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**MINUTES OF THE MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, JUNE 30, 2022
5:00 PM VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS MEETING**

Members Present: Chair Pamela Yonkin, Lorne Jones, Jane Lannon, Kathy Richards, Rodney Rowland, Peter Schwab, Conni White

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Jennifer Rowden of the Rockingham Planning Commission

Chair Yonkin opened the meeting by complying with the State law that requires stating that this was an emergency meeting of the Master Plan Committee being held via Microsoft Teams Meeting rather than in person due to Covid concerns.

Chair Yonkin then asked for approval of the May 12, 2022 meeting's minutes. *Mr. Rowland made a motion to APPROVE as written the minutes to the meeting of the Master Plan Committee on May 12, 2022. Ms. Richards seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

Secretary Horgan announced that the summary of the survey results and the full survey results are now posted on the Town website on the Master Plan page.

Chair Yonkin presented graphs of the answers to the survey which offered a concise visual of town survey respondents' sentiments. Ms. Lannon shared a Word Cloud graphic that she had compiled from the survey results. Chair Yonkin and Ms. Lannon will continue to refine these graphs and visuals along with the input from Jenn Rowden of the Rockingham Planning Commission.

Jennifer Rowden stated that a survey is a snapshot in time that is useful in informing a Master Plan. But it isn't the only tool. We should use other inputs such as public hearings and former versions of the Master Plan. From experience, Ms. Rowden said that a 10% response from a community is realistic. New Castle received an 18% response with 180 surveys completed.

The committee then discussed the Vision Statement that Ms. Richards blended from written input from other committee members.

Ms. Rowden advised that the Vision Statement should be a big umbrella overview and details should be left to the individual chapters. Bullets in the Vision Statement can help to give structure. We should try to strengthen our bullets so to make them more visionary and less detail specific. In general, she liked the brevity of our Vision Statement. We should always keep in mind what we are trying to achieve with the bullets.

We should ask ourselves, “What does success look like and how do we address it?” in forming our bullets.

For instance, “Improve bike and walkways to enhance safety” says more than “Improve safety measures for non-vehicular traffic”.

Discussion on referring to infrastructure. Most thought it was important to keep a reference to it because we are looking to the future when more upgrades may be necessary.

Talked about senior services and aging in place. The survey showed an interest in town provided senior services.

The members had a deep discussion on how to address the important topic of sea level rise. Our goal is to increase adaptation and resiliency. This was proposed as wording for our Vision Statement:

Proactively address the impacts of sea level rise and climate change by increasing the town’s resiliency.

The committee discussed the proposed bullet point about power generation and suggested that the details should be discussed in a chapter on that topic. This chapter could deal with new technologies such as cell towers, electric power, solar panels, etc.

The committee discussed the balance of usage of the town facilities/parks between residents and the public. Should we encourage usage? What are we allowed to do/to limit per the charter of the Commons, etc? Should this section of the MP be combined with town buildings?

Another discussion involved what we are trying to protect in town in regards to New Castle’s “charm and resources” per the results of the survey. There are structural guidelines that are in place and should be enforced or enhanced to:

Manage the scale and scope of new developments and renovations thus preserving community character and historic charm by enacting structural guidelines for development that protect the existing density and character of the town.

Ms. Rowden suggested that we needed a natural resources bullet but it needs to include more than just climate change. It should include trees, parks, beaches, marshes (wetlands), etc.

At our next meeting we will go over the revised Vision Statement that will be compiled by Kathy Richards. We will then move into looking at the topics that will become our chapters. Committee members should be prepared to volunteer for specific chapters of interest and already put some thought into whatever research and statistics are needed for that topic.

Chair Yonkin committed to looking into data on land use that is available from other sources. In the meantime, she will be sharing Google Docs to which committee members can add their comments

Meeting adjourned at 6:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Darcy Horgan
Recording Secretary