

Master Plan Implementation Committee

Minutes of April 13, 2010 Meeting

Meeting called to order by Chairman/Planning Board member, Ed Forsberg, at 6:30 pm, in the Planning Board Office, Room 212, Town Hall.

Members Present: Ed Forsberg, Michael Gallahue, Mike Berry, Al Goetz, Dick Nottebart, Roger Turner (left at 7:35 pm), Patrick Shield (left at 7:40 pm).

Staff Present: Don Johnson, Stephanie Mercandetti

Ongoing Business, and Implementation Activities:

- **Status of downtown revitalization activities / Downtown Municipal Campus concept / plans for municipal buildings:** Among the items discussed were:
 - Ed had attended the 4/6 Board of Selectmen's meeting for the MPIC's letter to the Board of Selectmen, voted at the MPIC's March 30 meeting, which suggested that the town use a comprehensive process of siting future municipal buildings in terms of the recommendations of the Master Plan. The Board of Selectmen had referenced what they saw as analogies to the Master Plan and the Master Plan Five-year Update Report that were used in the proposal developed for the Spring 2010 Town Meeting for the siting and funding of the proposed Police Station on Robbins Road. That proposal before Town Meeting would also include funding for the design of a new Fire Station. The Board of Selectmen had suggested that the MPIC meet with the Board in four weeks to work together on Master Plan implementation activities.
 - There was some discussion on whether grant funding is ever available for public safety facilities, and it was noted that very little and very rarely does such funding become available.
 - Roger again noted that Spring Brook (which is on the Town Hall lot) is being cleaned, but there is still a 200' riverfront protection zone along either side of the brook that can't be built upon. He suggested that this 200' zone should be enhanced as a riverfront park, which might include a replacement area for the cannon that must be removed when the new Library is constructed, as well as for the cannon that is presently located adjacent to Blackburn Hall. He noted that in the original municipal campus concept little attention had been given to the history of flooding; in 1955 much of the downtown had been flooded, and the Allen Pond Dam was constructed thereafter primarily as a flood control mechanism for this reason. He noted that on older maps the areas along Spring Brook and that now encompass much of Blackburn Field were called "Center Swamp", and have been filled. So we have to be careful with use of these sites and building there. It was noted that Spring Brook had not flooded in the two extreme March rainstorm events.

- It was decided that the next two MPIC meetings would be partially devoted to the discussion of some preliminary design concepts for the Downtown Municipal Campus in view of what could feasibly be built in the area.
- **Status of potential funding sources of various economic development and planning activities:**
 - **CDBG Economic Development Planning Grant Application:** Stephanie is continuing to work through the Board of Selectmen and the Economic Development Commission to provide requested information to DHCD on this economic development grant application for the Route 1A junk yards and the Industrial Park.
 - **Green Communities Program:** The Green Communities Grant application is due early in May. There was no article on the 2010 Spring Town Meeting warrant to accept the optional “Stretch Code” for building efficiency, therefore no grant application under the Green Communities Program was anticipated this year unless the Board of Selectmen were to amend the Town Meeting warrant to include such an article. The possibility of the insertion of an article on the STM warrant that would assist the Town in becoming eligible for funding under the Green Communities Act to possibly fund a portion of the cost of the Library among other potential funding for future projects. Patrick would contact Nancy Mackenzie on this matter.
 - **DLTA Program Application:** This was the grant application, submitted to MAPC in February, to seek assistance to develop a zoning overlay district to target appropriate economic development for approximately a dozen properties, presently underutilized, which abut and lie to the east of the Intersection of Routes 27 and 1 in Town. There had been nothing heard or received from MAPC about the Town’s application.
- **Responses to the MPIC’s inquiries on future uses of Norfolk County land:** Ed told the MPIC that the Board of Selectmen, at its April 6 meeting, had informed him that the Board will be meeting with the County in executive session on this matter, and consequently there was no further discussion.
- **Housing Production Plan & Housing Partnership – potential grant opportunity:** The Walpole Housing Partnership (WHP) had met earlier in the evening and had voted to pursue a grant from the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) for the purpose of funding a feasibility study that will explore the opportunities available for converting the “old” library building on Common Street to affordable housing units. Mike B. motioned, seconded by Al, to submit a letter to the Board of Selectmen supporting the WHP’s efforts in pursuing the above-referenced grant from MHP. Voted 5-0-0.
- **Zoning Bylaw Rewrite Phase 2 – Brief update:** No action

- **Historical Commission – Future Master Plan activities:** No action
- **Open Space & Recreation Plan Update – Brief update:** Over the previous few weeks Don had had the opportunity to accomplish quite a bit of work on the Open Space and Recreation Plan update; essentially he had finished the draft of the update of the Community Setting chapter, which he had turned over to Landis Hershey for working into the rest of the plan update. An Open Space and Recreation Plan Survey had been on the Town of Walpole website for some time, and responses had been coming in. An Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee meeting would likely be taking place within the next few months, likely not until after Town Meeting, though.

Adjournment: At 7:54 pm, Ed motioned, seconded by Dick N., to adjourn the meeting. Voted 5-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,