

Hartford Planning Commission/Town Plan Steering Committee Meeting
8/27/18
Approved Minutes

Attendance: The following individuals attended the meeting which was held at the Hartford Town Hall in Room 2 at 171 Bridge Street in White River Junction on Monday, August 27, 2018. Planning Commission chair Bruce Riddle called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

Bruce Riddle	Planning Commission
Peter Merrill	Planning Commission
Robin Adair Logan	Planning Commission
John Reid	Planning Commission
Toby Dayman	Planning Commission
Dave Sherman	Planning Commission
Angie Emerson	Conservation Commission
Pat Stark	Historic Preservation Commission
Martha McDaniel	Energy Commission
P.J. Skehan	Chamber of Commerce
Lori Hirshfield	Director, Department of Planning and Development Services
Matt Osborn	Planner

Draft Minutes of the August 13, 2018 Meeting: Matt Osborn suggested changing the name of the section “Overall Themes and Needs of the Five Public Forums” to “Consolidated Comments of the Five Public Forums” noting that it is more accurate than the former name. Pat Stark suggested the same change for the first sentence of the section. Bruce Riddle asked if there are any other changes. Being none, Martha McDaniel made a motion to accept the minutes of August 13th with the noted corrections. The motion was seconded by Bruce Riddle and approved.

Revised Agenda: Lori Hirshfield stated that she wanted to address three items at the meeting this evening:

1. Respond to Comments from the 8/13 Workshop
2. Role & Responsibility of the Steering Committee
3. Discuss the Introductory Chapter to the Town Plan

Response to Comments from the 8/13 Steering Committee Meeting: Lori Hirshfield noted that she was on vacation for the 8/13 Steering Committee meeting. She stated that there was discussion at the Steering Committee meeting about obtaining other forms of community input for the current Town Plan update. Lori responded that since we need to adopt the Town Plan update by May, 2019, there isn't enough time to gather additional public input. At this point, we need to start writing the Plan. She noted that the five public forums were added to the Plan's scope of work. Lori stated that we need to manage expectations. There will be opportunities for more public input in the next plan update. She stated that the take away from the five public forums is we received a great deal of valuable input. Lori added that consultant Rebecca Sanborn Stone will summarize the information from the public forums for the Town Plan. Robin Adair Logan asked if there is a place to store items that will need to be addressed after the current Town Plan update. Lori responded yes, that the information will be placed in a file for future use by staff and the Steering Committee.

Role & Responsibility of the Steering Committee: Lori Hirshfield stated that the role of the Steering Committee is to be stewards of the information that we heard at the five public forums and to organize it in an effective way. She stated that staff will be writing the chapters in the Plan and the Steering

Committee will review the drafts and provide guidance. Peter Merrill stated that he sees it a little differently. The Steering Committee will gather the input, review the materials and shape it with their opinions. Martha McDaniel stated that she sees the major challenge is to reformat the plan and develop the content. John Reid noted that ultimately the Planning Commission presents a Draft Town Plan to the public at a public hearing. Once approved by the Planning Commission, the Draft Plan is passed on to the Selectboard for them to consider adoption after holding public hearings.

Lori Hirshfield noted that it is time for staff to start drafting the text for the Town Plan and submit to the Steering Committee for their review. Angie Emerson suggested providing the information to be presented visually and then write the context. Bruce Riddle suggested providing a list of the mandatory chapters in the Town Plan and the order of the chapters for the 9/24 workshop. Lori agreed to provide it.

Major Guiding Principles: Lori Hirshfield presented the following major guiding principles from the five public forums. The information was assembled by consultant Rebecca Sanborn Stone.

- Accessibility & Affordability
- Equity and Inclusion
- Sustainability (environmental & economic)
- Asset-based approach
- Partnerships & Creative Approaches

Accessibility and Affordability: The Steering Committee did not like the term accessibility and decided to remove it.

Equity and Inclusion: The Steering Committee did not like the term equity. An alternative was equality, but there was no consensus that it should replace equity. There was agreement that accessibility is tied to equity and inclusion and that in addition to physical accessibility, there is accessibility to programs and town services. It was suggested that making Hartford more inviting for families is included in this guiding principle.

Sustainability (Environmental & Economic): The Steering Committee thought consistency over time and planning today for the future were important components to sustainability.

Asset-based Approach: It was agreed that this section includes the following: what makes Hartford special, what do we value, what are our physical assets, what are our building blocks for the future and celebrating what we have, identifying things that are critically important to us.

Partnerships & Creative Approaches: It was agreed that the Steering Committee prefers the term collaboration over partnerships.

Other Guiding Principles: Lori Hirshfield asked if community character and quality of life should be added to the list of guiding principles. Matt Osborn distributed a sheet from the Middlebury Town Plan that provided a mission statement for the Town Plan and identifies broad goals. The Steering Committee really liked the mission statement and thought we could modify it and create our own mission statement.

Matt Osborn distributed a sheet from the Brattleboro Town Plan that has a quality of life diagram with qualities that contribute to it. The Steering Committee liked the diagram, but there wasn't consensus to name it quality of life. Alternatives included "Hartford at its Best", "Hartford Assets" and just "Hartford". There also were suggestions to add social interaction, people and relationships to it.

Introductory Chapter: Lori Hirshfield noted that staff will be working on the introductory chapter of the Town Plan. The chapter will include

- Introduces the Town to the reader
- Who we are as a community
- What makes Hartford a special place
- The purpose of the Town Plan
- What is included in the Town Plan
- The Town Plan public process

As for goals, the Steering Committee agreed on the following:

- Ensuring Viability
- Encouraging growth and change
- Preserving our heritage
- Emphasize people, relationships and community

Wrap Up: Lori Hirshfield stated that for the next meeting, staff will provide an outline of the chapters to be included in the Town Plan as well as staff's thoughts on a standardized format and graphics. Lori asked for volunteers to assist staff in writing or editing the chapters prior to submitting to the Steering Committee. Robin Adair Logan volunteered.

Next Meeting: Matt Osborn noted that the next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 24th.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.