



Town of Sudbury

Master Plan Steering Committee

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MINUTES

JUNE 21, 2019 AT 8:45 AM

POLICE STATION MEETING ROOM, 75 HUDSON ROAD, SUDBURY, MA

Members Present: Vice-Chair Susan Asbedian-Ciaffi, At-Large; Nathalie Forssell, At-Large; Jan Hardenbergh, At-Large; Dan Carty, Board of Selectmen; Janie Dretler, Board of Selectmen; Patricia Guthy, Commission on Disability; Lisa Kouchakdjian, Sudbury Public School Committee; Amy Lepak, Sudbury Housing Authority; Robert May, Council on Aging; John Riordan, Zoning Board of Appeals; and Dick Williamson, Park and Recreation Commission.

Members Absent: Chair John Sugrue, At-Large; Ellen Joachim, Lincoln Sudbury Regional High School Committee; Dave Henkels, Sudbury Conservation Commission; Lee Swanson, Historic Districts Commission; and Fred Taylor, Historic Districts Commission.

Others Present: Adam Duchesneau, Director of Planning & Community Development; Beth Suedmeyer, Environmental Planner; Nate Kelly, Principal, Horsley Witten Group; Krista Moravec, Senior Planner, Horsley Witten Group; Fabiola Alikpokou, Staff Planner, Horsley Witten Group; and Rory Fitzgerald, Planner, Fitzgerald Halliday.

Public in Attendance: Leon Goodman; Kay Bell; Jennifer Roberts, Board of Selectmen; Jan Costa, Historical Commission; Taryn Trexler, Historical Commission; and Sue Rushfirth, Commission on Disability.

Welcome

Ms. Asbedian-Ciaffi opened the meeting at 8:45 a.m.

Regular Meeting Business

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Asbedian-Ciaffi announced the May 17, 2019 minutes would be discussed later in the meeting when a quorum of the Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) would be present.

Administrative Report

Ms. Suedmeyer noted Mr. Duchesneau would be arriving late due to his presence at a Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) meeting.

First Public Forum

Ms. Moravec provided a summary of the Public Forum and asked for input from the MPSC members. She noted various members felt the location was lacking accessibility and the space was not friendly to those with a disability or those who are aging. Ms. Moravec confirmed the accessibility factor would be a priority when scheduling future public meetings.

At this time Ms. Kouchakdjian arrived at the meeting and a quorum of the MPSC was achieved.

Mr. Hardenbergh indicated it was interesting that each table at the Forum had a different concern/topic and suggested group feedback could be shared if another Forum took place. Ms. Moravec acknowledged a more focused discussion might be beneficial along with the participants' ability to walk to other tables and provide feedback on various topics.

Ms. Guthy had concerns about the Forum accessibility factor and the set-up of the room.

Ms. Moravec confirmed such discussion would be properly captured in the edited Forum Summary.

Ms. Moravec reviewed the worksheet comments made by Forum attendees regarding questions 1, 2, and 3.

Ms. Lepak commented on Question #3 regarding housing and stated some of the comments presented were not very clear. Ms. Moravec responded she would follow-up with the person who ran that table. Mr. Hardenbergh suggested clarifying summary comments made by participants were not necessarily factual and not reflective of beliefs of Town representatives or related professionals. Ms. Moravec agreed with the suggestion and stated modifications could not be made with contributing survey information, emphasizing Forum comments should be viewed as a brainstorming-type session and not a commitment of statements. Ms. Moravec confirmed the team would ensure the chart was written correctly.

Ms. Guthy emphasized it was most important that the Forum Summary was presented correctly, even with a disclaimer.

At this time Ms. Dretler arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Suedmeyer mentioned such statements were a reflection of the public input piece within the Master Plan process.

Mr. Carty explained the concept of the "voice of customer" exercise displayed at the Forum, which depicts what people see as what the current state is. Ms. Suedmeyer agreed this was one part of the public engagement piece.

Ms. Moravec asked members if they were surprised by anything that was said or heard. Ms. Lepak said she was surprised no one mentioned agriculture. Ms. Dretler mentioned the historical character and rural agricultural aspect were mentioned at her table. Ms. Lepak indicated there was a vast difference between supporting agriculture as a business and viewing it as historical character. Ms. Lepak suggested reaching out to agricultural businesses in town.

Ms. Moravec noted agricultural businesses in town were included in the Outreach Plan and the Master Plan update would be targeting that population.

Mr. May felt disappointed to find that nowhere was the Council on Aging (COA) mentioned as an involved/interested group. He asserted traffic and transportation were areas of COA interest and involvement. Ms. Moravec asserted the team knows the COA is a big part of the process. Related discussion took place.

At this time Mr. Williamson arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Moravec confirmed text edits would be made to strengthen language and asked members to submit any additional comments they might have. The Summary would be posted on the webpage.

Transportation Baseline Report

Ms. Moravec stated additional comments regarding the Transportation Baseline Chapter were submitted by Mr. Carty, Senior Center Director Debra Galloway, and Alice Sapienza, the Town's Livable Sudbury Ambassador.

At this time, Ms. Moravec introduced Rory Fitzgerald, Planner at Fitzgerald and Halliday. Ms. Fitzgerald reviewed the following areas of:

- Increase in Traffic Volumes in Sudbury
- Crash Analysis
- Trails
- Commuting Patterns Over Time
- Journey to Work Data

Ms. Fitzgerald indicated most Sudbury residents were working in Boston, Waltham, Framingham, Cambridge, and Newton.

Ms. Fitzgerald then itemized the findings heard at the Public Forum:

- Increase in traffic congestion, especially during rush hour
- Traffic being one of Sudbury's biggest challenges in the near future
- Mobility issues especially for seniors, low-income residents, and people without cars.

Mr. May asked the MPSC if they believed the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail would help to decrease congestion in town. Mr. Williamson stated cyclists might help reduce the amount of congestion. Related discussion continued.

Ms. Suedmeyer mentioned the presence of significant data regarding the use of cycling to run errands and to go to school/work, which creates a separate accommodation that increases a sense of safety.

Ms. Dretler requested the "Journey to Work" graphic as presented by Ms. Fitzgerald be included in the Transportation Baseline Chapter document. Ms. Fitzgerald agreed to do so.

Ms. Fitzgerald presented additional follow-up items which the team heard:

- The Transportation Chapter was very auto-dependent
- Questions about projects related to work underway with surrounding towns

- More discussion regarding the needs of the disabled, older adults, and those without cars
- Desire to expand the walking and bicycling networks in town.
- Incorporation of comments received
- Include recommendations from the Livable Sudbury Report

Ms. Roberts mentioned Route 117/North Road is a growing problem for Sudbury and advocated for road improvements on Route 2 to help the traffic issue on Route 117/North Road. She stressed the idea of working with other Towns to encourage them to improve roads, which would help Sudbury's traffic problems.

At this time Mr. Riordan arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Moravec suggested implementing policies to reach out to the neighboring Towns such as Concord. She noted it might be beneficial because those neighboring Towns might have similar concerns.

Ms. Dretler noted Concord and Weston are currently engaged in town-wide traffic assessments and suggested Sudbury might want to do the same type of assessment. She further suggested obtaining some of those traffic studies might help Sudbury.

Ms. Kouchakdjian recommended reaching out to Town legislators and engaging with them in efforts to coordinate such planning with neighboring communities. She stated this was more than a local issue and was a concern for the Commonwealth as well. Ms. Roberts agreed. A related group discussion took place.

Ms. Costa commented she lives a mile from Route 117/North Road and has observed development becoming the driving force in determining traffic patterns. She said surrounding Towns have a tendency to construct multi-family housing very close to Town lines, which impacts Sudbury. Ms. Costa felt the key piece was understanding what the Towns' development plans were for the future. Ms. Dretler agreed and noted the proposed Quarry North/Melone Property development on Route 117/North Road would be contributing to this issue of clustered developments located near Town lines.

Ms. Kouchakdjian suggested inviting legislators to a MPSC meeting and sharing these traffic-related concerns with them. Ms. Moravec stated the decision was for the MPSC. Ms. Roberts indicated she thought the invitation was a good idea.

Mr. Hardenbergh suggested the MPSC prepare agendas for such meetings with legislators. Ms. Suedmeyer stated it might be best to invite legislators when the draft community plan/blueprint was prepared and then this could be sent to the legislators' offices with an invite to attend meetings.

Ms. Guthy recommended utilization of the Livable Sudbury Report when addressing the transportation topic. Ms. Moravec agreed the Livable Sudbury Report had great transportation strategies the MPSC should consider.

Ms. Guthy commented she did not see much in the Forum Summary regarding disabilities or ADA issues.

Mr. May indicated he lived in north Sudbury and stated there was major development slated for Maynard, which was very close to north Sudbury. Ms. Kouchakdjian maintained such development was reason for legislative engagement/awareness as soon as possible.

Mr. Duchesneau commented about the continued efforts of the Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC) subregion of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to address transportation issues in the region. He noted the entity was constantly seeking methods to improve transportation and mitigate traffic issues, but stressed this was a very difficult area.

Ms. Suedmeyer announced the Town was receiving state funding to move forward with the implementation of a Complete Streets Policy and Prioritization Plan. She indicated the Department of Public Works (DPW) would be overseeing the contract with a consultant to evaluate the existing conditions for bicycle and pedestrian accommodations in town. She affirmed the Complete Streets Policy would serve to establish the framework indicating how the Town would evaluate these types of transportation improvements, while ensuring a system would be in place for prioritization funding. Such funding would be available for the construction these projects, but would come at a later phase.

Ms. Roberts asked if Town funding was no longer being provided for Town walkways. Ms. Suedmeyer explained the walkway funding had previously been provided by various Town funds (including Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds), but CPA funding for these walkways in other communities had been challenged in the courts. For that reason, the method of using CPA funds has been put on hold until the new Prioritization Plan funding was in place. At such time, the Town would have a baseline platform for considering additional funding.

Mr. Williamson provided an update regarding the Mass Central Rail Trail. Mr. Carty commented the current plan involved the state's Department of Conservation and Recreation and Eversource, and he confirmed that until the Eversource power-line legal action is resolved, the Town would not support that project as originally proposed.

Ms. Roberts stressed the importance of parking provisions when planning for commuter transportation, as well as planning for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

Ms. Suedmeyer explained the Sudbury Chamber of Commerce had approached businesses along the route 20/Boston Post Road transportation shuttle route to encourage some parking be allowed on the various business parking lots. Thus far, the businesses are not responding favorably.

Mr. May asked if more description could be included in the narrative addressing the Scenic Roads in town.

Mr. Goodman referenced the importance of the mobility aspect and the commuter rail as referenced in the Public Forum Summary. He asserted his support for the opposition to the Eversource project near the rail trail and offered to present his Staged Rail Trial presentation at another meeting. He added a pedestrian bike trail and a commuter transit line would be preferred.

Mr. Goodman provided several copies of the document for the members to review. Ms. Asbedian-Ciaffi asked Mr. Goodman if his proposal was currently in place anywhere. Mr. Goodman responded it was being used in Chelsea in connection with the Silver Line bus service.

Ms. Dretler asked Mr. Goodman if he had made the presentation to the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization. He replied he had presented to MAPC, the Planning Director in Hudson, to the Sudbury Senior Center last year, and to several state legislators, including Representative Carmine Gentile, Senator James Eldridge, and to Senator Michael Barrett's staff.

Ms. Kouchakdjian asked about the type of bus used in the proposal. and Mr. Goodman replied it was a green bus system. A related group discussion continued.

Ms. Moravec detailed the updated projections from the University of Massachusetts – Donahue Institute (USDI) and MAPC completed in 2018.

Public Outreach Update

Ms. Moravec stated a follow-up survey was implemented after the Public Forum and would close on June 24, 2019. She reported 157 people have responded to the survey thus far and results would be incorporated in the Summary.

Ms. Moravec mentioned a follow-up abbreviated Public Forum session would be presented to the Sudbury Seniors during the summer. She suggested continuing the MIABs (Meetings in a Box) topics.

Ms. Moravec reported two Op-Eds had been published to date and requested an MPSC member write the next Op-Ed to be published in July. Mr. Carty agreed to write the article for July publication.

Ms. Asbedian-Ciaffi stated the next available outreach opportunity might present during the Town's July 4th celebration events. Ms. Moravec suggested that a Master Plan table with informational handouts could be set up.

Ms. Suedmeyer announced the Touch-A-Truck event would be held on July 10, 2019 at the Goodnow Library and recommended a Master Plan table be set up there. She suggested using the Master Plan pinwheel to entertain the children. Members volunteered for coverage at the event.

Mr. May stated the Commuter Rail shuttle ribbon cutting would be on June 24, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. at the Shaw's Supermarket. Ms. Moravec stated she would work on something for distribution at the shuttle opening.

Ms. Roberts recommended composing a general Master Plan flyer to be posted at the Library, the Senior Center, the Flynn Building, and in other locations.

Open Discussion

Mr. Hardenbergh queried about the deadline for the feedback from the MIAB (Meeting in a Box). Ms. Moravec responded the deadline was slated for the end of June.

As a matter of follow-up, Ms. Kouchakdjian stated the Sudbury Public School Committee (SPS) was a member of Massachusetts ClearGov and suggested members pull up the site at Cleargov.com where detailed information was available regarding the Town and the number of SPS employees.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Asbedian-Ciaffi asked if there were any proposed changes to the May 17, 2019 minutes. Mr. Carty proposed several amendments.

Ms. Asbedian-Ciaffi motioned to approve the minutes of May 17, 2019 as amended. Ms. Guthy seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Next Meeting

Ms. Moravec stated the next MPSC meeting would be held on July 19, 2019.

Ms. Asbedian-Ciaffi motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 a.m. Mr. Carty second the motion.
The vote was unanimous.