Open Space/Master Plan Committee Minutes

Town Hall, Banquet Hall

Minutes of November 12, 2008

Members Present: Sarah Heller, Cindy Scott, William R. Simpson, Tim Simon

Members Absent: Cheri Carty, Philip Chaffee, Sharon Mahoney

Also Present: Carol Childress (Grant-Writer), Jonathan Church (CMRPC consultant)

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm by Chair Cindy Scott.

1. **Mail**. Bill reviewed the mail received since our last meeting. There was only one piece, a memo from Kopelman & Paige regarding the Appeals Court invalidating the need to do a special permit prior to submitting development plans to the Planning Board.

The rest of the meeting was devoted to clarification of the contract and a review of points brought up when Cindy and Tim met with Jonathan Church on November 6.

2. **Economic Chapter**: CMRPC is doing this chapter through a grant that they received from the state. We need to have proof of that fact for grant purposes and to verify that it is getting done. In order to accomplish this, the Selectmen need to write a letter to CMRPC. Jonathan gave us a sample letter to pass along to the Selectman. Sarah will give to the Selectmen.

3. **Open Space and Recreation Plan:** Jonathan handed out a memo with an outline for the OS plan and a course of action for completing it. [Extra copies of the memo were left in the OS/MP town hall mail box]. CMRPC has a copy of the Heritage Landscape Inventory Report and will be using it for the Open Space Plan. It should reduce the cost of the OS Plan although Jonathan wasn't sure by how much at this time.

4. **Legal Advertisement**: CMRPC will handle any future legal ads needed for the rest of Phase I.

5. **East Hampton**: Jonathan had not been able to locate information on the web that Cindy had told him about (Pioneer Valley Plan Commission gave the MP committee a schedule, job description and information package). Cindy gave Jonathan the website address. Jonathan did give us the Executive Summary for Hatfield's Master Plan. We reviewed it briefly. It had an interesting feature: Local businesses placed advertising in it which apparently helped to fund the MP. Jonathan said there was no problem with involving local business in this way.

6. **Discussion about how the chapters will be written**: Jonathan said that he will give us draft chapters to review. He also said that the survey information will be given better presentation, including pie charts. We discussed how the drafts will be written. Jonathan indicated that it will not be word-for-word boilerplate taken from another town's plan, but there will be some standard text. Government sources, such as the 2000 federal census will be used. Bill said it would be important also to use the yearly town census data as it is more up to date. We talked about using the Community Development Strategy information and especially the ADA self evaluation. Carol emphasized that it is a lot of work and would be important to use anything the town already has done. Sarah will discuss this with the Selectmen.

Jonathan will email us an outline for each chapter so we can interview the various town boards and other people with responsibility in each area. He will pinpoint when different people need to become involved in the process. He will also give us a schedule from now until June 2009 so we can keep on track.

The Housing Chapter is listed in the contract as being started in August and completed in January but it has not been started yet. All of Phase I needs to be completed by June 30, 2008.

7. **Discussion about the importance of involving different town boards**: Both Carol and Jonathan emphasized the importance of involving the Planning Board and other town officials. The Planning Board in particular needs to sign off on the Open Space and Master Plan and will be very involved in making sure the Plan is implemented. While it seems likely that the Planning Board has "bought in", they are not participating. We also need participation from the ZBA, the Zoning Enforcement Officer, the Building Inspector, the Housing Authority, the Recreation Committee, the Conservation Committee, the Selectmen. We discussed going to the Planning Board meetings if we cannot get a Planning Board member to come to our meetings. Carol is drafting a letter to send to the Planning Board to encourage their involvement.

8. **MassConn Sustainable Forest Partnership**: As part of his research for the Open Space Plan, Tim suggested that Jonathan contact Emily Silver who is an intern MassConn and is working on updating open space data in Brookfield and other towns in the area.

9. **Dividing up into Subcommittees**: At a point in the future we will divide into subcommittees by chapter. In addition to members of the OS/MP committee, the subcommittees can involve other people who are pertinent. For example, the Housing Chapter could include members of the Housing Authority, the Open Space, members of the Conservation Committee.

10. **Discussion of how often Jonathan will attend our meetings**: Jonathan stated that he is available to attend all our meetings if we would like him to. Bill stated that once a month seems reasonable. Cindy said that that once we have the calendar from Jonathan it will be easier to tell.

11. **Publicizing the results of the public hearings**: Jonathan handed out notes from the October 29 hearing. At that hearing he had also handed out notes from the Oct 15 meeting. Bill asked that Jonathan email us both of these documents so that it will be easier to use that information in creating news articles.

12. **Next meeting**: We agreed to meet Wed. Dec 3 at 6:30pm. Sarah put a posting notice in the Town Clerk's box.

13. **Adjournment**: Meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Heller, Secretary

Date approved by the Committee: 12/3/08

Date submitted to the Selectmen's office: 12/17/08