

MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Thursday March 7, 2024 at 7:00 pm

Online via Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm.

Members Present: Bob Roemer, Panny Gerken, Stacia Downey, Ed Sterling, Cia Boynton, Sharon Shepela, Brian Boyle, Mary Ciummo, Ken Troup

Others Present: Pam Harding, Olivia Knightly, Tony Jagodnik

Minutes. The minutes for the February 15, 2024 meeting were approved unanimously.

Review of Implementation Matrix – Climate Change. The group then reviewed Sharon’s comments on the climate change portion of the revised implementation matrix. Prior to the meeting, Sharon had provided a listing of things the town had already accomplished or participated in with respect to climate change. These included being designated a Solarized Community. Key areas of discussion and subsequent agreement were:

- Bob recommended and attendees agreed that the list Sharon provided should go in the Existing Conditions write up. Olivia will see that occurs.
- The group discussed STRETCH code and the newest Specialized Energy Code.
- Sharon has proposed stronger action verbs in some of the action items, for example to say “forbid” or “require” as appropriate. Ken noted that throughout the Master Plan, the language “urges” but does not “require.” Sharon proposed “strongly urge” for many of the climate related actions. Bob said he agreed and others did also.
- As just above, Cia recommended and other agreed that it would be best to “encourage bylaws” for new development that could forbid clearcutting. It was pointed out that both the Open Space and Land Use area of the goals dealt with these same issues, including that having to do with reducing current groundwater use for lawns. Cia noted that including such actions may help discourage such actions and give the planning board teeth.
- Stacia suggested and attendees liked the idea of a single action to incentivize developers to do things that benefit the town and achieve some of the climate protection items discussed above.
- The group discussed the action proposed for increasing the floodplain at 117-110. Cia and Ed didn’t think it was appropriate to be so specific. It was suggested that specific state laws or plans be specified. In the end, the group agreed that additional work was needed and Olivia will further investigate.

- Bob said all of the evening's discussion needs to be summarized as soon as possible for a one pager on climate change. Olivia will identify the state guidelines, revise the goals and actions, and summarize the information for the one pager. Olivia will send out the revised information by March 15. After that the one pager will be prepared for submittal to the media outlets.

Department Head Interviews. Pam provided an update. Pam and Olivia met with most additional departments, with only the police left. Pam will incorporate notes into the previous version and make available to committee members. Since some department heads have differing views on some issues, Bob said MPSC review should be for facts not opinions, and the hope is that the internal issues can be resolved before the Master Plan is completed.

Next Steps. Master Plan chapter write ups will be available around March 15 at the online link to be provided. The one pager on climate change will be completed the following two weeks.

Attendees agreed that the next meeting will be at 7:00 pm Thursday March 28, 2024 via Zoom. At the meeting, MPSC will discuss revisions to Existing Conditions, updates to the climate change goals and actions, and the one pager on climate change. On a motion by Panny and second by Stacia, the meeting adjourned at 8:39 pm.