

Brookfield Master Plan Committee Minutes

Town Hall, Banquet Hall

Minutes of March 6, 2008

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MAR 21 2008

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Members Present: Cheri Carty, Brittany Carroll, Sarah Heller, Cindy Scott, William R. Simpson

Members Absent: Gwen Broz, Greg Burnham, Sharon Mahoney, Phil Pierce

Also Present: Carol Childress (Grant-Writer), Bill Puishys (Resident), Megan Cunningham (Resident)

The meeting was called to order at 6:45 pm by Chair Cindy Scott.

1. **Approval of Minutes.** Cheri moved and Bill seconded that the minutes of Feb 21 be approved as submitted. The motion was approved unanimously. Sarah will forward the approved minutes to the Selectmen and to Sharon for inclusion on the website.

2. **Introductions.** As there were new people present, we briefly introduced ourselves and members expressed the hope that prospective members will ask to join the committee by writing a letter to the Selectmen.

3. **Discussion of alternating meeting nights** between Wednesday and Thursday: Everyone was in favor of this idea. We decided not to change the next meeting which has already been posted (Thursday, March 20).

The following dates were chosen for meetings through the end of April: Wednesday, April 2; Thursday, April 17; Wednesday, April 30. All meetings will be posted to start at 6:30pm.

4. **Contact information for members:** Cindy passed around a sheet for all to put their contact information. Brittany made copies for everyone.

5. **Contract update:** Cheri gave a summary of her discussions with Central Mass Regional Planning (CMRPC). Jonathan Church is now our CMRPC representative since Steve Wallace has left the agency as of the end of February. Cheri began by saying that she informed Mr. Church that the Master Plan (MP) Committee and the Open Space Plan (OS) committees had agreed to work together and combine their work and asked about the contract options. Mr. Church said CMRPC was very flexible and the tasks could be changed around; although the OS is a stand-alone plan in itself, it is also a chapter of the MP and could therefore be combined and the work done concurrently. Mr. Church said a number of different options were available:

If the committees want to remain separate we could begin with Phase I of the MP as Task I: Survey & Public Hearings (survey and public hearings \$1,500) & Task II: Housing (housing \$6,000) and thereby reducing the MP contract below the \$10k currently available, while leaving the OS plan separate. Mr. Church said Mr. Wallace only proposed Phase I to begin with Task II: Housing & Task III: Public Facilities & Services because they were the least controversial.

If the committees wanted to go ahead with a combined contract this also would not be a problem. Once the committees were combined (and either the combined and/or additional funding becomes available for use), we could begin Phase I as Task I: Public Hearings, Task II: Housing and Task III: OS Plan (with Task II & III started concurrently).

Finally, Cheri informed Mr. Church the committee already had a sub-committee working on the town survey and asked if the "survey" could be eliminated from CMRPC's scope and thereby reducing the cost. Cheri first wanted to make sure that by eliminating the survey from the scope it would not affect any of the other comparison data that CMRPC would be providing on the plan. Mr. Church said we could eliminate the survey from the scope since we were already working on it. This would reduce Task 1 by \$400 (from \$1,500 to \$1,100). The comparison data with other towns is included in the cost of each chapter so that would not be affected by us doing the survey. Cheri said that Jonathan agreed to give us the excel spreadsheet in order to tabulate the survey results. CMRPC will still be doing the public hearing and we can combine that into one public hearing for both OS and MP. There was discussion about whether to push for a signed contract before the May Town Meeting. Cheri stated that we have plenty to do until May and it would be better to wait. The committee agreed that due to the additional funding we could apply for as a joint committee we would continue with combining the contracts. The committee then authorized Cheri to contact Mr. Church and ask him to draft a combined contract for both the MP & OS. Cheri will bring the revised contract back to the committee for review. Bill suggested that we ask the Selectmen to approve a contract contingent on the town meeting votes. No decision was made on the contract at this time. The committee appreciates all of Cheri's work on the CMRPC contract.

6. Discussion about merging the OS Committee and MP Committee: Sarah told the committee that Donna Neylon said that merging the two committees would need to be done at the Town Meeting and gave a deadline of March 18 for getting a draft article to the Selectmen. Cindy read an email from Gwen Broz stating that she had spoken with Susan Brogan (the only member of the OP Committee who is not also a member of the MP Committee). Susan told Gwen that she was in agreement with merging the two committees. Carol said that it would be advantageous for us to combine the two for fundraising and grant writing purposes. Cindy moved, Sarah seconded, a motion to put an article on the May 9, 2008 Town Meeting to merge the OS and MP Committees. All in favor. Sarah will get the draft article to Donna Neylon prior to March 18. Cheri said that the OS committee also needs to vote to merge the committees. She will contact the other OS committee members and arrange to have a posted meeting where they can take a vote prior to the May Town Meeting

7. Review of draft survey questions for General Section: Cindy passed out copies of a draft of the Introduction and General parts to the Survey. She explained that the Survey Subcommittee was using the SWOT (Strengthens, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) technique to formulate the questions. They also used a variety of formats (open response, multiple choice, essay, ranking). After reading the survey, members expressed their approval, with a few specific changes suggested to the draft, especially including a statement that this is to be anonymous, for demographic purposes only and questions may be skipped if the participant does not wish to answer a particular question. Bill moved, Cindy seconded, a motion to accept the format of the survey and the General portion as a draft with discussed changes. All in favor. Mention was made of first class postage going up soon and perhaps we should purchase forever stamps for the survey mailing. It was also mentioned that perhaps the town has a bulk mailing permit that we could use. Sarah said she would ask Donna Neylon about the bulk permit.

8. Transportation Chapter of the survey: It was agreed that Cheri would design the draft of the Transportation Chapter of the survey. Sarah will get to her the results of the transportation survey that the TipTop Energy Study Group distributed on Feb 5 as soon as possible.

9. Fundraising: Carol asked that the Committee decide whether she should apply for money from the Jeppson Fund. It would need to be a "pass-through" award with a non-profit sponsoring us. The Committee decided not to ask for money because we don't want to take funds away from local non-profits.

10. Invitation for input from other town boards: Bill suggested that we solicit input from other town boards. Bill agreed to write a flyer to be distributed in the town hall mailboxes.

11. Money Article for the May Annual Meeting: There was agreement that we should increase the article to \$15,000. Cindy agreed to go to the Advisory Board to explain this change. The reasons are that when we submitted the article, (1) It was early in our contract talks with CMRPC and we didn't realize the scope of work, and (2) We thought that the grant money would be available sooner. Carol has explained that we cannot expect much grant money for another year. CMRPC will not sign a contract with the town unless there is sufficient money earmarked for the project in our town treasury.

12. Discussion about PR for the May Town Meeting Article: The Committee discussed the need to prepare posters and newspaper articles for before the town meeting and a presentation for the town meeting itself.

13. Website Update: Sarah agreed to contact Sharon and find out the status of the website and what assistance Sharon may need in that regard.

14. Incoming Communications: Bill went through the mail that the committee has received since the last meeting. There was nothing pertaining to MP business.

15. **Outgoing Communications:** Cindy mentioned that she had submitted her vision statement to The Brookfield Citizen for the April issue. She also questioned whether she should submit it to other newspapers. Members encouraged her to do so. Carol said that she would forward to Cindy a list of media contact information. Carol will also send the list to Sarah. Sarah mentioned that the MP letter to residents appeared in the March issue of The Brookfield Citizen.

15. **Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Heller, Secretary

Date approved by the Committee: March 20, 2008

Date submitted to the Selectmen's office: March 21, 2008