

SUDBURY MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE (MPSC)

JOINT MEETING WITH THE PLANNING BOARD

MINUTES

January 18, 2019

Silva Room, Flynn Building, 278 Old Sudbury Road

Members Present: Chair John Sugrue, Vice-Chair Susan Asbedian-Ciaffi, Vice-Chair Jennifer Roberts, Nathalie Forssell, at-large; Jan Hardenbergh, at-large; Dan Carty, Board of Selectmen; Janie Dretler, Board of Selectmen; Pat Guthy, Committee on Disabilities; Ellen Joachim, Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School (LSRHS) School Committee; Amy Lepak, Sudbury Housing Authority; Robert May, Council on Aging; John Riordan, Zoning Board of Appeals; and Dick Williamson, Parks and Recreation Commission;.

Members Absent: Lee Swanson, Historic Districts Commission and Dave Henkels, Conservation Commission.

Others Present: John Hincks, Planning Board; Nancy Kilcoyne, Planning Board; Beth Suedmeyer (Acting Director of Planning & Community Development/Environmental Planner); Nate Kelly (Principal in Charge), Horsley Witten Group; Krista Moravec (Project Manager) – Horsley Witten Group; and Deb Takacs (Recording Secretary).

The meeting was convened at 8:40 a.m.

Welcome & Introductions

Ms. Suedmeyer welcomed everyone and thanked all members who have volunteered to work on the Master Plan for the Town of Sudbury. She introduced Nate Kelly and Krista Moravec, the Committee facilitators, and Master Planners from the Horsley Witten Group.

Ms. Suedmeyer stated the current Master Plan for the Town was filed in 2001 and stressed the Town has gone through many changes since that filing. Ms. Suedmeyer thanked all members on behalf of the Planning Board.

Ms. Moravec stated other consulting team members included Francisco Gomes and Rory Fitzgerald, of Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.; and Tom Dworetzky, of Camoin Associates. She added that Mr. Dworetzky would facilitate the economic development topics and that Mr. Gomes and Ms. Fitzgerald, would deal with the transportation and mobility topics.

Ms. Moravec affirmed the Master Plan was the vision for the future of Sudbury; reflecting where we are, where we want to go, and how to get there. She asked members to brainstorm and provide words to include on the flip chart, which were descriptive of Sudbury in 10 to 20 years.

Ms. Moravec noted there would be member differences that come up in MPSC discussions, and that the MPSC would encounter many topics for meaningful discussion; but everyone would proceed in the spirit of public respect.

Regular Meeting Business

Ms. Moravec referred to the Project Management Plan and mentioned that members could edit or change contact e-mail addresses. In the interest of not sharing personal e-mails, she suggested that group email, MasterPlan@Sudbury.ma.us, be available for public use.

Ms. Suedmeyer suggested the group email be used to communicate with the entire MPSC, but members should be refrain from deliberating on issues to maintain compliance with the Open Meeting Law. Ms. Suedmeyer and Ms. Moravec agreed most correspondence for the MPSC should go through Ms. Suedmeyer to avoid concern for Open Meeting Law violations.

Ms. Suedmeyer stated the Open Meeting Law Training members recently reviewed as part of the appointment process would ensure familiarity to those laws.

Ms. Moravec suggested the MPSC appoint a Chair and a Vice-Chair, or two Co-Chairs; adding the role of Chair is to be the face of the MPSC, run the business of the MPSC, and lead the Charge. Mr. Kelly recommended MPSC appointments be made from the at-large membership, since other community members might be perceived as having other interests in mind and the at-large members were truly representative of the citizen platform. Mr. Hincks and Ms. Kilcoyne agreed that MPSC officers are best suited when selected from the at-large membership.

Ms. Suedmeyer explained the Planning Board members decided not to be included in the MPSC as members, but Planning Board members were always welcome to attend any MPSC meeting. She added that since meetings were advertised as joint meetings with the Planning Board, in instances when a quorum of Planning Board members attended MPSC meetings, the minutes from those MSPC meetings would be approved by the Planning Board in addition to the MPSC.

Discussion of potential officers transpired. After agreement was reached, Ms. Moravec announced that Mr. Sugrue was chosen to be the Committee's Chair, and Ms. Roberts and Ms. Asbedian-Ciaffi were chosen to act as the two Vice-Chairs.

Quorum:

Ms. Suedmeyer confirmed eight members would be needed in order to establish a quorum to hold an MPSC meeting. Ms. Moravec suggested it would be wise to survey members before any MPSC meeting to determine a quorum could be achieved.

Ms. Guthy asked if a related public forum would take place. Ms. Moravec stated there would be several Master Plan public forums as the process advanced and affirmed that every MPSC meeting would have allocated time for public comment. Ms. Moravec stated it would be most beneficial if the MPSC meetings encouraged this type of public participation.

Ms. Suedmeyer agreed that because the MPSC meetings were rather informal meetings, it would be best that public comment be open throughout the meeting and not just limited to the end of meeting.

Vice-Chair Roberts inquired about the frequency of MPSC meetings. Ms. Moravec suggested the meetings be held once per month for the most part, with subcommittees probably being formed as well. She suggested the MPSC meet on the third Friday of each month at the same time, with the formation of subcommittees being less formal. Ms. Moravec indicated subcommittee meetings would report their discussions/findings back to the MPSC. The MPSC members agreed the next meeting would take place on February 15, 2019 at 8:45 a.m. Ms. Moravec detailed that subcommittees might be formed for additional focus on individual topics, stating the subcommittees would help advance particular topics of discussion, as well as allowing for better time management of the MPSC meetings.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Ms. Suedmeyer stated minutes would be taken at each MPSC meeting and the meetings would be publicly posted. Ms. Suedmeyer detailed that all MPSC draft minutes would be reviewed by the MPSC for editing and approval. She explained draft minutes would be included in the materials sent for

upcoming meetings, and stated the MPSC Chair would have the responsibility of ensuring regular meeting business is done during each work session.

Administrative Report:

Ms. Suedmeyer indicated each meeting would include the topic of Administrative Report, especially in regard to related events, meetings, publications, and subcommittee reporting.

Ms. Moravec stated Horsley Witten would facilitate all MPSC work sessions and materials for those sessions would be provided to members at least one week prior to a meeting via email, unless otherwise arranged. Ms. Suedmeyer suggested utilization of an online drop box could be available to members as well.

Mr. May commented subcommittees can sometimes be difficult to handle in the context of the Open Meeting Law and wondered if subcommittees fell under the Open Meeting Law, which he believed they did. Ms. Moravec replied that subcommittees were smaller and that two or three people could compose a subcommittee, which could meet periodically, or routinely, during the life of the project. Ms. Moravec also noted a member of the consulting team would lead those subcommittee meetings. Discussion ensued as to whether subcommittees were subject to the Open Meeting Law and should be posted accordingly. Ms. Suedmeyer stated the formalizing of subcommittees as public meetings would be appropriate and she would be looking into requirements for setting up subcommittees.

Ms. Moravec suggested the MPSC hold a meeting on a given topic, such as “transportation,” and invite the public to attend. Ms. Dretler stated adherence to administrative methods regarding public meeting protocol, was most important. Mr. Carty was in agreement. Ms. Moravec noted a survey regarding a particular meeting topic could be distributed to determine interest and then a meeting on that topic could be scheduled and posted. Mr. Kelly mentioned the concept of “working groups” and public outreach groups, as done with projects in other communities.

Mr. Williamson queried about subcommittees and quorums. Ms. Moravec stated members should not feel obligated to participate in any particular subcommittee unless they wanted to.

Mr. May explained that recently a Town Selectman had commented proposed Town plans sometimes fall apart due to lack of funding and he wanted this group to be mindful of a limited Town budget when making proposals. Ms. Moravec responded that any implementation/action schedule proposed for a Sudbury Master Plan would include the ability to be realistic and explore action items that keep this item in mind. Mr. May indicated he was concerned with the “piecing together” aspect of putting forth various Town plans. Ms. Moravec stated that is the exact intent of the Master Plan and the aspect the MPSC will be addressing.

Ms. Guthy questioned the coordination involved with the MPSC and other Town transportation and livability groups which were already established.

Mr. Carty added that as Chairman of the Town’s Transportation Committee, he affirmed he would be the coordinating link between the two groups and explained that part of the reason for his membership on the MPSC was to facilitate that process. Ms. Dretler stated that both Committee members could attend each prospective meeting and share ideas.

Ms. Moravec stated the objective of the Master Plan was to bring everything together and would not replicate what was previously done, but would incorporate study/findings/trends. She noted MPSC members should be in contact with their respective Boards and Committees.

Draft Project Management Plan

Ms. Moravec displayed the Project Management Plan and reviewed the important aspects of this draft plan. She emphasized the Management Plan is the business plan and explained the Sudbury Master Plan would be organized into a three-volume series as follows:

- Baseline Report – Reflecting baseline information for each element (such as housing, transportation, etc.) of the Master Plan, to include inventories, census data, traffic reports, projections, gap/needs analyses, and maps. She added this report could be found in several Town locations for public viewing.
- Community Plan – The active aspect of the Master Plan, such as the Community Vision, local policy issues, and goals.
- Action Plan – Presentation of an implementation matrix possibly in the form of a spread sheet or checklist, and would identify responsible parties, resources, and timeframe for achievement.

Mr. Kelly stated the Community Plan reflected the goals/elements of a community. He indicated topics would also include commerce, jobs, walkability, and connectivity.

Mr. Hardenbergh said he would be interested in looking at the strategies established for the 2001 Master Plan. Ms. Moravec agreed and added a report card on how things were viewed and done at that time would be beneficial. She spoke of influencing factors in 2001, included the recession, and other related aspects.

Mr. Hincks stated one of the reasons the Planning Board chose the Horsley Witten team for this project was Horsley Witten looked at the elements of the community in the past, present, and future; seriously considering what the final plan should encompass, not just an update to the 2001 Master Plan.

Ms. Moravec suggested members research Master Plans in other communities to see how they perceived “grow, communicate, and connect,” what items their plans focused upon, and how these communities are incorporating sustainability standards.

Ms. Suedmeyer detailed the state requirements for Master Plan updates, which may not have changed much since 2001. She stressed there is much flexibility in customizing the plan and addressing the particular needs of a community. Ms. Suedmeyer emphasized the Town is using sustainability principals which have been adopted by the American Planning Association. She noted the MPSC will see how those principals contribute to the Master Plan process.

Mr. Williamson questioned projections in the baseline report. Ms. Moravec responded that population projections and land usage scenarios, based on Town zoning, contribute to these determinations. She maintained the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) has provided these guiding projections and the MPSC will use these numbers as a guiding tool.

Vice-Chair Roberts asked about web-based planning activity. Ms. Moravec responded such a tool would probably not be used, adding a website could be used for project updates with PDF reports and posting online. Ms. Suedmeyer stated she would consider all reporting aspects and would further discuss this with the MPSC and the Town IT specialist. If more creative methods could provide for infographics and visual representations for a more engaging tracking presentation, they could be pursued.

Mr. Kelly added the Town of Northampton has a particularly innovative Master Plan website for review, as well as Jamestown, RI, which became a web plan rather than a physical document.

Ms. Moravec suggested the MPSC try minimizing paper usage and encouraged members to bring their own copies, if possible. She added that for those members needing hardcopies they could contact Ms. Suedmeyer. Ms. Moravec added that some paper copies would always be available for the public and affirmed the meeting record on the Town website would include materials distributed at the meeting.

Mr. Hardenbergh requested a link to search references and Ms. Suedmeyer responded this information would be available on the Town website. Ms. Dretler stated such a link reference would be of great benefit for the MPSC and members would be able to examine the current Master Plan.

A conversation took place regarding the use of informational websites.

Mr. Riordan asked about space for future meetings, adding the Silva Room might not be enough space if members of the public were to attend. Ms. Suedmeyer responded that Town Hall would not always be available for meetings and in the summer it was very warm. She suggested meeting at the Police Station conference room. Ms. Dretler suggested meeting at the Community Room at the Library might also be an option if the Police Station was not available.

Mr. May stated the Open Meeting Law allowed for remote meeting participation at the discretion of the MPSC Chair. Ms. Suedmeyer responded that remote participation is often used but indicated there were limitations, for example, the Chair of the meeting could not participate remotely. She added the Town uses a remote conference line method with speaker phones that IT sets up, and explained that video conferencing or Skyping have not been used.

A discussion took place regarding Google shared drives via the Town website. Ms. Moravec stated she would confirm the availability and use of sites linking to the Town website.

Mr. Williamson volunteered to perform editing tasks for the MPSC and he stated he had much experience with editing.

Overview of Schedule and Tasks

Ms. Moravec reviewed the 15-month Project Schedule and Chapter VII within the Project Management Plan, highlighting the five Phases. She reviewed the Schedule legends used on the timeline noting the adopting bodies are the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen. She detailed the purpose of Phase 1 - "Project Set Up" is to establish structure and protocol, review of infrastructure, and websites. She recommended the MPSC schedule a tour of the Town, which would be appropriate in Phase 1.

Ms. Moravec mentioned Phase 2 – "Visioning" would reflect the "big picture," encompassing goal-writing workshops, the drafting of goals for each topic, and meeting with adopting bodies/stakeholders, as well as inclusion of the first Public Workshop.

Ms. Moravec detailed that Phase 3 – "Existing Conditions & Trends" is the current planning phase involving downloading relevant data, pulling various aspects together, talking with Town departments/committees, and adopting bodies meetings within an extensive ongoing period, from now until November 1, 2019.

Ms. Moravec stated Phase 4 – "Drafting Plan Policies" would commence – in the Fall, and end in mid-February 2020. She explained the MPSC would start drafting the Plan, continuing with public outreach, and the second public meeting.

In the final phase of the project, Phase 5 – "Adoption," Ms. Moravec stated the actual adoption of the complete Master Plan would take place in March 2020, with Board of Selectmen and Planning Board approval.

Mr. Kelly stressed that during the summer outreach work is rather difficult, so “Existing Conditions & Trends” work would be taking place. Ms. Moravec noted the schedule is a suggested timeline and could be adjusted if needed.

Vice-Chair Asbedian-Ciaffi asked how existing Town subcommittees would be incorporated into the MPSC schedule. Ms. Moravec replied that baseline reporting is very important with regard to this aspect and the MPSC could setup an outline of topics. She also recommended the first topic should be transportation and a meeting with the Transportation Committee should be scheduled with integration of all needed materials/documents in preparation for that meeting.

Ms. Dretler strongly advised that any joint meetings should be scheduled before the summer when committees might not meet.

Mr. May emphasized the importance of baseline materials and suggested including a list of exactly what would be included within the baseline report. He indicated that for Council on Aging consideration, other related projections would be very useful as well as an annotated outline of what would be discussed, along with links to these report sites.

Ms. Suedmeyer added new Livable Sudbury documentation/findings will be presented in February and will provide the updated information for the MPSC’s baseline assessment. Mr. Carty clarified the Livable Sudbury Report would be presented on February 12, 2019 at the Library at 6:30 p.m.

Ms. Asbedian-Ciaffi asked if the Livable Sudbury presentation would be considered a public meeting if more than eight members attended. Ms. Suedmeyer responded that quorum regulations would not apply because the event is a presentation and not a meeting. Mr. Carty thought the Livable Sudbury presentation did not require a public posting as deliberation would not take place.

Draft Public Participation Plan

Ms. Moravec referred to the Public Participation Plan – Draft, dated January 18, 2019 and stated the Public Participation Plan was a “living document” and was ever changing. She detailed that the document helps determine available resource methods for getting the word out about the Master Plan. She focused on the Messaging section of the draft and spoke of “key messages” as conceptual to ensure all members share the same message about the Master Plan and the update process, as well as providing consistency when speaking about the Plan.

With this objective in mind, Ms. Moravec outlined the possible elevator speech or the quick summary members could provide to capture public interest and involvement in the Master Plan process. She asked members to provide talking points which might inform the public, peak their interest, and allow MPSC members to respond to frequently asked questions about the Master Plan.

Mr. May questioned why Sudbury Public Schools (SPS) membership was not included on the MSPC adding that SPS should be represented. Ms. Suedmeyer replied the former Director of Planning & Community Development and a subcommittee of Planning Board members developed the membership plan and she was not included in that process. Additional members indicated they supported the participation of SPS based upon the importance of the schools in the community and that the schools receive a large portion of the Town’s budget. Ms. Suedmeyer stated she would explore the membership question further.

Next Steps

Ms. Moravec stated she would like to see additional thoughts from members and the Participation Plan Draft coverage would continue at the next meeting.

Ms. Suedmeyer suggested members think about messages to include on the Town website. Ms. Moravec suggested including a section such as “Did You Know” on the Town website, advocating the approach helped with public involvement.

Mr. May acknowledged the MPSC would be very likely to receive many comments/inquiries from the public and the local newspapers. Ms. Suedmeyer stated if the MPSC members received such contact she would like to be informed so a coordinated response could be provided with checks in place.

Mr. Hardenbergh inquired about One Sudbury. Ms. Dretler explained One Sudbury was a rather political medium. Ms. Moravec suggested if inquiries were received from One Sudbury, members should not respond to anything from that site. Ms. Suedmeyer suggested providing a response that would refer to the website or to tell the party inquiring to contact someone for further information.

Open Discussion

Some discussion took place regarding the Town budget and its relationship to the Master Plan.

Members agreed the next meeting would take place on Friday, February 15, 2019 at 8:45 a.m., with the location to be announced.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m. on a motion by Mr. Sugrue, seconded by Ms. Asbedian-Ciaffi, with all members voting in favor.