

**GROTON PLANNING BOARD
AUGUST 13, 2009
MINUTES**

Chairman Capes called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM in the Town Hall
Members present: Perkins, Barringer, Burke, Capes, Giger, Hess, and Wilson

COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN INTERVIEWS

The Board interviewed three consultants for the Comprehensive Master Plan. The Board selected the consultants to be interviewed by ranking the proposals. Chairman Ray Capes explained the selection process to each consultant.

Taintor & Associates – Juliet Walker and Sue Brown of Taintor, Kent Nichols of Weston & Sampson, Lisa Davis of LDA, and Ann McKinnon of Jacobs Engineering presented Taintor and Associates proposal. Ms. Walker highlighted work Taintor Associates had done in Newburyport and Salisbury, MA; Portsmouth, NH and the Southern NJ Pinelands.

The Cecil Group – Ken Buckland of the Cecil Group, Kathleen McCabe of McCabe Enterprises, John Schmid of Nitsch Engineering, and Brad Cheney of CME Associates presented the Cecil Group's proposal. Mr. Buckland described the master-planning process and provided the Board with copies of the Sustainable Northampton Plan. Ms. McCabe highlighted her experience in economic development and knowledge of financing programs.

Communities Opportunities Group (COG) – Judith Barrett and Angela Insinger of COG, Peter Flinker of Dodson Associates, and Gary Hebert of Fay, Spofford and Thorndike presented COG's proposal. Ms. Barrett described the recent master planning process in Princeton and the Devens Communities of Harvard, Ayer, and Shirley, MA.

The Board asked each consultant the following questions:

1. **To be covered in the presentation** - Who will be the Project Manager/Team Leader and what is his/her experience with master plans in general and this team in particular?
2. **Member Perkins** - Describe in detail your proposed approach to visioning, public participation and outreach. Tell us about innovative techniques you have used to maximize community involvement and buy-in. Give examples that demonstrate how successful these techniques have been.
3. **Member Giger** - Beyond the resources identified in your staffing plan, I would like to gain a better understanding of how much town government effort and volunteer citizen effort successful completion of your proposed project depends on. In that regard, I would like you to address the following questions:
 - Does your plan require the creation of topical sub-committees? If so, how many committees; what is the average size of each committee; how will member selection be made and who will manage each committee?
 - What type and amount of information technology services will you require for this project and specifically what part of that requirement are you expecting the Town to provide?

- In addition to the resources identified in your staffing plan and those just discussed, is there any other involvement from the Town and its citizens that you will require to successfully complete your proposed project?
4. **Chairman Capes** - When discussing the future of a community, many different view points emerge from passionate stakeholders. Effectively framing the trade-offs, such as economic development versus preservation of Groton's rural character, is critical to keeping the process moving toward consensus. What techniques will you use to effectively frame the important trade-offs? Can you provide an example from past projects where such techniques helped move a community past a particularly contentious trade-off?
 5. **Member Hess** - Master plans are comprehensive and the elements are interrelated, tell us about the interrelationship between the following plan elements which are very important to Groton.
 - Land Use and Transportation
 - Economic Development and Sustainability
 - Agriculture Preservation and Housing
 6. **Member Barringer** - What is your past experience with the implementation of master plans?
 - Drafting bylaws and regulations?
 - Use of innovation techniques e.g. form based, performance based, non-zoning strategies?
 7. **Member Wilson** - How do you define and measure a successful master plan process?
 8. **Member Burke** - Who was T. J. Kent? If price or the scope of the RFP were not a determinant, what task(s) that have been omitted from your proposal would you recommend be included?

Town Planner Michelle Collette will check references and the Board will discuss its selection at its meeting on August 27, 2009. The Board will review the price proposals at that meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING – SPECIAL PERMIT RENEWAL, 536 MAIN STREET

The Board held the continuation of the public hearing to consider the renewal of the special permit for Gillis Homes to construct an office building at 536 Main Street. At the request of the applicant, the Board voted unanimously to continue the public hearing on September 10, 2009 at 7:30 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Collette
Town Planner