

Acton 2020 Committee
[DRAFT] Minutes
July 13, 2011 – 7:00 PM
Room 204, Acton Town Hall

Margaret Woolley Busse (Chair), Paulina Knibbe (Associate, by phone), Sahana Purohit, Celia Kent, Jim Snyder-Grant, Charles Mercier, Vasilios (Bill) Marathias, Sandeep Verma (Associate, minute-taker), Roland Bartl, John Sonner (BoS rep). Consultants from “The Collaborative” (formerly known as the “Planner's Collaborative”) Daphne Politis, Jim Purdy.

I. Approve minutes from June 30, 2011

Approved with amendments. Jim SG and Charles will work together on one posting to focus feedback on the chosen IIIrd alternative along with other requested attributes, which together comprise what we will refer to as the “Proposed Plan”.

II. Discuss feedback/results from June 23rd meeting

Question about the recent rate of land protection in Acton. (acres / year)

Jim P to research this rate and report back. Kristin to also report to Margaret on current open space in Acton, with help from Roland.

Concord's Land Trust was cited as a possible mechanism for preserving open space.

III BLOG entry

Discussed a blog entry which prompted us to ask whether the master plan should consider behavioral transformations needed to affect civic changes in addition to the role of infrastructure in possibly facilitating this change. There was some discussion centered on what is more important in achieving the goal of town centers – whether we need to incentivize people with attractive town centers within walking distance or will town centers emerge around places that people like to visit? Discussion veered towards the Douglas School Jazz Band as a possible example.

040 - IV Discussion on Acton 2020 Report Outline

Discussion on “Goals and Objectives” versus “Elements”. Jim P. mentioned that Elements are required to meet the official format for submission to State.

Celia – assigning dots is open to debate as potentially there are many more inter-relations.

042 – IV Discussion of Proposed Plan Concept

Celia – At the top level – we need a compelling story about what Acton is and how the master plan will honor that, e.g., What is Acton's identity? How do we want to be known? We agree generally that Acton is about great schools, but we're less clear on what else characterizes our town – different people would offer different answers. Is there a way to transform that diversity of opinion from an appearance of confusion to a positive source of strength?

It was decided that we'll make a distinction between a “Town Center” in Kelley's Corner and “village centers” in other parts of town like West Acton and South Acton.

Margaret – this doesn't address all goals, e.g., sustainability. This is a good starting place for the executive summary for the Proposed Plan.

Roland – Marketing executive summary needed after the November 7th, Public Workshop.

050 – V Project Countdown

Various meetings and schedules leading up to the November and March Public Workshops were discussed. It was decided to have the next committee meetings on July 27th and August 3rd, 2011. Meetings on August 10th and 24th were cancelled due to unavailability of members.

There was a significant amount of discussion on which experts should potentially be invited to speak to committee members on topics such as affordable housing. Margaret wanted both advocates and opponents to get a balanced view. September 28th was suggested as a suitable date for these experts. Amongst the names mentioned were Nancy T, Kelly Cronin, Bob (?), Jennifer (MAPC), Kathy Acerbo-Bachman, Jim Stockard, Jamie Eldredge.

Roland suggested that we prepare questions in advance for the experts and have a moderator during the information sessions. These meetings and the invited experts should be well publicized and advertized, and possibly recorded and posted on the website (Charlie). We should allow about ten minutes for questions from the audience though the primary purpose of these meetings is to educate the Acton 2020 members (Daphne).

Under "Potential Topics", Daphne to provide a specific plan specific to Acton for "Economic Development". It was felt that "Tools" better described what was proposed under "Precedents". Also, since "Town Character" mostly referred to "Open Space", perhaps that described it better. Growth management was proposed as a possible addition.

Jim P suggested the plan will need to address three questions (on potential changes) – (1) Precedents: Will we like the results? (2) Tools: How do we accomplish it? (3) Feasibility: What does it cost and how can we afford it?

064-VI Summary of the June 23rd meeting

All committee members were requested to read the summary document and email the committee and the Collaborative their comments by 5:00 p.m., July 15th, 2011. Sahana to finalize the email Acton2020 friends/subscriber list. Margaret to email the summary document to entire email list. Jim S-G and Celia to post summary on the website the week of July 18th, 2011.

Jim S-G – Use a single color for the chart on most popular elements.

Member assignment for various Goals and Objectives are as follows:

1. Preserve Town Character – Celia
2. Ensure Environmental Sustainability – Jim S-G and Sandeep
3. Improve Connections – Bill
4. Provide More Opportunities for Community Gathering and Recreation – Paulina
5. Support Inclusion and Diversity – Charlie
6. Preserve and Enhance Town Owned Assets – Sahana and Paulina
7. Maintain and Improve Financial Well Being of Town – Margaret

Roland suggested that individual committee members who are assigned to various goals should email town committees in advance with possible dates when they would like to get on the agenda, possibly request a "standing agenda item".

In addition, members are requested to read documents related to Goals and Objectives, especially the ones assigned to them, for possible discussion according to the following schedule.

July 27th, 2011: 2 and 3

August 3rd, 2011: 1 and 4

August 31st, 2011: 5, 6 and 7