

Washington Planning Board
Public Hearing Minutes

June 2, 2015

- 0.0 Assembly: 6:30PM
 - 0.1 Members present: Cook, Crandall, Schwartz, Williams
 - 0.2 Alternates present: Kluk, Terani
 - 0.3 Members and Alternates Absent: Marshall, Dagesse, Dulac, Russell
 - 0.4 Visitors: Lolly Gilbert, Carolyn Bullock, Kathy West, Kitty West, Gwen Gaskell, Pete Martin, Diana Hanssen, Steve Hanssen, Jack Sheehy, Joan Sheehy, Christopher Krone, Tara Van Meter, Jon Gibson, John Butcher, Michael Kluk, Dennis Kelly, Al Krygeris, Mary Krygeris, Andrew Hatch, Jed Schwartz

- 1.0 Crandall called the Public Hearing to order at 6:30PM.

He welcomed the public and explained that this is a public hearing on the six Master Plan Update chapters and Vision Statement. He explained that the pictures used on the cover of the document are some of the paintings done by Washington Elementary School students last year for the Community Workshop and depict what Washington means to them. Crandall spoke about why we are updating the Master Plan, touching on guiding growth, state RSA's that recommend updating every 5 to 10 years and providing planning guidance for the town. He mentioned the Community Survey and Community Workshop components of the update that took place in 2013 and 2014. He listed the chapters that will comprise the finished Master Plan and what they will contain. He said that this hearing is the public's chance to have input on the Vision Statement and the specific goals and recommendations for the six drafted chapters.

He gave the public time to read over the Vision Statement in the handout and asked for comments. There being no comments, he turned the presentation over to Jean Kluk to run through the draft chapters. He stated that if anyone had comments to make after the hearing, they could email them to the Planning Board or contact a member.

Kluk then introduced the chapters. Kitty West had a comment on zoning, she said we have one zone now and she doesn't think we need to change that. Crandall said that he realizes zoning is a bad word for some people but 8 to 1 people wanted separate lot sizes for different uses (75% were in favor of this approach according to the survey).

Kluk read through the goals for the Land Use and Zoning Chapter and asked for comments on them. Kitty West asked about what would be considered appropriate commercial development. Kluk answered that it would be a business that didn't conflict with the rural character and the neighborhood. West asked about a Laundromat. Kluk said the board would have to consider the location and appropriateness for the location in addition to other considerations. Jon Gibson commented that in the May Planning Board minutes a suggestion was made that we would not want to have a Heritage Commission in Washington. Kluk said that we are still considering one and it is talked about in the Cultural/Historic chapter of the Master Plan. He said that the summary states that history is important to the town. Kluk pointed out the "Constraints to Development" map displayed at the back of the room.

Next she covered the Natural Resources Chapter goals and there were no comments made.

Economic Development was next and Kitty West asked about the town's uniqueness. Kluk said that the town is rich in its own history, there are unique artisans that live in town and we should embrace all that is special in town. We have the highest (altitude) town center in the state. Gwen Gaskell mentioned the Civil War Monument. Kluk said that we can utilize these to our benefit. Gibson asked about communications and how could we pressure the phone company to bring in faster broadband service. Kluk said that we are covering this issue in the Utilities Chapter. Schwartz said that fast fiber service is available on Washington Drive, as a trial for Granite State Communications and they may expand it to more in town. Dennis Kelly said that there is a federal movement to improve broadband in rural regions, such as ours.

Kluk read through the goals of the Recreation Chapter and no comments were made.

She then presented the Cultural and Historical Resources Chapter goals and pointed out that there was a map of the cultural and historic sites at the back of the room. Kitty West asked about the preservation of cellar holes. Kluk said they are a historical resource and feels it would be worthwhile to survey and inventory them. She was at a session at the NHOEP Planning Conference where the NH Historic Alliance said they have a program where they will come out to train volunteers to do inventories of sites. Steve Hanssen mentioned that dam sites are also historic sites and should be noted. Kelly said that there is a problem when property rights can interfere with inventorying of historic sites. Kluk said that it would be discussed with owners and their thoughts would be respected. Jack Sheehy said that you could identify them without saying where they are. Pete Martin commented that there is always a danger of treasure hunters taking artifacts from a site. Gaskell said that much of this information is in the Historical Society Building in a notebook and they have maps and pictures that you can look at. She offered to take anyone interested on a tour of the Historic Society building and Museum. It is full of educational items and there is a pictorial tour of old Washington. They have changing displays and she invites everyone to appreciate what is available by visiting often. Andrew Hatch asked about the ordering and priority of the goals in each chapter. Kluk said we would come up with a priority list of goals when we are all done.

Kluk read the Population Chapter goal and asked for comments. She pointed out the chart of demographic information at the back of the room. Dianna Hanssen commented that she was fascinated reading this chapter and the information in it, Kluk agreed.

Kluk said that there is some repetition in the chapters because they all interrelate. There is a common theme of town communication and collaboration between town boards.

She then covered the next steps in the process of finishing up the Master Plan update, which include considering public input from this evening, continuing to draft the rest of the chapters, then implement the recommendations over the next 10 years. Kitty West asked how we would do that. Crandall said that our plan is to have an all town boards meeting and divvy up goals and recommendations to the appropriate town boards/committees/commissions. Kluk said that if there are things that are near and dear to your heart, you should attend meetings and speak with the boards and give your input. West said that means she should attend a Planning Board meeting because she is interested in zoning. She said we now have 4 acre zoning but there are over 1000 lots under 2 acres that are grandfathered. She wanted to know how we can stop creating new ones. Kluk commented that not all the small lots are buildable. Steve Terani commented that

we need young people more involved in town affairs. Gibson asked about when the Master Plan Update Committee meets and whether they are public. Kluk said they are always public and posted and our next meeting is Wednesday, June 16th at 2PM.

Kelly said he has travelled all of New England and no one knows where Washington is, he thinks promotion is a mixed blessing.

Kluk introduced the Master Plan Update Committee members – Lolly Gilbert, Carolyn Bullock, Annie Bissonnette, Bob Williams, Steve Terani, Jim Crandall, herself, Jean Kluk, as chair and Nan Schwartz as co-chair.

Crandall stated that we would continue to take comments from the public and the recommendations are still as work-in-progress. Kluk said that we might try to include things we have accomplished each year in the Town's Annual Report.

Hatch asked about the timeline for the completion of the rest of the Mater Plan.

Kluk said we would continue to draft the rest of the chapters this summer and hold another public hearing in September, with an all boards meeting in the fall.

Hatch asked if we might do a presentation at Town Meeting. Both Crandall and Kluk thought that was a great idea.

Crandall thanked the public for coming and closed the public hearing at 7:12PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nan Schwartz