

ATKINSON MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

October 20, 2022

Attendance:

Members

Anne Brenton
~~Sue Coppeta~~
Ken Grant
Karen McFadden
Ellyn Murphy
Kate Rochford
John Ottow
Noriko Yoshida-Travers

Consultants:

Steven Whitman
Crystal Kidd

Others Present

Sue Killam
Karen Brown

Call to Order:

John Ottow called the Atkinson Master Plan Committee meeting to order Thursday, October 20, 2022, at 4:33pm

Correspondence: None

Old Business:

➤ Outreach and Engagement Discussion

Karen McFadden reviewed the revised Outreach/Engagement “how and why” document that came out of the Committee’s October 11 meeting. There was brief discussion about some of the items.

Steven Whitman reviewed the three major phases of the planning process: 1) **Quiet** phase for education and data gathering (current); 2) **Engagement** phase for forums, focus groups, etc; and 3) **Act** phase for review, endorsement, and implementation. During Engagement, the forum is the big event and getting information and invitations out is key. Focus Groups are after Forums with Surveys after that. The need for surveys should be discussed in more detail at a later point.

Crystal Kidd updated the committee about her outreach to the town TA and employees and data gathering from RPC, state offices, and elsewhere.

Actions:

- Steven Whitman will update the MPC project timeline.

New Business:

➤ **Draft Flyer**

The MPC gave feedback to Resilience concerning edits to the flyer: “What’s Next Atkinson” at the top (no date); more engaging photo; edit paragraph into bullets; add a tag line; use a tiny URL/bitly.

Actions:

- John Ottow and Noriko Yoshida-Travers to source the photo.
- Resilience to edit the flyer.

➤ **Existing Conditions: Transportation**

Resilience indicated that there is a lack of data for this topic. They are looking at a Greater Derry report. The MPC indicated that traffic counts were done in recent years for the Island Pond/ Westside Drive intersection, on Main Street near Sawmill Ridge and on Rt 121 near the Plaistow line.

There was agreement that within the town transportation is virtually limited to automobiles. There was a discussion of the Elderly Services Transportation Program which provides rides within and outside Atkinson. MPC members also indicated transportation nearby: Merrimack Valley local buses in Plaistow; train service to Boston and to Maine from downtown Haverhill; and Boston/Logan service from Exit 2 in Salem. The commuter bus from Plaistow is gone and the park and ride lot on Rt 125 from which it left has closed. There is a park and ride lot in Hampstead near the Atkinson line which is barely used.

Issues within town are speeding, lack of parking near town center and other gathering places, visibility issues trying to turn onto main streets, ‘cut-through’ streets, lack of enforcement, and lack of pedestrian amenities leading to safety issues for walkers.

Steven Whitman talked about opportunities used in other towns: complete streets, traffic calming, employer van services, walking paths, multi-use pathways.

Actions:

- Crystal Kidd to look for traffic counts from the areas mentioned by the MPC.

➤ **Community Facilities and Services**

Crystal Kidd has met with Noriko Yoshida-Travers and Matt Sullivan. She has an appointment with Karen Brown and is waiting to hear back from the Police Chief and the Fire Chief.

Karen Brown, Director of Kimball Library, described the library services (adult and children's collections, print and digital, programming, tech support, the courtyard, meeting rooms) which are in demand with a very high usage rate. A satisfaction survey was recently sent out and responses are due soon. The siding replacement is pretty much complete and there has been some talk about possibly installing solar panels on the roof. Parking is an issue when there is a popular program but a warrant to put in more parking failed a few years ago.

Kate Rochford explained about the Kimball Trust which granted the town of Atkinson land and the Kimball House for use as a museum, a library, and a cemetery. The Trust is in effect to this date and is watched/ controlled by the State of NH.

The Board of Selectmen are pursuing a possible new Police Station with a parcel of town-owned land on Main Street near Island Pond identified as the preferred option. The Building Needs Committee was resurrected a few years ago and hired a consultant to do a review of all town buildings – found on the town website [here](#). The Police Station is not included because that building was done recently in connection with the review of their space needs. There was some MPC discussion about the Building Needs Committee vis-a-vis the Capital Improvement Committee.

➤ **Questions and Next Steps**

Next meeting's topics are Natural Resources and Natural Hazards. The revised flyer will be reviewed. Liz will be here with Crystal on Zoom. Steve is not available.

Approve Minutes: October 11, 2022

Anne Breton made a motion to accept the minutes of the October 11, 2022, meeting of the Atkinson Master Plan Committee. Karen McFadden seconded the motion. Unanimously passed on a voice vote.

Adjournment:

Ellyn Murphy made a motion to adjourn. Ken Grant seconded. Meeting adjourned at 6.32pm

The next Master Plan Committee meeting will be held on November 17, 2022, 4:30 pm at the town hall.

Submitted by Ellyn Murphy on October 23, 2022