

1 **LONDONDERRY, NH MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THE**
2 **AUGUST 2, 2012 MEETING IN THE MOOSE HILL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

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4 Members Present: Leitha Reilly, Chair and Planning Board Representative; Marty
5 Srugis, Vice Chair and Heritage Commission Representative; Mike Speltz,
6 Conservation Commission Representative; Bob Saur, Londonderry Trailways
7 Representative; Barbara Mee, At Large Representative (Central); and Russ
8 Lagueux, At Large Representative (South)

9
10 Also Present: Community Development Director André Garron, AICP; Town Planner
11 Cynthia May, ASLA; GIS Manager John Vogl; and Community Development
12 Secretary Jaye Trottier

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14 **I. Call to Order**

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16 Leitha Reilly called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

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18 **II. Approval of Minutes – July 25, 2012**

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20 It was decided to postpone approval of the July 25 minutes to the September
21 26 meeting to give a larger compliment of members present at that meeting
22 the opportunity to vote.

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24 [B. Mee and M. Speltz arrive at 7:02 PM].

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26 **III. Continued Review of Master Plan Discussion Draft**

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28 L. Reilly asked Steering Committee members if they had any further general
29 observations, questions, or comments since their discussion on July 25 with
30 Town Planning and Urban Design Collaborative (TPUDC).

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32 [R. Lagueux arrived at 7:04].

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34 M. Srugis inquired about the buildings depicted on the southern side of the
35 proposed road running behind the Town common bandstand as conceptualized
36 on page 165. L. Reilly explained that despite recent newspaper articles
37 describing the potential for residential buildings there, TPUDC had suggested
38 small commercial structures that would serve the needs associated with the
39 common (e.g. a small store). This was a result of input received from residents
40 that the common area is underutilized. M. Srugis also asked how that scenario
41 could be possible if the Town forest is protected land. B. Saur and M. Speltz
42 explained that there is no conservation easement or other permanent
43 protection associated with the Town forest. L. Reilly reiterated that ideas in the
44 plan such as villages are only conceptual in nature. Even if they are eventually
45 considered by residents for development, not all details would necessarily be
46 adopted and much analysis would be needed before initiating the process.

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48 M. Speltz expressed his goal to strike a balance in the document between its
49 conceptual nature and its potential to be a practical guide for the future.

50 Implementation will be difficult, he said, if the ideas are only ideas. B. Saur
51 countered that the practicality of the document lies in its identification of overall
52 goals and the potential routes to achieve them. It is beyond the scope of the
53 document, he said, to address any specifics if the funding needed to further
54 refine goals and priorities is not readily available. The implementation phase of
55 the master plan is the more appropriate time to consider particulars. Even
56 then, it is ultimately up to the residents and Town Council to choose specific
57 directions. L. Reilly suggested waiting to examine the implementation matrix
58 coming in the next draft to see if some priorities can be developed from the
59 many recommendations in the document. M. Speltz noted that some level of
60 specificity will be required to comply with State statutory requirements
61 concerning master plans. A. Garron added that decisions pertaining to such
62 concepts as zoning need to be made in order to achieve the visions created for
63 different areas. Various goals also need some degree of determination, even if
64 their execution is not entirely clear, since certain aspects require inclusion in
65 the Capital Improvements Plan if they are to become a reality.
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67 M. Speltz proposed that the concept of Growth Sectors and their Character
68 Zones (beginning on p. 142) is arguably the most important aspect of the plan,
69 therefore the associated map should be analyzed closely by the MPSC. GIS
70 resources could be used to develop tools that compare those proposals to
71 existing conditions such as current zoning and adopted policies like the Open
72 Space Plan. J. Vogl noted that the Master Plan is the basis for other plans in
73 town related to water, sewer, and safety. L. Reilly expressed her hope that
74 TPUDC will identify "return on investment" factors for each recommendation,
75 including those that are qualitative such as aesthetics and standard of living.
76 R. Lagueux recommended two resources related to sustainability of water that
77 could be mentioned in the plan; the Stormwater Center at the Civil Engineering
78 College of the University of New Hampshire, and the Department of
79 Environmental Service's report due out next month regarding water
80 sustainability statewide. As they did at the July meeting, Committee members
81 stated the importance for TPUDC to cite references and resources that will
82 maintain the plan's credibility. M. Speltz asked if other members had found any
83 reference in the utilities and transportation section regarding the effects of
84 climate change on the town's infrastructure, e.g. how the town can better deal
85 with the hundred year floods that are occurring more than every 100 years. L.
86 Reilly said there was some, but that TPUDC has already been asked to add
87 more facts and context to the next draft.
88

89 B. Saur communicated positive feedback from a business owner in North
90 Londonderry who was impressed with the presentation of the document,
91 particularly with the vision of sectioning different areas in town into villages and
92 corridors. R. Lagueux stated his confidence that the design of this Master Plan
93 will make it more regularly utilized than past versions. While the concepts may
94 not be specific, developers who approach staff with an idea for any given part
95 of town can be shown the vision for that area. The inclusion of the "community
96 report card," he continued, will help keep the document at the forefront where
97 it belongs.
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99 L. Reilly entertained input from the public. Ann Chiampa, 28 Wedgewood
100 Drive, stated her concerns that she did not recognize Londonderry when looking
101 at the document. Input from the phone survey and Planapalooza, she stated,
102 reflected the desire of many to keep the Londonderry the way it is, yet the
103 graphics in the draft show drastic changes that would transform the town to
104 more of a city. She communicated her concern that developers could look at
105 the plan and assume that residents are looking for everything represented in
106 the document. In her experience, most residents do not want the level of
107 development depicted, particularly in the near future. She suggested that
108 instead of seemingly creating a new town, the graphics could identify
109 Londonderry's existing conditions, upon which TPUDC could then expand.
110 Aspects in the renderings that do exist today should be labeled to better orient
111 the reader and separate the conceptual features. In addition, she stated that
112 the document's language and pictures have not been tailored to Londonderry.
113 She asked that the draft be posted on the front page of the website. J. Vogl
114 replied he would see to that.

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116 Steering committee members attempted to address A. Chiampa's concerns. At
117 the July 25 meeting, TPUDC had been instructed to integrate both photographs
118 and language related specifically to Londonderry. Committee members
119 explained that the graphics used by TPUDC are purely conceptual in nature and
120 are offered as a guide to handle inevitable development. If land is not
121 protected by some method such as a conservation easement or Town
122 ownership, the town has no control over what the owner chooses to do with it.
123 A Master Plan gives residents the chance to envision how they prefer different
124 areas of town be developed so that when change is proposed, there is some
125 direction with which to steer that development at a fundamental level. The
126 Master Plan also provides opportunities to improve those areas that were not
127 originally developed with foresight. To preserve and add to the character and
128 resources that people already value, a plan should be in place to deal with
129 growth *before* it occurs. Such a plan also addresses the needs posed by the
130 alternative land uses preferred by younger generations (e.g. living in a higher
131 density village where amenities are close by, as opposed to living in a low
132 density subdivision removed from commercial activities). Creating an overall
133 vision will make the town more attractive to new residents, as well as the
134 children of current residents who may want to stay in Londonderry. Leaving
135 Londonderry the way it is now, M. Speltz noted, is simply not an option. The
136 only two choices are to continue to develop the town the way it has been or to
137 pursue new ideas. What needs to be done in light of A. Chiampa's comments,
138 members stated, is to better identify the renderings in the plan as conceptual
139 so they are not interpreted as anything more than that. The concepts within
140 the draft need to be presented in a way that does not shock the reader, but
141 rather challenges them to consider meeting their needs and achieving their
142 aspirations in the face of unavoidable change. It was further noted that growth
143 typically occurs in increments, so it should be made clear that if residents
144 choose to adopt any of the visions depicted in the draft, those changes will not
145 take place overnight. While the main focus of the master plan is on the next
146 ten years, it is not restricted to that and can represent ideas for the distant
147 future as well.

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IV. Next Steps

Comments from Committee members are due to staff by end of business on August 3. Synthesis of those comments is due from staff to TPUDC by August 10. The MPSC will be sharing a booth with the Town Council at Old Home Days to encourage attendees to read the drafts and convey how relatively easy it is to absorb. An interim draft is due from TPUDC on September 7. A policy maker briefing will follow on September 12 at a joint meeting of the Planning Board and the Town Council. Between September 7 and 21, the MPSC and residents will have the opportunity to comment on the interim draft. The last citizen's workshop will then take place on October 24 at 6:00 PM at the High School Cafeteria to give people a final opportunity to comment. TPUDC is scheduled to deliver the final master plan on November 11. L. Reilly noted that while the intent is to follow the compressed schedule, changes can be made if they are warranted.

V. Other Business

There was no other business.

VI. Adjournment

M. Speltz made a motion to adjourn the meeting. M. Srugis seconded the motion. Vote on the motion: 6-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jaye Trottier, Community Development Secretary