

ATKINSON MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

December 15, 2022

Attendance:

Members

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

Consultants:

Liz Kelly, Resilience
Planning & Design
(RPD)

Others Present

Water Resource Com:
• Joe Jordan
• Carl Orio
• Sam Butler
• Mike Trasatti
Paul Wainwright,
Conservation Comm
Karen Steele, Resident

Call to Order :

John Ottow called the Atkinson Master Plan Committee (MPC) meeting to order Thursday, December 15, 2022 at 4:38 pm

Approve Minutes: November 17 & December 1, 2022

John Ottow made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 17, 2022 meeting of the Atkinson MPC. Vote: 7/0/0. The motion passes. John Ottow made a motion to accept the minutes of the December 1, 2022 meeting of the MPC. Vote: 7/0/0. The motion passes.

Correspondence: None

Old Business: None

New Business:

➤ **Review draft MPC town report:**

Sue Coppeta provided feedback from the Asst. Town Admin: content looks good, follow the town's guidelines (format, font..)

Add the same 2 bullets/verbiage from the flyer describing what a master plan is, add committee picture. John Ottow, Ellyn Murphy & Anne Brenton to finalize edits and review graphics. John Ottow to submit to Asst. Town Admin.

➤ **Project Timeline & Deliverables Review: Liz Kelly PPD**

- January will be the final meeting on Existing Conditions
- Existing Conditions Draft report will be delivered by the February. This is a comprehensive report.

- Final committee report in March
- Existing Conditions report serves as a foundation along with the public outreach to directly inform the Master Plan development/update, data, charts, and information will be used at the Community Outreach event.
- This is a significant milestone in the master plan process.
- Reviewed handout on Community Forums: goals, event details & content.
 - Members of town boards and committees will be invited to participate and present at the individual tables/stations that they represent: Land Use, Conservation, Natural Resources, Recreation, etc.
 - Survey will be available at community forum and online

➤ **Open Space**

- Paul Wainwright joined the discussion.
- Open Space consists of 2 main categories:
 - Natural areas, forest, farmland, conserved land, & parks regardless of ownership
 - Cluster development open space. Cluster development open space areas have different qualities and have the potential to add to the rural character of the town and conservation though conservation is not the primary consideration
- There are ~ 500 acres of town owned and conserved lands
- There are ~ 600 acres of open space within 20 cluster developments
- Maps of currently conserved and open space can be found on the Conservation Committee webpage in the Land Conservation Plan of 2022.
- Map of high value conservation areas; wildlife corridors, protection of wetlands, abutting conservation lands, are also identified in the plan regardless of ownership. This can be used as a basis when considering future acquisitions/donations.
- Sue Coppeta inquired if there are any metrics that we could compare ourselves to in regards to total open space. Paul Wainwright informed that Atkinson is approaching about 20% between the 2 categories. The NH Association of Conservation Commissions targets 20% for the state. The Association does not count cluster open space as conservation land. Paul Wainwright concluded that “Atkinson is not in bad shape.”
- Ken Grant provided an historical view of how many of the town’s conservation land came to be.

➤ **Recreation**

Recreation refers to all indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, buildings, programs, and land including athletic fields and trails.

- Paul Wainwright noted that during covid there was a large increase in trail usage. Conservation Commission is rethinking the number/layout of trails. NH Fish & Game recommend that trails circle the perimeter leaving undisturbed areas in the middle for wildlife habitat
- Noriko Yoshida-Travers, Town Director of Recreation and MPC member provided insight to recreational facilities: Collins Park, Woodlock Park and the Community Center. The pavilion at Woodlock is small. A larger capacity covered structure could open opportunities for alternative usage. Town has no indoor recreation facilities outside of the Community Center

Ball fields are well utilized mostly by non-town sponsored athletic clubs which pay a fee for usage. Pickleball is very popular and the courts are well utilized even during the winter months.

The Community Center serves many purposes: recreational activities, community groups, elderly activities, town department offices and elections.

The community center was built in 1912 and is a former summer camp. The building needs committee has recommended the building be torn down instead of major renovation. (reference Building Needs Report on town website) Not all space is being actively utilized. This the only town owned facility that can host larger events. During elections, building capacity limits have been a noted. Town may need to consider a larger capacity facility.

➤ **Historic and Cultural Resource**

- Any building, land mark or site that may have historical value to the community. May include barns, cemeteries, houses, monuments, cellars, etc.
- Sue will check with assessing to see if there are any registered barns in town
- The Kimball House, Center School and Atkinson Academy cited as building with historical value. The Historical Society is located at the Kimball House. The Kimball house and surrounding lands were put in trust for a library and museum. The trust is overseen by the state. The Center School has been recently added as an historical building. Atkinson Academy's history is noteworthy for being the first co-ed school The Academy is owned by Timberland Regional School District. The original building is not being utilized for school rooms. Concern that the district may not be focused on maintaining a preserving
- The town briefly had an Historical District that was resolved due to residents finding it too restrictive.
- There are different philosophies in town: tear down/sell vs preserving.
- Discussion on Cultural Resources will continue at the next meeting

➤ . **Water Resources**

- Joe Jordan Vice Chair of the Water Resource Committee (WRC), joined the discussion
- The WRC was formed ~1.5 years ago as an advisory committee to the Board of Selectpersons to support and advise town officials during the PUC rate and water hydrant maintenance rate increase case. Now that has concluded the WRC is changing focus
- The goal of the WRC is to improve & protect Atkinson's water resources, help and advise residents in event of contamination with suggestions and resources for remediation and treatment. They held their first educational forum on private well testing and what to look for, presented by state experts.
- Hampstead Area Water Co (HAWC) is a public utilities company and regulated by the state. The town or committee has no authority over them but continues to be aware of activities.
- PFAS contaminations are an ongoing concern to monitor
- WRC to provide their mission statement to the MPC

Adjournment:

Karen McFadden made a motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 6.40pm

The next Master Plan Committee meeting will be a workshop held on January 10, 2022, 6:30pm at the Community Center.

Submitted by Karen McFadden on December 22, 2022