

Hartford Town Plan Steering Committee Meeting
4/9/18
Draft Minutes

Attendance: The following individuals attended the meeting which was held at the Hartford Town Hall in Meeting Room 2 at 171 Bridge Street in White River Junction on Monday, April 9, 2018. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

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|-----------------|---|
| Bruce Riddle | Planning Commission |
| Toby Dayman | Planning Commission |
| John Reid | Planning Commission |
| Chris Lowe | Zoning Board of Adjustment |
| Martha McDaniel | Energy Commission |
| Angie Emerson | Conservation Commission |
| Pat Stark | Historic Preservation Commission |
| Dylan Kreiss | Community Resilience Organization |
| Kim Souza | Selectboard |
| Lynn Luczkowski | Chamber of Commerce |
| Lori Hirshfield | Director of the Department of Planning and Development Services |
| Matt Osborn | Planner |

Welcome & Introductions: Lori Hirshfield welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Town Plan Steering Committee. Introductions were made.

Overview of the Municipal Development Plan: Matt Osborn provided a brief overview of the statutory requirements of the Municipal Development Plan. He distributed a Town Plan Overview and a copy of the statutes. He noted the specific chapters that must be updated at this time to meet statutory requirements.

Master Plan or Town Plan: Matt Osborn noted that the term Master Plan is a New Hampshire term that stemmed from Hartford being a member of the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC) for several decades. He stated that Hartford left the UVLSRPC in 2003 and joined the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission. He stated that in Vermont, the term Town Plan is commonly used. He stated that staff and the Planning Commission agreed that it was time to change the name in this update to Town Plan.

Creating a More Visually Engaging, User-friendly Town Plan: Matt Osborn noted that staff hopes to create a more visually engaging, user-friendly plan. He distributed a copy of the Brattleboro Town Plan. Matt noted that the Brattleboro Plan is much more concise than the Hartford Plan. The current Hartford Plan is 312 pages. He stated that staff and the Steering Committee will be looking at ways to make the Plan shorter and more engaging. He noted that a great deal of information that has been in past plans could be included in an appendix. Lori Hirshfield stated that staff will provide a link to the Brattleboro Town Plan and provide it to the Steering Committee.

Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) Comments: Matt Osborn noted that the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission is charged with reviewing town plans to ensure compliance with State Statutes. Staff met with Senior Planner Kevin Geiger of the TRORC this winter. Kevin conducted a review of the 2014 Plan and provided feedback. Matt noted that the comments are summarized in the March 12, 2018 Planning Commission Workshop Minutes.

Bruce Riddle stated that the Town has had some differences of opinion with the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission at times. Lori Hirshfield responded that she and Bruce serve on the TRORC Board and in recent years there has been more dialogue on the content of the Regional Plan at the TRORC meetings. She noted that the Town has a good working relationship with TRORC.

Review of Town Plan & Level of Update:

| CHAPTER | LAST SIGNIFICANT UPDATE | LEAD COMMISSION | LEVEL OF UPDATE |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Historic & Cultural Resources | 2003 | HPC | Moderate |
| Land Use | 2014 | PC | Minor to Moderate |
| Population | 2012/2014 | PC | Minor |
| Housing | 2012/2014 | PC | Minor to moderate |
| Economic Development | 2003 | PC | Minor |
| Community Facilities & Services | 2003 | PC | Moderate |
| Utilities | 2007 | PC | Moderate |
| Public Roads & Transportation | 2007 | PC | Moderate |
| Natural Resources | 2003 | CC | Major |
| Energy | 1993/2003 | EC | Major |
| Relationship to Adjacent Towns & Region | 2014 | PC | Moderate |
| Implementation | 2003/2007/2014 | PC | Moderate |
| Flood Resilience | 2014 Hazard Mitigation Plan. | CRO | Minor to Moderate |

PC - Planning Commission

HPC - Historic Preservation Commission

EC - Energy Committee

CC - Conservation Commission

CRO - Community Resilience Organization

Matt Osborn went through the list of chapters and described the expected level of effort, noting those chapters that must be updated to meet state requirements. He also identified the lead Town commission, committee or board. Matt noted that the Economic Development chapter was last updated in 2003, was the result of a Municipal Planning Grant and was well-written. He stated that with the short time-frame for the current update, it is limited what can be included in the update for this chapter. He suggested pursuing a grant for the Economic Development update following the current Plan update. Lori Hirshfield also noted that there are regional and statewide studies that have been completed in the past few years regarding the creative economy and other economic development information that we can use in the present update.

Bruce Riddle noted that the Town Plan update is not an academic exercise. The Plan is a reference document for grant applications and Act 250 applications.

Kim Souza asked if staff will identify implementation measures that have been completed. Lori Hirshfield responded yes.

Town Plan Schedule: Matt Osborn noted that the current Town Plan was adopted on May, 2014 and is set to expire in May, 2019. As a result, staff has developed a schedule that has the first draft completed in the fall in order to have sufficient time for community input, revisions to the Plan, and the public

hearings process. Lori Hirshfield noted that Town departments are already working on the update. She stated that staff and the Steering Committee have a lot of work to do in a relatively short amount of time, and therefore, the first priority will be on updates that are required by the state.

Steering Committee Meeting Schedule: Matt Osborn distributed a Town Plan Steering Committee meeting schedule for 2019 that includes fourteen meetings. All of the meetings are scheduled for Mondays. Lori Hirshfield noted that additional meetings may be needed. Lori stated that the goal is to try to keep the meetings to 1 ½ hours, but some meetings may require two hours. Matt stated that staff will develop a list of topics for each meeting. Bruce Riddle stated that if you can't attend a meeting, send your comments to staff and they will share with the Steering Committee. Martha McDaniel stated that it is important that the meetings be concise.

Public Input for the Town Plan: Lori Hirshfield noted that it is important to have public input for the plan update. She relayed the Planning Commission's preference for holding a series of five meetings, one in each of the five villages. She suggested a time frame of May into early June to kick-off public input for the plan update. She suggested having specific topics for each meeting. The Steering Committee agreed.

Lori stated that given the limited time available to update the Plan by May 2019, some of the items identified at the public input meetings may not be a part of the update, but could result in recommendations for follow-up in the future. She added that Plan updates can be done earlier than the state requires.

Lori noted that there will be community meetings in the fall once a draft plan has been completed as well as public hearings required for the adoption process next winter/spring 2019. As for other methods of public input, Lori stated that the Town did a community survey in 2016 that can be referenced. She also noted that a survey was completed in the last year or so by the Parks and Recreation Department, a parking study and survey and a Town Forest survey that can be used.

There was agreement that affordability, quality of life, equity and equality are important issues that should be discussed at the meetings. The following is a list of the meetings and the topics.

| <u>Meeting</u> | <u>Topics</u> | <u>Venue/Village</u> |
|----------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Important Community Priorities & Town Plan 101 | Dothan Brook School/Wilder |
| 2 | Energy and Transportation | Ottauquechee School/Quechee |
| 3 | Natural Resources & Land Use | West Hartford Library/W. Hartford |
| 4 | Community Facilities/Services & Historic Resources | Hartford Library/Hartford Village |
| 5 | Housing & Economic Development | Town Hall/White River Junction |

The Steering Committee came up with the following ideas to consider to engage the public at the community meetings:

- Live key pad polling.
- Tension topics
- Important community priorities
- Meeting an aging population
- Making our community attractive to people to come and stay in Hartford

The Steering Committee agreed that it is important to have early and broad publicity for the public meetings.

Next Meeting: Lori Hirshfield noted that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 30th. She stated that we will be discussing population and housing. She asked the Steering Committee to review both chapters and be prepared to discuss what information to keep and what to let go. Lori stated that staff will put together dates and venues for the community meetings.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.