

Minutes of the CLRPC Meeting of March 9, 2018

Pursuant to a notice filed with the Town Clerk, the Comprehensive Long Range Plan Committee (CLRPC) met at 8:00 a.m. on March 9, 2018 in the first floor meeting room, 141 Keyes Road, Concord, MA.

Members Present:

Elise Woodward, Co-Chair

Wade Rubinstein

James Bryant

Judy Zaunbrecher

Tory Lambert

Peter Hunter

Sharyn Lenhart

Gary Kleiman, Co-Chair (remotely)

Marcia Rasmussen, DPLM Director

Elizabeth Hughes, Town Planner

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Woodward at 8:05 a.m., who stated that the meeting was being recorded. Ms. Woodward informed everyone that Mr. Kleiman was participating remotely by telephone.

Minutes from February 23rd

Ms. Woodward noted that the minutes of February 23rd were not available.

Correspondence

Ms. Woodward noted receipt of an email from Paul Lovecchio with the Hugh Cargill Trust regarding the draft Plan who stated that it does not adequately address the planning for the financially needy.

Ms. Woodward noted receipt of a memo from Concord Housing Foundation regarding concerns with Mr. Boynton's memo on mansionization.

Ms. Woodward noted receipt of an email from Tanya Gailus regarding transparency and a request to post all drafts of the Plan including committee edits. Ms. Woodward clarified that the February 23rd draft that was mentioned at a previous meeting has been posted and the March 5th draft is on the web site. She noted that drafts that include edits from all of the Committee members were not shared with the Committee based on the advice from the Attorney General's Office of Open Government that it would be considered a deliberation outside of an Open Meeting. She noted the February 23rd draft could be made available through a public records request.

Ms. Woodward noted receipt of a determination letter from the Attorney General's Office of an Open Meeting Law violation when two Committee members met as a subcommittee to discuss the citizen survey and during a call with the consultant. She informed the Committee that the remedy is to create minutes from those two meetings.

Check in on Process and Schedule

Ms. Woodward hoped that members have reviewed the draft and will be sharing their comments. She noted that the draft Plan will then be adjusted and reissued in June as a final, but until then, the Committee has time to make refinements and improvements.

Ms. Woodward commented that she and Mr. Kleiman will be working on the presentation for the March 14th public hearing. She noted that the remaining Committee meetings will have dense agendas.

Ms. Lenhart asked about going back to all boards and committees for comments on the draft Plan. Ms. Woodward replied that a letter was sent to all board and committees on March 6th asking that they review the draft plan and provide comments by April 15th.

March 14th Public Hearing Preparation

Ms. Woodward informed members about the handouts for the meeting; an updated goals list that includes 4.7 and 4.8 and Issues Flagged for Community Input.

Ms. Woodward and Mr. Kleiman will be putting together a presentation for the public hearing and plan to discuss the systems approach and the outline. She mentioned the Issues Flagged for Community input handout and suggested starting the conversation on item 12 and 13.

Mr. Kleiman thought the Committee members represent a microcosm of the Town and these Issues were what he thought the Committee would likely hear at the public hearing. Ms. Woodward asked if members of the audience needed her to repeat what Mr. Kleiman said. No one had difficulty hearing the comments.

The Committee discussed having the list of Issues available to the public at the public hearing and determined that since the Issues list was going to be part of the presentation that the presentation would be available as a handout. The Committee agreed that having the slides to highlight some of the issues the Committee has brought forward would be helpful for the citizens who come to the public hearing who have not read the complete draft plan.

Ms. Woodward commented that in Section 2, page 27 of the Plan the five lenses and their purposes are discussed. She asked for the Committee's point of view on the lenses and if they show a strong enough rationale and direction going forward.

The Committee discussed including the lenses graphic in the Plan and the overall redundancy in the document on the analysis and data. The Committee agreed that the redundancy and length of the report can be streamlined, that taking all of the analysis out of Section 3 makes it difficult in reading by requiring people to go back and forth in the report. The Committee determined that the Big Issues would remain in Section 3, the analytics could be better organized and that further refinement on the redundancy and data was needed.

Ms. Lenhart asked if the Town's Age Friendly application has been integrated into the Plan. Ms. Rasmussen stated it would be in the next version.

Ms. Lenhart commented on the Plan's focus for smaller homes that allow senior to stay in the community and the fact that some new retirees may not want to move right away and are looking for alternatives that allow them to stay in their homes for 10 or 15 more years. She did not think the Plan addresses this topic adequately. Mr. Bryant noted that some comments received from seniors indicated they wanted to stay in their neighborhood and this was not adequately addressed in the report.

The Committee discussed the Concord Housing Foundation's letter noting concerns with Mr. Boynton's mansionization memo, the tensions with the moderate workforce housing for all ages and the overall needs of seniors. The Committee agreed that the issue of increasing population in Town has not been adequately addressed in the plan.

The Committee discussed Item 13 on the handout and the comments from the Hugh Cargill Trust that as the population of Concord diversifies, there will be an increase in emergency financial needs of the citizens. Mr. Kleiman felt that Item 13 and 14 of the handout needed the most work right now from the Committee. The strategy for improving sustainable choices moving forward with the fiscal illustrations and fiscal tensions should be included as part of the discussion in Section 2.

The Committee will be receiving data from the consultant regarding the needs of the current structure and the cost of all the goals identified in the plan. The Committee agreed that the Plan did not adequately address this issue and the affordability of all need to be included in Item 14 with the increase in financial needs as a subset of that Item. The Committee agreed there needs to be a strategy for anticipating the funds to address these financial needs.

The Committee discussed and agreed that the illustrations for the fiscal needs should be included in Section 2 and the tensions that may arise from addressing these needs.

Mr. Hunter asked where State funds come into play in the Plan. Ms. Rasmussen commented that the Finance Committee's plan includes information on the sources of all of the Town's funding and this could be included in the Plan. Ms. Woodward noted the Finance Committee's 5-year plan and the different spending scenarios. The Committee discussed how to frame these funding scenarios in the Plan and the illustrations that are needed in the plan. The Committee agreed the Plan needs more clarity on all of the revenue streams and the analytical process.

Mr. Rubinstein pointed out the many of these social services groups give funding support to people based on what people are asking for and the group's available funds, but this does not get to the real need. He thought that the Town does not have a real understanding of the total level of emergency needs. Ms. Woodward believes that it is reasonable to suggest that the Plan has a description on what are the increasing emergency assistance needs. She suggested that if organizations understand the demographic portion of the population requesting emergency financial assistance and the frequency of requests, the Town could anticipate the percentage of the population change based on growth and strategies can be developed to address those needs.

The Committee discussed whether a formal projection of need should be in the Plan and agreed that the question on whether increasing emergency financial assistance should be a line item in the Town budget should be looked into further.

The Committee discussed Item 9, 10 and 11. The Committee agreed that these captured what is represented in the Plan and that the Committee needs to hear more from the public at the hearing.

Ms. Lenhart requested the issues with transit to Boston medical trips be included. The Committee agreed. Mr. Bryant questioned why some of the radical ideas, such as shutting down Walden Street or Main Street and making a more pedestrian mall, are not included.

The Committee discussed Item 8 and linking these items. Ms. Rasmussen cautioned stating in the Plan that there needs to be a formula business bylaw and the topic should be studied and the unique characteristics and features of Concord Center and Thoreau Depot identified first because if it is not done, there will be litigation. The Committee agreed that an ongoing tension was the high rents and the rights of property owners to recoup their costs.

The Committee discussed Item 4 and 7 and agreed that the topic of Transfer of Development Rights needs to be clear, the presentation needs to include some of the options available for

increasing density in the village centers and the public needs to weigh in on how to preserve open space while addressing housing and density and taking properties off the tax rolls.

Ms. Woodward questioned members on what they thought was the role of the Town on incentivizing private property either through regulations or incentives and whether communicating the goals of the Town in the Plan was enough to get property owners to cooperate. Mr. Hunter thought that if businesses wanted to thrive here, there has to be cooperation between businesses and the Town. The Committee agreed that the Plan does a good job of highlighting what are value statements and what are particular areas of regulations that should be looked at for changes.

Public Comment

Tom Tarpey, 59 Westvale Drive and Finance Committee member, asked for clarification on the term “as the population of the Town diversifies”. Ms. Woodward thought the use of this term meant all elements of diversity, such as population and economics and agreed there should be a definition in the glossary.

Lori Gill Pazaris, 1376 Old Marlboro Road, questioned how the public hearing was being promoted. Ms. Woodward stated it is on News and Notice and in the Journal. Ms. Pazaris encouraged using all methods as possible and questioned whether all boards and committees had to approve the Plan. Ms. Woodward stated the Committee has asked for comments from Board and committees, but it is the Planning Board that adopts the Plan with acceptance by the Select Board. Mr. Kleiman informed everyone that the Planning Board was holding a special meeting on March 29th to review the Plan.

Ms. Pazaris asked how comments on the Draft Plan would be made public and how the Flagged Issues were identified. Ms. Woodward replied that these are issues identified by the Committee because they represent tension and all of them are things the Committee has heard consistently from the community. Ms. Woodward commented that resiliency was not specifically listed in the Flagged Issues as a tension. Mr. Kleiman believes resilience is listed as part of bullet point 12 as part of the filtering process, but that ts may need to be more strongly stated.

Ms. Pazaris believes that the Plan should include appendices to back up information so that the report can be streamlined. She pointed out that part of the goal of Article 23 is to place emphasis on identifying services the Town is getting for free from nature and if the Town were to lose them, then the Town has to put in manmade systems which are expensive.

Ms. Pazaris pointed out the issue of flooding and vulnerability of increasing density in the village centers. She has a concern with the Town being able to provide residents with the quantity and quality of water needed for the future and the Plan needs to include awareness on this issue.

Ms. Woodward stated that sustainability has been established as a filter in order to capture all of the important issues raised, as opposed to having sustainability as an add-on Section because the Committee wants sustainability to be considered with every decision. Ms. Pazaris noted that sustainability is not the same as resilience. Ms. Woodward stated that it will be the challenge of the Committee to describe the sustainability filter in a way that is as comprehensive as possible so it will represent an integrated strategy across town.

Mark Gailus, 62 Prescott Road, commented on the importance of publicizing the hearing and suggested that the list of Flagged Issues include an open-ended comment section for the public to identify what has been missed. He had concern with the loss of greenspace with climate

appropriate vegetation in certain kinds of commercial and residential developments leading to potential problems with flooding, water table and overall degradation of the ecosystem in the Town.

Ms. Woodward asked for clarification on the term of “climate appropriate vegetation.” Mr. Gailus provided clarification.

Mr. Gailus suggested the Plan include a formal collaborative between town committees and staff with the School committees on the fiscal challenges and opportunities. He thought it was important that the public and committees have access to incremental draft documents.

Ms. Pazaris thought there was no recognition in the Plan on the cost of climate change on the community, the need for climate appropriate vegetation to support climate change and the need to stop the use of residential pesticides.

Ms. Woodward asked Ms. Pazaris whether she had an example of a metric to use on the cost of climate change. She would look into this.

Ms. Rasmussen noted two issues for Item 10; first mile last mile and the topic of free parking.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 am.

List of documents presented which are on file in the Planning Division Office at 141 Keyes Road, Concord, MA:

- Issues Flagged for Community Input 3-9-18
- Section 4 – All Section Goals List 3-9-18

Respectfully submitted,

John Boynton, Clerk