

Master Plan Advisory Committee—Survey Subcommittee
Wednesday, November 10, 2010, 5:00 P.M.
Durham Town Hall—Council Chambers

— MINUTES —

Members present: Amy Cunningham, Molly Donovan, Joe Moore, Robin Mower

Members absent: Lorne Parnell, Neal Ferris, Charles Forcey

Alternate members absent: Ute Luxem, Jim Lawson

Others present: Charlie French, UNH Cooperative Extension

Others absent: Jim Campbell, Town Planner

Meeting convened at 5:10pm

Members reviewed surveys from the previous community planning documents (Master Plan 1989, 1995 Community Development Plan, Master Plan 2000) and confirmed that the first chapters of the Master Plan to be updated will be: Commercial Core, Land Use Regulations, Environmental and Cultural Resources, Tax Stabilization/Economic Development, and Energy.

Members confirmed that they like the format of the Newport Survey: the ranking provides a lot of information. Discussion followed about choice of categories, and how they relate to the chapters of the Master Plan.

Charlie French advised not to use the names of the chapters for the categories. Use terms that resonate with people, such as the built environment. Some questions can cover more than one category.

The purpose of the survey was confirmed: To prioritize what aspects or elements in the community they want to promote or preserve over the next ten or 20 years.

Molly Donovan noted that the forum and survey combination is a vehicle for obtaining community-wide input. The consultant will rewrite/update the chapters. At each step, the documents will be brought back to the public for feedback. Then the consultant and staff and Planning Board ("owner of the Master Plan" begin to think about how does one implement it through the zoning ordinance.

Charlie French said that he often recommends a Master Plan audit prior to starting the update process to determine whether a town's zoning coordinates with the Master Plan. The danger is that you could expose the town to litigation. Such audits are rarely performed, in his experience.

Amy Cunningham provided an example of this sort of gap: someone had mentioned to her that the Master Plan seems to mandate that one must build large houses, perhaps those starting at \$450,000.

Members discussed the value of such a gap analysis. For example, one could ask on the survey, "What is not working about housing in Durham? Does this community value houses that cost less than \$450,000?"

Charlie French suggested that we consider a gap analysis matrix question for the first page, which might result in a larger number of responses, even if people did not complete the survey. He confirmed that the survey software will accept partially completed survey, although analysis might be complicated by such results.

The committee started working its way through the Newport, NH survey, considering it in light of Durham's unique characteristics and reframing questions.

TASKS:

- 1) Map with areas of town for Charlie French—Jim Campbell
- 2) Dummy survey for boards/committees to use—Charlie French, who will send it to members prior to the November 23 meeting, at which we will go through it line by line.

Next meeting of the committee was established at the last meeting: November 23 at 5:00 P.M

Minutes taker: Robin Mower