

Planning Board Minutes
May 6, 2020

MINUTES

Location: Zoom Meeting

Date: Wednesday, May 6, 2020 Members

Present: Francois Steiger, Bill Homans, John DeMalia, Alice Livdahl (Chair), Members

Staff: Christina Sutcliffe, Administrative Assistant

Additional Attendees: Doug Cormier, Jonathan Vos, Brian Doherty, John Hume and Ryan McLane.

Christina read the Governor's order regarding remote meetings and noted The meeting is being broadcast live and digitally recorded."

Ms. Livdahl called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

First order of Business:

Public Comments - None

Minutes Approval - None

Next order of business, Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) Transportation Master Plan.

Mr. Vos explained the goal is to construct and maintain a safe road system that is consistent with the Town's character, maintaining a roadway management plan to achieve maintenance and establish a basis for roadway priority and project allocation.

The 10 proposed recommendations are as follow:

1. The Town of Hubbardston continue their proactive participation with MRPC
2. Schedule traffic counts, up to 4 every year
3. Construct sidewalks and possibly bike lanes to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
4. Financing from enhancement funds, private public partnerships, community development and continue working with the Complete Street program funding
5. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) partner , working with neighboring communities and a Regional Rail Trail network
6. Comprehensive circulation study
7. MRPC unified planning work program
8. Municipal Vulnerability Program (MVP)

9. Increase open dialog with Montachusett Area Regional Transit (MART) for bus routes at strategic locations.
10. Analyzing crash data and working with MRPC and MassDOT. The 2 primary locations for further study are at 1. Old Boston Turnpike (Route 62) at Worcester Road and 2. Gardner Road (Route 68) corridor.
11. Management

Mr. Vos noted the culverts and the 3 bridges will be repaired at no cost to the town.

Ms. Livdahl asked Mr. Doherty if the MRPC kept a backlog of past studies. Mr. Doherty stated yes for the standar locations. Mr. Doherty stated they could use different locations at the request of the town.

Next item on the agenda, Master Plan Chapters.

Mr. DeMalia suggested a public forum in the fall to receive public feedback.

Ms. Sutcliffe stated she has researched performing a survey which would be mailed out on a postcard and be completed online. Mr. Steiger asked if the survey would go to each member of the household or would there be only one per household. Ms. Sutcliffe stated it would be per household, the cost would be less that \$1,000. Mr. Homans felt that would be a good investment. Mr. Steiger agreed an online survey would be a good idea.

Ms. Livdahl

Master Plan Chapters schedule to present to the public will be revisited after the Governor's new orders on May 18, 2020.

Ms. Livdahl asked the status of completion for the Chapters. Jonathan --- stated the Transportation and Services and Facilities are almost complete. Housing is in progress and will not be drawn from the previous Housing Chapter. Open Space and Recreation in progress.

Next item on the agenda, Master Plan Funding.

Mr. McLane discussed the Planning Board's contribution to the final chapter. Mr. McLane stated the importance of finishing the Master Plan. The Warrant Article would fund a little more than 50% of what MRPC has quoted and the Board of Selectmen contribution of roughly 50% and the Planning Board's 50% match. Planning Assistance grant possible for the match. Ms.Livdahl asked what the amount will be for the match. Mr. McLane stated \$5,000.

Mr. Homans made a motion to contribute the funds to finish the Master Plan Implementation Chapter, Mr. Steiger seconded, all in favor, motion carried with a roll call vote (4-0).

Next item on the agenda, Tax Title properties and Planning Board funds from Community Preservation Act (CPA).

Ms.Livdahl stated there are 6 lots to potentially acquire for Affordable Housing.

Ms.Livdahl asked Mr. Mclane if a property were to be redeemed by the own, would the funds be rededicated to the Planning Board. Mr. Mclane stated the funds would move to the general fund

which would turn the funds into free cash. Mr. McLane stated the Planning Board could put an Article on the warrant to request the funds.

Ms.Livdahl explained she had met with the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) to discuss how CPA funds can be used. Ms.Livdahl stated funds could be used for tax title property. Ms.Livdahl stated The Massachusetts Housing Partnership manual, "examples of eligible activities" reads CPA funds can support the construction of new housing on small lots in existing neighborhoods. Site can be acquired often through tax title foreclosure, donated or purchased.

Ms.Livdahl asked Mr. McLane what the procedure is if the lot is non-buildable. Mr. McLane stated they would have to cease using the money and find another location for affordable housing.

Ms.Livdahl asked if the owners had been notified. Mr. McLane stated yes, pre COVID.

Mr. McLane stated the legal fees are \$5,000 per parcel, which would total \$30,000 for the 6 lots.

The Board reviewed the lots and discuss the main points of each lot as follows:

1. Map 6-44, Vacant lot, land in Hubbardston and Westminster, 31.6 acres with a 50' Right-of-Way and no frontage. Known in this meeting as lot 1.
2. Map 6-45, same owner as #1 and has frontage to the Right-of-Way, hoping to combine with #1 to save on legal fees.
3. Map 6-43 abuts lot #1, 6 acres with 315 ' of frontage, located on Old Westminster Road, seem quite wet in the front. Known in this meeting as lot 2.
4. Map 6-111, Vacant lot, 14.48 acres with 420' frontage, located on Old Westminster Road. Known in this meeting as lot 3.
5. Map 1-171, Kruse Rd, 2.3 acres with 350' frontage, wetlands. Known in this meeting as lot 4.
6. Map 8-10A, .42 acres on Brigham Rd, existing house lot. Known in this meeting as lot 5.
7. Lot off the center of town, .9 acres, antique abandoned house on the parcel. Known in this meeting as lot 6.

The Board discussed and decided on 3 lots, 6-44, 6-43 and 6-111.

Mr. Steiner made a motion to move forward with the allocation of \$15,000 for lots 1-3, Mr. Homans seconded, all in favor, motion carried with a roll call vote (4-0).

Mr. Homans made a motion that in the case -45 cannot be foreclosed with 6-44 to allocate the additional \$5,000 , Mr. DeMalia seconded, all in favor, motion carried with a roll call vote (4-0).

Next item on the agenda, 147 Williamsville Road solar project request for Special Permit extension.

Ms. Sutcliffe explained she had received an application for extension from Ms. Sweet of Clearway Energy. Clearway Energy acquired the property from Borrego Solar.

Ms.Livdahl asked when the permit was expiring. Chris stated she believed it was issued in June 2018 and would expire June 2020, but will check.

Ms. Sutcliffe is waiting for Bill Murray's report. Ms. Sutcliffe noted the application has been received and the Board has 90 days to act on it. --- checking to see if there is a title issue. Mr. Murray has requested an additional \$1,200 plus 15% administrative fee. Borrego Solar submitted a \$10,000 bond which is in the Town's possession.

Next item on the agenda, MVP Recap and Summary.

Ms.Livdahl informed the Board the MVP grant group meets for 3 sessions.

The MVP group works with an engineering firm and MRPC.

The group has identified the need for a cell tower, generator for the school so the school may be used as a shelter and 3 culver replacements.

The environmental concerns and action items as follows:

- Draft site
- Forest management
- Splash pad

Last item on the agenda, Hubbardston House and Affordable Housing.

Ms.Livdahl explained to the Board Hubbardston House is built to capacity. They have 48 people on the waiting list and the turnover is 0-5% per year. Ms.Livdahl stressed the need for more Affordable Housing. Mr. Steiner urged Ms.Livdahl to continue her research.

Next meeting June 3, 2020

Mr. Steiner made a motion to adjourn, Mr. Homans seconded, all in favor, motion carried (4-0).

Adjourned: 8:15 pm