

APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE NEW CASTLE PLANNING BOARD SPECIAL MEETING ON UPDATING THE MASTER PLAN THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2021 7PM AT THE REC CENTER

Members Present: Darcy Horgan, Lorne Jones, Iain Moodie

Others Present: Jenn Rowden, RPC; Tom Maher, BOS; Dave McGuckin, BOS; Todd Baker, ZBA; Conni White, CC; Jim Rini, CC; Beth Barnhorst, CC, Rodney Rowland, Historic District Comm; Ken McDonald, Admin; Michael Traister, Budget Cte; Chris Robillard, Road Agent; Judy Groppa, Community Member; Patty Cohen, Community Member

Darcy Horgan introduced Jenn Rowden from the Rockingham Planning Commission. She presented a PowerPoint presentation as an introduction on how a town can approach updating its Master Plan (MP).

The RSA that applies to Master Plans is RSA 674:1. The only required chapters in the Master Plan are Vision and Land Use. Land Use drives a lot of the action. But a whole host of other topics can be included such as Transportation, Housing, Coastal Resiliency. (Refer to handout "Master Plan Status and Background Information").

It is important to consult with stakeholders on the Master Plan. The plan is a strategic tool for 10 to 20 years. The MP is the general policy; it gives legal standing. It should be a document that helps all departments in town, ie, the PB, Con Comm, Budget Cte.

Implementation is an important part of the MP. Our current plan is light on implementation. We should beef this up. This section might include what we will do year to year with a plan to review it annually. This section can be done chapter by chapter or a separate chapter in and of itself.

The MP can be used to help get the Town grant money. It can be used for leverage. If something is important enough to be in the MP and there is grant money available for that topic, the Town has an important step in the right direction in getting that grant. For our town, a section on Coastal Hazards may be prime for funding. Land conservation is also a prime area for funding.

There is no special formula for the formatting of a town's MP. Some towns do it chapter by chapter, topic to topic or by theme. A theme example is "resiliency". For reference, Portsmouth's plan is thematic.

Steps to take in developing a MP:

- Start a committee (Good to have 1 to 2 people from the PB. Involve town staff who will be important to the process)
- Data collection. Get public input. Use a survey, perhaps on-line. Or hold in-person input sessions. Find out the priorities in town
- Draft the narrative
- Review of the draft with the public, PB?
- Revise based on input
- Present to the PB
- The PB holds a Public Hearing and adopts the plan

Our current plan doesn't have much data. That is one area Jenn would recommend we include. Support our plans with data. Traffic counts? Population increase? FEMA statistics? Housing increase? We would do well to beef this up along with our goals and implementation plans. We should include how the data has changed over time. These will be important pieces of evidence to support our goals.

Rockingham Planning Commission has helped Fremont, NH do their Master Plan. Helped them do a survey. RPC has a good on-line survey tool that we may want to utilize. They suggest that a goal for a response to a survey is 10%. The RPC may also be able to help us get some grants in doing our MP. In addition, the RPC has about \$4,000 that could be allocated to New Castle for their technical assistance. The committee should investigate this opportunity further. There is transportation planning funds available.

From various questions it became clear that we need to include in our MP, the bridge near the Wentworth by The Sea Hotel upgrade and its ramifications to our town. SafePath should also be in there.

Respectfully submitted,
Darcy Horgan
Chair, New Castle Planning Board