what they do.

M. Miville: It is okay to have a Profile that has differing opinions and we encourage that. This is why we have these things to address all sides and address these things.

C. Baxter: One of the things is voting with sticky dots. You can see how the votes come in and see what the popular votes will be. It is not the most popular people in town, it is the group as a whole. Using the dots is a large public participation process and it makes powerful statements about what people want to do in the community.

J. McHugh: Have you had a community that has been overly ambitious?

C. Baxter: I think the towns give themselves a reality check. In about two months not all of the groups will still be meeting. There may be a couple of groups that fall off the radar and will come back as well. There are different time frames.

S. White: How do people find out about this? You want youth participation but if it wasn't for my mom I wouldn't have known about this. How do we get it to every age group?

C. Baxter: We can put it in the newspapers, on the website, word of mouth, there have been communities when people have gone door to door. Going door to door may have been in smaller communities but there is no limit to how we spread the word and one of the reasons why we begin to plan about six months ahead. We have some time to do this work which, to a large extent, is not just planning the event but making sure everyone knows about it. Sharon and I are working for you, you know the town. Where people are is where we will go to spread the word. I think because the Hooksett kids are not all in the same high school that is somewhat of a challenge, but we are here to embark on these challenges together. As we thought about doing the event in November, that is enough time to do that kind of planning and to time this during the sports seasons and the other events that Hooksett families are involved in.

M. Miville: We will also have Old Home Day in September to let people know.

T. Guglielmo: Was there a survey prior to this that kicked it off or was it the master plan?

J. Duffy: I think we talked about doing the master plan update and only have about \$16,000 set aside, which isn't enough, so Dr. Shankle thought this would be a way to get the community together again to get them interested in participating in the town. He went to the Council and they agreed.

M. Miville: The Council commissioned a town citizen survey last year. It was a \$13,000 survey for the town last summer through October. The results are on the website. We also did something similar to this in the village district. There really does need to be follow up. At the last Council meeting, the project coordinator in town came to the meeting and discussed what she has been doing to look at the citizen survey that went out and she is taking steps to do some project work with it. It was fascinating what she was doing, but it is up to the Council to pick up this project. I suggested to some of the councilors to put one aspect of the survey on the agenda to move it forward.

C. Baxter: We have signed a memorandum of understanding with the town as to what we will do to provide guidance. The fee is \$2,500 which is not a lot of money and because you pay taxes in NH and in Merrimack County, and cooperative extension is funded by local, state and county government, your taxes support what we do. The \$2,500 helps recover some of the process and represents a commitment.

We will stay on your case after the event and check in on the working groups on an on-going basis and set you up with specialists at UNH Cooperative Extension. What you are getting is more than just a process, it is follow up after the fact that is both a promise and a threat because we will stay on your case. There also may be grants and your neighboring towns may have an interest as well.

J. McHugh: One of the issues that can cause an impediment is the economy. I have always been mindful of the taxpayer because they may not be in a good situation either. There has to be a way of doing some of the things. The town had to buy into the Tiff idea but it did lower the taxes. I think sometimes we don't see that. Sometimes things have been done and no one used them so they went away. I don't know how you get that message out to the public after the fact.

C. Baxter: If there is little or no interest that could be an indicator of something else.

T. Guglielmo: How much commitment will there be from this committee now and after the fact?

C. Baxter: We are asking you to work with us through the actual event. Following that you don't have an obligation as a Steering Committee. After the event, you may have an interest in some of the projects. We will do a report and, hopefully, there will be some groups that come from that. I am passing papers out and one of them explains the time line. We realize that summer is short in NH. We think we can do this without having meetings in July and August, but we may pull back together in August and will work hard in September and October. We thought we might have one meeting every couple of weeks from the end of August to the first of November to get ready. Some of these check list things may be compressed but we know we can do it. As far as roles and responsibilities, not every one of these tasks has to be fulfilled by the people here. We can pull other people in. We are going to be responsible for getting these things done, but we can have people help do it all. I am retiring from UNH on June 30. I am going to stay on board for at least September through December on this project, all the way through. On the flip side of the list of components is a sample agenda. Typically this happens on a Friday evening and a Saturday from about 8 am to 2 pm. One of the good things about having it over two days is people are busy so it gives them a chance to go. It is a big commitment, and there are a lot of logistics, but it gets a lot of people to come out. It is tough to compress it into one day and get as rich of an experience.

S. Cowan: We did this in Peterborough and there were whole families there. If you get friends interested there will be jobs for them to do, they will be able to contribute and will be very valuable to the process.

C. Baxter: In the Peterborough profile, about a third of 150 people were newcomers, a third were from 5 – 15 years old, and a third were long timers. It was very rich and diverse because we had all of those perspectives. I think in Hooksett you will discover people are attracted to this because they are not signing on to a long term commitment. Tonight I would like us to identify a person who will be the Chair of this group. We can ask for volunteers or nominations. Some may think about doing some other role.

T. Guglielmo: I don't know anyone here, but I would say someone who has done this before.

M. Miville: I see a lot names in here that I recognize.

M. Ouellette: I would say Mark or Joanne McHugh because you have done it before.

M. Miville: My plate is full.

J. McHugh: My plate is full.

M. Miville: I would say Todd.

T. Rainier: My plate is full.

T. Guglielmo: Is this something we need?

C. Baxter: We can wait until the next meeting, but it is something we will work on. Most of the work will be done in September and October. It has to be someone who lives in Hooksett.

J. McDonald: I don't know how much this has been publicized. I am thinking someone younger that may have the time and energy. My question is do they even know we are doing it?

T. Guglielmo: It was hard to find out about it. We had to dig to even find JoAnn's email.

J. McDonald: How did you find out about it?

T. Guglielmo: The Hooksett Banner and it was over a month after the first meeting.

M. Miville: Was that through Dean Shankle's article?

T. Guglielmo: Yes. I think the main reason we are here is because we don't know anything about the community we live in and it is hard to find out about things going on. There is probably someone out there that is ready to take this on.

M. Miville: It has been discussed at Town Council meetings for quite a while. We were here based on initial discussions that came from last years election where there was a community building initiative instituted. The Council decided to up the anti on that because we were getting default budgets all the time and we were trying to find out why. The town is often divisive about certain issues so there was an initiative by certain citizens, including myself, who wanted to change the trend to establish a community building initiative and the Council jumped on that. They had the administrative contact that came here to talk to the Council about it and they appropriated the money to have you start this whole initiative. That is how this started.

J. Duffy: There was a newsletter that went out in the tax bill that said who to contact, on our website and facebook page. The PTA was informed but they never got back to us.

T. Rainier: Being new to town, where would you first turn for information?

T. Guglielmo: We looked at the town website, The Hooksett Banner and The Hooksett Banner on-line. Even on the community development page we didn't see anything. Maybe something on the front page would be a good place.

C. Baxter: The town does a newsletter as well?

J. Duffy: Only twice a year. The town doesn't have a facebook page but our department does.

T. Rainier: I think we should get something on the front page of the website that directs to the location.

M. Horn: Last time we met Tom and Cathy were here.

J. Duffy: Cathy is not interested and Tom is traveling.

C. Baxter: We will figure out the Chairperson role before we kick into high gear.

T. Rainier: Do you want it Mike?

M. Horn: I have enough town jobs. I cannot take on anything additional.

M. Miville: I thought the Chairperson might come from the Town Council. A councilor or a town committee member.

C. Baxter: Is there anyone here that is or has been on the Town Council?

M. Miville: No.

J. McDonald: Could you have people who want to split it?

C. Baxter: Yes. You could have Co-chairs.

S. Cowan: Do you think there are other people that should be here, demographic wise?

J. McHugh: Could we still recruit more people?

C. Baxter: I would like Sarah to see if she can recruit another friend, if she can.

J. McDonald: We can put it in the Kiwanis newsletter.

C. Baxter: I think we have a very solid Steering Committee. It is a healthy size group. If there is a hole we can fill absolutely invite them. On the other hand, I think we have a solid group and would love to know that each of you is willing to be in this process through the event. I would like to make sure we have email addresses from each of you. Is Thursday night a night we would be likely to get all of you? Someone said the Budget Committee comes here on Thursdays.

T. Rainier: We could go upstairs to use a room.

J. McHugh: Could we use JoAnn's suggestion and go with Co-chairs?

M. Ouellette: Do we have a definitive date and a facility? We need to secure that.

C. Baxter: November 7 and 8. Where did the last one happen and where do you think is the best place to have the event?

M. Ouellette: I am thinking Cawley.

J. McHugh: I am thinking Cawley as well. They have a kitchen, smart boards, and great facilities.

C. Baxter: JoAnn, can you find out if the school is a place we can use?

J. Duffy: Yes.

C. Baxter: Do we have a backup?

T. Rainier: The library?

C. Baxter: Please start to think of an invitation list, everyone will be invited, and a marketing and publicizing list.

T. Guglielmo: Is there a town wide yard sale?

J. McHugh: Not yet.

T. Guglielmo: That was an event we went to elsewhere where they had tables set up to advertise these things. Are there other things like Old Home Day that are happening before August?

C. Baxter: I think you need to use any opportunity if you are interacting with people and as soon as we have a location we can let everyone know as soon as possible.

J. McHugh: They have the opening of football and have the jamborees.

C. Baxter: We will take registrations to anticipate numbers but will also have walk-ins.

S. White: We could let the church know as well.

C. Baxter: Please write notes about audiences, avenues, ideas that you have for creating this event to be owned by the citizenry. We will start working on an invitation list and a responsibilities list. I don't want to labor your thinking over the summer, but we will work hard in September and October to make this happen. We will be looking for small group facilitators to lead the small group discussions. I love

the fact you are here and enthused about this. This will be a positive experience for the Town of Hooksett. It is exciting to go back to a town and work again on a Community Profile because we are learning a lot about the changes and it is learning for us as well. We have done 80 or so of these over the years.

C. Cronin: This might look like a list of intimidating things, but a lot of these things are things that staff can do. It is not as daunting because we are here to support you.

C. Baxter: That is important to embrace because some of the communities have done them with an entirely volunteer Steering Committee, but I feel that staff and Council are involved and offer broad support to make sure your task is manageable.

M. Miville: Did you say there needed to be more funding?

J. Duffy: The \$2,500 is coming out of the master plan.

M. Miville: The bottom line is we want to put new things into the master plan.

C. Baxter: I will give the people who were not here the last time my business card. Thank you for being here. I will suggest we meet on a Thursday night, the last week of August or the first week of September.

M. Ouellette: The last Thursday in August is the first day of school.

C. Baxter: Let's say it will be September 4.

Meeting adjourned at 7:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

AnnMarie White
Recording Clerk