

Official

MINUTES
HOOKSETT PLANNING BOARD MEETING
MASTER PLAN WORKSHOP
HOOKSETT TOWN HALL CHAMBERS (Room 105)
35 Main Street
Monday, October 26, 2015
6:00 PM

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:00 P.M.

INTRODUCE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

PRESENT: D. Marshall (Chairman), T. Prasol, Muamer Durakovic, P. Scarpetti (arrived at 6:14pm), and F. Kotowski.

ALTERNATES: Denise Grafton

EXCUSED: Tom Walsh (Vice-Chairman), D. Winterton (Town Council Rep.) and Michael DiBitetto (Alternate)

STAFF: JoAnn Duffy (Town Planner) and Jim Donison (Assistant Director of Public Works/Town Engineer)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MASTER PLAN WORKSHOP

J. Duffy: The introduction and vision needs revision, zoning is the same except for urban residential and change of the performance zone. The existing land use for each category is available through the Assessing Department.

D. Marshall: Is Southern New Hampshire Planning (SNHP) keeping the zoning map on computer or do you have that?

J. Duffy: We only have the pdf and SNHU was updating it for us each time we had a change.

D. Marshall: Do they have the Performance Zone on their file?

J. Duffy: Yes.

D. Marshall: Then it is a matter of reprinting that?

J. Duffy: Yes.

D. Marshall: Is that true of the land use map?

J. Duffy: That has not been updated since this plan was put together.

D. Marshall: Do you have that file?

J. Duffy: Yes.

D. Marshall: Chapter 3 will be a matter of updating the maps due to the definitions.

J. Duffy: We need to add two definitions, update the table, the map, the summary of the various districts, and the zoning map.

D. Marshall: Bringing that up to date will require both our staff and the Southern New Hampshire Planning staff.

J. Duffy: Correct.

D. Marshall: Regarding the vision, do you believe the Community Profile we had recently changed anything?

J. Duffy: A lot of things that came out were the same. The biggest things were a community center, better communication, a traffic light at Industrial Park Drive, to bring in different forms of alternative transportation, adopt a complete street strategy for construction projects incorporating multi-modal transportation, create signage for trails, trail heads, and parking areas, a bike/walking path along the railroad from SNHU to the village, a long range planning committee for education, a cable access channel, and address the infrastructure for water/sewer.

D. Marshall: Do we rewrite the vision section to match the specific categories that were in the Community Profile which would be taking recommendations that were in the original one and moving them into the proper category, unless we determine they are unrealistic or something that has been completed?

F. Kotowski: We can look at what has been done from 2004, cross that out, and incorporate the information received in the latest Community Profile. If it is a duplication it could be emphasized that this has been on-going for a long time.

D. Marshall: If we look at the discussions we have had with regional planning agencies throughout the state, a master plan is not a wish list. It is to take a realistic view of what your community should look like. That means that if there is no chance of getting funding for something, it will not happen.

F. Kotowski: That is a reality, however, I believe the plan ought to reflect the wishes of the people that develop it. They may not be achievable, but I think anything the public has offered to the plan should be in there.

D. Marshall: I disagree with that. This Planning Board, along with staff, has an obligation to present a future plan that reflects the desires of the public but also the reality. We have been taught that from regional planning agencies.

F. Kotowski: I believe that grants and federal money become available that we are not aware of.

D. Marshall: We all know the transportation and CMAC funds are available every two years, but you have to compete for them.

F. Kotowski: Unless an item is on the list you cannot take it to the legislature.

T. Prasol: I understand that we have to be realistic, and some of this may not come to fruition, however, the community needs to feel like they have been heard.

D. Marshall: How do we respond when the public asks why we have not done this?

F. Kotowski: Let them know the money isn't there.

P. Scarpetti: Could you put wordage in stating that something is on a wish list?

F. Kotowski: Maybe the Planning Board could prioritize these things and let the public know what items may happen, a potential time frame, and those items that are likely not to happen.

D. Marshall: There could be a statement in the introduction stating that the recommendations that are outlined have been put forth by the public, however, the public must realize that implementation on those recommendations depends on available funds.

F. Kotowski: I like that.

D. Marshall: Chapter 4, Community Facilities and Services, is the departments updating their figures and should be an easy rewrite with cooperation from them.

J. Donison: As part of Chapter 4, one of the items we are looking at is the TIFF district for the sewer district around exit 11. That would be a recommendation to include in the master plan.

D. Marshall: Chapter 5, Population and Housing? Would that be updating the tables?

J. Duffy: Yes.

D. Marshall: I assume we would be going to the SNHPC for this?

J. Donison: We will do as much as we can in-house. We may need to hire interns or go to SNHPC.

D. Marshall: SNHPC has most of the demographics. Roads and transportation?

J. Duffy: The recommendations of the last master plan were to develop and encourage alternative routes, encourage public transportation, improve pedestrian facilities (sidewalks), improve highway

signage, improve street identification signs to be more visible at night, pursue a transportation improvement plan, pursue government grants for road safety improvements which we have been doing, verify the center line of Rt. 3, improve street lighting, improve street beautification, study feasibility of a bus route, support the needs of local organizations to provide transportation to people with limited means, develop a long term plan for vehicles and pedestrians. From the new community profile, suggestions were for more access across the river, Exit 11 development to include river crossing, and sidewalks/roads to connect Donati field to each other.

D. Grafton: Was there a traffic study done when the bridge was under construction?

D. Marshall: That is done each year. It was done prior to the bridge closing, and now is the time for the annual counting. Due to timing, we missed having it during the closure.

D. Grafton: The signals should be synced.

D. Marshall: The state said that because of the spacing between we can sync some but not all of them.

F. Kotowski: I think they are synced pretty well.

D. Marshall: Economic development has been done?

J. Duffy: Yes.

D. Marshall: Regarding that, I would recommend doing any updating of the tables. A lot of those would be census dependent. We could have SNHPC take a look at them. What about Conservation and Natural Resources?

F. Kotowski: A lot of accomplishments have happened since this was written. That whole thing has been looked at and updated. The Conservation Commission, Parks and Recreation, and staff could handle that.

D. Marshall: How did the chapter on education originally get written?

J. Duffy: It was written by a committee of people interested in the schools that was chaired by Joanne McHugh.

D. Marshall: She was on the school board. Would you turn this over to the school board and supervisory union and ask if they would review and update it?

F. Kotowski: I think that is where it belongs.

D. Marshall: Chapter 11 is regarding the village. There has been a lot of visioning and opinions on the village, but no one seems to want it.

F. Kotowski: If the people don't want it, it won't happen.

D. Marshall: Correct.

P. Scarpetti: It think the only way to do it is with grant money.

D. Marshall: Even if you have rehabilitation or historic preservation funds, the people don't want change. I don't know why the issue is being pushed. This is not the public will.

F. Kotowski: What came out during the last Community Profile? Is there still preference to turning that into a historical district?

J. Duffy: The Village wasn't brought up as a separate topic. Under recreation and cultural, they would like to see a downtown area with restaurants or a town center. They are looking for a "center of town".

D. Marshall: There is no center of town in Hooksett. Lambert Park was developed with a gazebo and boat launch.

J. Duffy: I believe that is used by the people that live there but others might not want to drive there.

D. Marshall: Head's Pond is proposing a common area.

J. Duffy: That will be at the edge of town. Could there be a gazebo at Donati Park with community events? I believe they are looking for an actual town center.

D. Marshall: What do you want to do with that section?

J. Duffy: I don't know if it should be taken out, but I don't know that it needs to be updated at this point.

D. Marshall: Regarding natural hazards. Is this reaffirming the hazard mitigation plan?

J. Duffy: Yes. Town Council is about to adopt that in November.

D. Marshall: Chapter 13 is a catch-all for everything. What do we want to do about the southern leg of the by-pass?

J. Duffy: David was supposed to come back in about removing it. I don't see it happening. It is not good for the businesses along Rt. 3 to take traffic away.

D. Marshall: I wonder if it might be best to get rid of it.

J. Duffy: There is roughly \$150,000 that is sitting in an escrow account that was supposed to be used for this study.

P. Scarpetti: Regarding SNHU, as far as the road that goes through there, is there something in the deed or an agreement that the southern leg is supposed to go through that property?

D. Marshall: We have avoided them encroaching on that right-of-way. It is shown on a plan, but has never been deeded to the town. It is part of their master plan that they would like to see disappear.

P. Scarpetti: Would SNHU pay for the ability to take that off the table for the town to improve Rt. 3?

D. Marshall: My gut reaction would be no. It would be expensive to built the southern leg.

P. Scarpetti: We also need to know what their intention is for the road that they built. What that road is for can make a difference in the traffic study.

F. Kotowski: I would suggest there will be a time when things are opened up in the West Alice Avenue area and that will relieve a lot of traffic through the campus. Their intention is to run traffic around the campus and not through it. As it is now it is dangerous.

D. Marshall: They may open the road at West Alice. There is question as to why they built it. From time to time they have mentioned taking control of N. River Road, but that is a collector road and cannot happen. Expanding Martin's Ferry Road could be an option. SNHU is a great asset to the community, however, they are growing in segments and if there is a total growth, what is the impact?

F. Kotowski: They want to maintain the on-campus population and are almost at maximum capacity. I think their future is in e-learning, not increase in students on campus. I believe they would like to hire more IT personnel.

D. Marshall: Chapter 13 is checking to see the things we have already done, removing them, and adding additional things that came out of our last Community Profile. One thing is Item H, maintaining a current transportation plan. We have a good transportation plan within Southern New Hampshire's regional plan. Anything else would be any local and street improvements.

J. Duffy: There is no transportation plan for the local Hooksett roads that are maintained by the town. Usually there is such a thing and you put in CIP each year for however many dollars.

D. Marshall: Then you would have a road maintenance plan.

J. Donison: It could be referred to as a road maintenance plan. Warrant articles could be developed for road improvements.

D. Marshall: We are suggesting that recreation go to Parks and Recreation for review.

J. Duffy: There have been a number of recommendations from the Community Profile. People are looking for more recreational opportunities such as use of the river and the Lilac Bridge, but that is coming down next spring,

J. Donison: It will go out to bid in the spring for a 2016 project. That will include a bid alternate item to construct a pedestrian and utility bridge. Depending on the prices and availability of town funds, the pedestrian bridge may or may not go forward, but the utility bridge will go forward.

D. Marshall: Has there been any thought to applying for a transportation enhancement grant or CMAC?

J. Donison: We will look into that.

D. Marshall: Originally we had a transportation enhancement grant to rehabilitate the Lilac Bridge. We gave it up when the town didn't put up enough money. Sewer put up a lot of money, however, we could not ask them to do the whole thing.

J. Donison: I believe DOT has \$600,000 of funding available to remove the bridge and the Sewer Commission has \$500,000 to hang the sewer on the new bridge. The question is when we bid it out what the cost will be to tear down the old bridge and build a new pedestrian bridge with sewer.

J. Duffy: From the Community Profile for recreation, they would like to see a town center, Hooksett Youth Performing Company, public transportation to get from one part of town to another, a park and ride someplace besides exit 11, more restaurants, more hiking and biking trails, 4,000 to 5,000 sq. ft. for community outside events with restaurants, concerts, festivals, a senior/teen center, use of the river, hotel, and a bridge of flowers.

D. Marshall: The recurring thing is a community center.

J. Duffy: Some individual comments that were made were: more events like Old Home Day, more generations participate, senior center, not being able to use the river because of restrictions, you have to bring your own canoe's and kayaks, no natural swimming areas/beach/pool, can't walk to developed areas, no sidewalks or places to bike, no place to go for coffee or music, getting SNHU to participate in the community, drawing younger people, limited affordable housing, smaller lots, no art/dance opportunities for any age except in schools, library outreach, trouble getting people to participate.

D. Marshall: We should focus on what came together as a group. Are you satisfied with turning the recreation over to Parks and Recreation and working with staff?

J. Duffy: Yes, we would provide them with information.

D. Marshall: The same with turning education over to the school board supervisory union?

J. Duffy: Yes.

D. Marshall: Chapter 8, which is community facilities, is a collection of police, fire, sewer, water, municipal buildings, highway department, etc. and putting it together in a usable form. The top priorities would be Chapters 4, and 6, Community Facilities and Roads and Transportation. Chapter 8, Conservation and Natural Resources, can be sent to the Conservation Commission and have them update it.

D. Marshall: Do you need time constraints?

J. Duffy: We have to fit this in with our schedules.

D. Marshall: Could you report back to us at the November 16 meeting and give us a plan. I would encourage you to use some of the funds that have already been approved and utilize SNHPC. They have all of the data. We have the funds and those should be utilized for this.

F. Kotowski: Are there funds that your departments may be able to utilize for a limited amount of time?

J. Duffy: Most interns look to be paid.

F. Kotowski: Those funds are to bring this up-to-date, look at the visionary things, put them into draft, and bring them back to us. I don't like to see staff spending any more time than necessary, when they already have work to do. You might be able to borrow an intern from SNHPC for a short period of time. It would be nice to summarize in the new master plan what transpired since the last master plan.

D. Marshall: That could be in the introduction of any new master plan.

The Board came to a consensus that it was a good idea to include what has transpired since the last master plan in an introduction of the new master plan.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

*T. Prasol motioned to adjourn. Seconded by P. Scarpetti. **Motion carried unanimously.***

The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

**AnnMarie White
Recording Clerk**