Acton 2020 Meeting Minutes – Oct. 27th, 2010

Attendees: Margaret, Celia, Clint, Jim, Roland, Kristen, Sue (minutes), Sahana

I. Minutes Approved for Oct. 13th 2010 meeting
II. Discuss feedback from Oct. 20th Community Workshop
    a. Outreach
        i. Areas for Improvement
            1. Committee needed more time to look at presentation from PC beforehand as well as the handouts from PC that were provided to the public so we could be prepared for questions
            2. Participants needed more time to review materials (need more than 10 min.); consider less questions/less content; review content with teams before the discussions
            3. Try to get more 'average citizen' participation vs. active Acton residents because always get a skewed view; need to do our best to get to ALL citizens of the community – how? Suggestions:
                a. Have posters at the Library with questions
                b. Have a presence at WinterFest – not just a booth – and communicate with participants (FYI - next meeting in Jan.)
                c. What brings people out? Focus on Major Issues that people care about: Open Space, Pay as you Throw, Taxes, Dogs, School Future.
                d. Advertise based on the issues that will bring people out.
                e. Change it to a weekend day.
                f. Target Outreach to community groups.
                g. Need a lot of repetition.
                h. Target others to be involved.
                i. Start earlier to plan event.
                j. Need ground rules for team participation
                k. Need more Planning Board members involved. Consider having separate meetings with Selectmen/Town Committee members and the general public. Need structured conversations, specific questions to ask committees to get their input and guidance vs. open-ended conversations.
                l. Evaluate our position and our ability to engage Town committees in the process and to obtain their insights on what's needed. – Clint suggested asking their opinions on future issues...taxes, water, traffic, etc. to get them engaged. Who is supposed to support/contribute to the long-term plan?
            4. PC PRESENTATION:
                a. Delivery of PC presentation needed to be more interesting/engaging; have our committee more involved in the presentation; need more relevant data to present
                b. More interaction from participants during presentation
                c. Needed more time during PC presentation for people to ask questions

d. Needed a clearer story about age of residents and directions

5. Facilitators were varied in ability; they were asked questions they didn't know answers; some participants were belligerent and railroaded team focus
6. Team discussions' voting on top 3 was not reasonable in view of limited review time and vagueness of goals.
7. Need a DRY RUN at the location before the event

ii. FOOD

1. Was great– need to thank the caterer who was fantastic; Leah will draft Thank you letter and Margaret to sign

iii. ACTON WATER – nice touch by Jim

iv. NEED TO COMMUNICATE RESULTS from the Workshop

1. Post Results from event (include PPT)
2. Engage with participants to improve the process – find out what their issues are and discuss with them.
3. NEED TO STRUCTURE FEEDBACK – ex., POST request for comments on website. Margaret and Jim to follow up with some individuals?
4. Summary Sheets on website
5. Discuss results at upcoming Acton2020 meeting

v. NEED TO COMMUNICATE GOALS of upcoming events

vi. **Acton2020 Committee needs to make a list of what we need to see from the consultants – specifically which points of data are required. **Need focus on Long Term Plan.** PC is focused on 7 state elements but we need to focus on what's needed for our Town. For ex., (see document "Long Term Planning Subjects")

1. Housing
2. Long term capital plan
3. Long term growth plan
4. Long term school plan
5. Long term tax plan

b. Logistics

i. Try for Saturday (vs. during the week)

ii. Use Parker Damon – better environment/access

iii. Have team evaluate location/entry points, etc. to optimize flow of people and locations of materials

ACTION ITEMS:

III. BEFORE NEXT MEETING:

a. Review minutes before next meeting, particularly the data issues in III.e below. These issues will be presented to PC before the next meeting.
b. Need to create a write up of the results of the Oct. 20 Workshop and post to website. Jim to ask Daphne to identify top 3 things we got out of meeting. Jim to draft and Margaret to edit.
c. Margaret to confirm that PC can attend Nov. 10th meeting
d. Consider assigning responsibility to team members to review specific topics of 1998 Master Plan
e. **Additional data that consultants need to provide:** *{***Committee members, please review list and add other data items, if needed}*
   1. In general, need more comparative data
   2. Need town census info on people moving in/out – needed trending info

3. Need Ratio of K-12 population, trending how we compare
4. Open Space: what's protected and what's not per capita. (vs. NYC); what's currently happening to open spaces in Acton.
5. School Crowding – are we at capacity? Trend and compare to other communities.
6. What % of overall taxes is spent for schools? Trend and comparison
7. Can't used generalized data vs. Acton data
8. Need to know actual size of population in house size; Cross tab bet. # of bedrooms and # of school age children; trend and comparison. For ex., when senior family moves out, what is size of family (and # kids) moving in?
9. Water Resources – review 1998 Master Plan. Consider including Water Resources as a specific topic into the goals of Sustainability or Town Assets. How does water affect future building in town?
10. Based on current zoning, how much additional land can be built? Can we support it? That's the Build Out Analysis that PC will provide.

IV. AT NEXT MEETING:

a. Need to de-brief Oct. 20 Workshop with PC
b. Discuss Long term Planning approach and how it is incorporated into Acton2020 initiatives
c. Need to strategize town engagement in process – town committees, average citizens
d. Discuss with PC what's left to present (existing conditions)
e. Committee needs to identify areas of change for process and relationship with PC
f. Need to determine when next community workshop will be
g. Figure out Plan B if our expectations exceed what the consultants are able to provide – specifically related to the data and scope of the plan for the future
h. Determine critical Town topics to engage participants – brainstorm at next meeting.
i. Figure out who will be responsible to manage the logistics of the upcoming events. Identify potential volunteers. Consider Lee, Deb Elkoury, others who responded to our website
j. Consider meeting with other committees to discuss project approach and progress

V. HOW TO ENGAGE INTERESTED VOLUNTEERS?

- Per Jim, when fill out Contact Form, gets inserted into Google Doc on tab "web contacts" which includes date of contact, person, email address and what they're interested in (events, volunteer advisor, etc.)
    - If they want announcement, they put their name into the town website
    - If they're interested in being a volunteer advisor, copied contact info into correct section under their interests (if clear)
    - Not significant volume yet.
    - Jim suggests to list advisors and indicate their areas of interest in a checklist so we can contact them.
- Volunteer Advisors
    - Help review data by topic – for ex., school data filtered to Peter Ashton, John Peterson to take a look and help us to evaluate.
    - Alter approach to have them organize by current goal, focus more on specific issues. Then tie back to Phase I Goals.
    - Need to send note to Volunteer Advisors thanking them for their interest.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:30pm.