



MASTER PLAN COLLABORATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

LOCATION: Room 6 (Veterans Hall), Pembroke Town Hall

STARTING TIME: 7:00 pm

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Stephan Roundtree (Chairman), Steven Ciciotti (Vice-Chairman), Sharon McNamara (Clerk), Susan Bollinger, Scott Chaharyn, James Eng, George Grey, Curtis Kuta, Martin Lu, and Tracy Marino.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Frederick Casavant.

OTHERS PRESENT: Matthew Heins (Planning Board Assistant).

OPENING THE MEETING

Mr. Roundtree opened the meeting of the Pembroke Master Plan Collaboration Committee by reading the Chairman's statement: "Please note that this meeting is being made available to the public through an audio recording which will be used to ensure an accurate record of proceedings produced in the minutes of the meeting. All comments made in open session will be recorded."

DISCUSSION ABOUT FUTURE EVENTS FOR VHB CONSULTANTS TO ATTEND

At this time, the committee members present were Mr. Roundtree, Mr. Ciciotti, Ms. Bollinger, Mr. Chaharyn, Mr. Eng, Mr. Grey, Mr. Kuta, Mr. Lu and Ms. Marino.

Ms. Bollinger made a motion to approve the minutes of August 10, 2023, Mr. Ciciotti seconded the motion, and the committee voted unanimously in favor.

Mr. Heins reminded the committee that his last day of work would be October 4, and discussed the schedule of future committee meetings.

The committee members talked about the upcoming Pembroke Celebrates event, which the VHB consultants assisting with the master plan were expecting to attend. A discussion also took place about what other future event the VHB consultants could attend, and various suggestions were advanced. The children's flag football games seemed like the most promising option.

DISCUSSION ABOUT ANTICIPATED TOPICS (CHAPTERS) OF MASTER PLAN DOCUMENT

Mr. Roundtree explained that the meeting's main objective was to discuss the anticipated topics of the master plan document. Each chapter of the master plan will cover a broad general topic, and possible examples include: land use and zoning; housing and affordability; economic development; transportation and infrastructure; public facilities and services; sustainability and natural resources; open space and recreation; and cultural and historic resources.

Mr. Roundtree raised the topic of land use and zoning, and a discussion took place about land owned by the town.

Committee member Sharon McNamara arrived at this time.

Mr. Roundtree emphasized the problem of housing affordability. This segued into a conversation about the proposed Mattakeesett Village 40b project, on the former Shepherd's funeral home property. The possibility that the property will be clear-cut for this project was discussed.

Mr. Roundtree discussed climate change and how it will impact the town. Mr. Ciciotti noted the hazard mitigation plan that was done recently for Pembroke, and discussion followed. It was agreed that the hazard mitigation plan, and also the open space and recreation plan, should be referenced in the master plan.

Ms. Bollinger mentioned that enrollment in the schools is dwindling, and the committee members talked about this issue. They also discussed the benefits of age 55+ housing, and the problem of housing affordability in general.

The committee and Mr. Heins talked about accessory dwelling units (also known as "in-law apartments") and whether they should be allowed as detached structures (i.e., separate from a house). The zoning bylaws currently only allow accessory dwelling units when they are attached to or part of a house.

The committee members discussed how they can keep track of promising ideas that they want to include in the master plan.

The committee members continued to talk about the need for accessory dwelling units, and were in general agreement that the master plan should propose that detached accessory dwelling units be allowed.

Mr. Lu discussed hazard mitigation and the need for local residents to report the impacts they experience.

Mr. Roundtree emphasized that the town could pursue economic development through the properties it owns, and this led to a conversation about the role of government relative to the private sector.

Mr. Grey asked what factors are discouraging businesses from operating in Pembroke, and a wide-ranging discussion took place about the experiences of businesses in town and Pembroke's

strengths and weaknesses from their perspective. Mr. Ciciotti suggested that certain aspects of town government could be streamlined and professionalized. Ms. McNamara noted the loss of local newspapers.

Mr. Grey asked about abandoned buildings in Pembroke, and how businesses could be encouraged to use them. Mr. Roundtree mentioned the limitations of the zoning restrictions in the town center, and conversation ensued. The committee talked about the feasibility of amending the zoning bylaws.

Mr. Ciciotti encouraged everyone to start coming up with ideas and suggestions on their own, and to bring them to future committee meetings. A discussion followed about how to brainstorm collectively while still complying with open meeting law, and it was agreed that five committee members (the quorum being six for this committee) would work together.

On the topic of transportation and infrastructure, Mr. Ciciotti suggested that sidewalks be constructed along the main roads in town and near the schools. Conversation followed. Mr. Roundtree pointed out that ebikes and other technologies may become popular. Mr. Grey emphasized that CPC funding is available for pathways. The committee also talked about the GATRA bus service and its limitations in Pembroke.

The committee members conversed about the need for better communication within the town and between the town government and residents.

On the topic of sustainability and natural resources, Mr. Lu said that there should be a risk assessment plan. Mr. Roundtree described the danger of falling trees, and also noted the issue of stagnant water.

Regarding open space and recreation, Mr. Grey described some of the projected projects to enhance the town's open space and recreational facilities. Mr. Roundtree said that the town needs more canoeing options.

On the topic of cultural and historic resources, Mr. Chaharyn discussed his experience visiting many of the town's historic resources with one of the VHB consultants.

A discussion took place about technological problems in the school buildings and other aspects of the town's school system. Ms. Bollinger and Mr. Ciciotti described the "Pathways" school program.

Mr. Ciciotti made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Bollinger seconded the motion, and the committee voted unanimously in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Heins, Planning Board Assistant