

## Meeting Minutes

**Date:** January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Location:** Nashua River Watershed Association

**Attendees:**

Commissioners: Mike Roberts, Carl Canner, Leo Laverdure, Steve Webber, Carl Flowers, Richard Hewitt

Liaisons: Mark Archambault

Guest: Al Collins

Commissioners absent: Chase Duffy, Chris Christie

**Minutes taken by:** Stephanie Strickland

**Agenda:**

1. **Sustainability Definition Final Discussion**
2. **Sustainability and the Master Plan**
  - a. **Review Steve's power point**
  - b. **Master plan sustainability participants**
  - c. **Master plan objective scoring**
3. **Report from Sustainability Event Steering Committee**
4. **Adjourn**

**Agenda Item #1: Sustainability Definition Final Discussion**

**Motion**

- **Mike: I would like to vote that we allow Mark Haddad to sign off Stephanie's payrolls since we don't have five commissioners present at all meetings.**
- **Richard: I second it**
- **Unanimous agreement from all present**

**Discussion**

- Al's definition: "Sustainability is a commitment to adopt practices that simultaneously support the social, economic, and environmental aspects of our lives now and into the future."
- Leo: There are two things I would do differently: drop simultaneously and add support and balance and second is that it drops foreseeable future which I would like to keep in.
- Al: The reason I took it out is because some people look at it as a short time period.
- Leo: Can we get it to say, long time future?
- Mike: Can we say just future?
- Carl Canner: There is a contradiction with saying our lives and in the future.

- Al: Why do we care about the environment? Because of how it affects us.
- Steve: Economics, environment, and society are all aspects.
- Leo: Practically it doesn't matter because we will never be able to sell it otherwise. People are motivated because it impacts them.
- Mike: I'm going to throw community back into it.
- Leo: What are the boundaries of the community? I don't feel strongly about the definition.
- Mike: The final definition should go right under the letterhead.
- Carl Canner: Community makes sense then.
- Mike: Replace community with lives.

#### **Motion**

- **Mike: I would like to make a motion to move this definition as our final.**
- **Carl Flowers: I second it.**
- **All in favor: Unanimous agreement from all present.**

#### **Discussion**

- Leo: I think we should take this opportunity to write an article and explain our definition and why we came up with it.

#### **Action**

- **Action Item: Leo to draft an article on the definition of sustainability.**

#### **Agenda Item #2: Sustainability and the Master Plan**

- Mike: We would produce a list of commissioners or liaisons who would be interested in participating in the working groups.

##### **a. Review Steve's Power Point**

- Steve: Not all towns have master plans. The master plan from 2002 listed out all the things we have done, which I didn't like because it made it longer. The master plan should be short, not so long that people won't read it. The master plan forces us to agree on, what we as a town will want to happen. It can be used to decide whether someone wants to move to or develop a small business in Groton.
- Mark: Selectman would use it as guidelines for making decisions.
- Mike: It will aide citizens in understanding sustainability.
- Steve: The problem with the last master plan is that we didn't go back and make sure action plans were being implemented.
- Mike: Plans should have two parts: one where you plan it out and one where you actually implement it.
- Steve: If there is too much detail in the plan then people aren't going to want to read the entire document. Should details be in a separate document?
- Leo: A question is whether or not we should see this plan as a single linear plan? Uncertain factors should be listed; people should know of a potentially different future.
- Mike: My thinking is that we're hiring master planners to do this and they won't want us in their way. Our role is to react and help master planners understand more of what we want to see.
- Leo: How could uncertainties change how we're looking at the plan?

- Mike: How do we look at twenty something uncertainties? I'm going to ask Leo if you can write a page or so that articulates these issues.
- Steve: So you're asking for five major things?
- Carl: In what time period?
- Mike: I think so, and forty years. One goal would be to have public transportation.
- Leo: I would ask what the key uncertainties about transportation would be.
- Mark: I think it's worth bringing these issues up to the master planners.
- Carl: How far are we going to go into this?
- Mike: I would like to start with the thickest lens possible and come to some agreement with the planners.
- Leo: What predetermined uncertainties exist for the next 20 years? They should both be there. We need to talk to the people making these decisions and see what they're concerns are.
- Steve: Goals should be to make Groton a sustainable community and to preserve the character of Groton. There were 24 goals in the 2002 master plan which I think are too many. Some of those 24 still make sense today.
- Leo: What aspects are we preserving?
- Steve: Groton's population has stabilized but is unfortunately going to have some upheavals thrown at it.
- Mike: IBM will have an affect on that.
- Leo: On the other hand we have some things at Devens now. Should we have a discussion in there about the changing factors in Groton?
- Carl Canner: They want to preserve the rural character.
- Steve: Someone will need to come up with a list of elements.
- Mike: They've already done that.
- Leo: I asked if the elements were set in stone and they said no.
- Mike: How does sustainability weave into the plan?
- Steve: I think it will within the advisory groups.
- Leo: Maybe I should work primarily on disruptive change.

#### **b. Planning Group assignments.**

- Mike: I would like to know what elements you would each want.
- Al: Housing
- Richard: Open space and recreation plan
- Carl Canner: Land use
- Leo: Chris Christie would be interested in transportation
- Mike: Leo and Mark to do sustainability, natural resources, water, and energy.
- Carl Flowers: Transportation/ economic development.
- Mike: Natural and cultural resources
- Steve: Economic development, open space and recreation, and community services
- Mike: Chase Duffy would be interested in open space and community services as well

#### **Action**

- **Action Item: Mike to give list to Michelle.**

### **c. Master plan objective scoring**

- Mike: I'm passing around a draft of the scoring sheet. Take a look at the objectives and tasks and score them against our three legged stool. I would like to know if anyone has ideas about scoring.
- Leo: It should be high, medium, low, or unaddressed.
- Richard: Could it have a negative effect?
- Leo: Absolutely. We should include that as well.
- Mike: Instead of numbered score should we have something like good?
- Leo: That's what I meant by low or high. Numbers are easier to work with in a spreadsheet though.
- Steve: The problem with numbers is that you're tempted to add them.
- Mike: We're measuring the planning process.
- Leo: I'd rather see it as a dialogue with them.
- Mike: I intended this spreadsheet to be something to score against.
- Leo: I don't think that's where we should start. We should concentrate on dialogue and worry about scoring later.

### **Action**

- **Action Item: Mike to send out notice to steering committee.**