

April 7, 2009

Town Planner Screening Committee

Present: Barbara Perry, Joanne Coppinger, Jean Beadle, Joe Skiffington,
Natt King, Bob Stephens

Absent: Judy Ryerson (w/prior notification)

Carter Terenzini opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m. and began a review of various matters before the committee.

1.) RSA 91-A: He distributed a memo on the highlights of 91-A as to its applicability to this body, the requirement to post and for discussion to happen in these posted meetings, the fact that everything sent to them and from them was a public document, the best practices relative to the use of emails and telephone participation by a member, and non-public sessions. He also said he would produce the minutes for them and described them more as a reader digest versions than a transcript. Natt asked if they really only had to contain those present and the motions. Carter said they were supposed to have an overview of what was discussed as well as the motions themselves.

2) Job Description: He distributed the latest version and said it would be acted upon on Thursday. Folks should become familiar with it to structure questions and homework assignments that would draw out the needed skills and qualities. Joe asked where this came from and Joanne said it was a group effort from an original drafted by Carter. Carter will notify all ASAP if it is changed at all on Thursday evening.

3.) Advertising Campaign: Carter reviewed where the position had been advertised or posted (About 140 places now) and the fact that the position was "open until filled". There was general discussion of when the review commences (to give candidates notice of when to get there resume in [April 30, 2009]) and how they may add candidates that come to them after that date but before they are deeply committed into final interviews or a job offer.

4) Questions and Scoring Matrix: Carter distributed a memo on the various types of questions they needed to consider and whether or not to assign any sort of "homework". Natt described an assessment center (plot plan evaluation) Heidi Griffin could help them undertake. The consensus seemed to be that would not be practical for the first round of (potentially 15+/-) interviews but may make sense as the candidates are fewer in number. Carter suggested it be part of the day long interview process with the BoS.

There was general discussion of how closely must the backgrounds match our community (i.e. maybe they have worked for the City of Nashua). The suggestion was you needed to look at what they did and the totality of it. We need a person skilled in both sides of the coin; a long range planner (dreamer/master plan) and a short range planner (i.e. site plan review).

There was discussion of when references will be done (as we get down to the list of the top 6+/-; perhaps before the list goes to the BoS for the reference check) and the background check (perhaps as we are even closer to the top three). The consensus was to interview all those who seemed to pass the initial cut for compliance with minimum qualifications.

Carter described a potential scoring matrix and process. Joe wanted to be able to add some candidate specific questions (i.e. gaps in resumes) and it was agreed that could be done although the answers might appear in the non-scored section of the matrix. Once all the scores are tallied the group would then discuss whether or not a candidate really should be placed higher/lower than their initial score reflected. Although that would be formally done at the final meeting it was the consensus to set aside some time after each round of interviews to share general impression of those they had just seen.

5.) Telephone Interviews: Telephone interviews would be considered for those simply too far away (West Cost or Iowa as an example) for a trip to make sense.

6.) Next Dates & Steps: The group decided to invite questions from the Planning Board, ZBA, and Concom members by NOON of 04/13. Bonnie would then compile all of this into a long list they could work from that evening. Carter will bring the applications received to date to each meeting so they could see what was coming in as it was coming in.

7.) Selection of Chair: Carter said he usually set the date and ran the first meeting just to get a group up and running but it was best if they had someone for him to work with and a person to act as the face of the group when making reports and the like.

Motion: Bob Stephens moved to nominate Joanne Coppinger as Chairman.

Jean Beadle Seconded.

Motion Carried – Unanimously.

Joanne asked if they need to be formal or would a "consensus" work. For most things Carter thought a consensus would work but at times, electing a chair, adjourning, confirming a final list of names; a motion might be in order just for the formal record. There being no further business there was a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Barbara Perry moved to adjourn at 8:14 P.M.

Jean Beadle Seconded.

Motion Carried – Unanimously.