

## Acton 2020 Committee Minutes

Date: January 13, 2011, 7:00 pm

Location: Town Hall, Rm 126

Attending: Kristen Alexander, Margaret Wooley Busse, Jim Snyder-Grant, Celia Kent (minutes-taker), Clint Seward, Planners Collaborative (Daphne Politis, Brian Barber)

Citizens: John Sonner (first part of meeting), Ron Beck (chair of the Water Resources Committee, to participate in discussion of Goals/Objectives re water resources)

I. Approve Minutes. Postpone this until receive draft minutes from Sahana.

II. Follow up on last meeting

a. Margaret reviewed the upcoming schedule:

*Three public meetings in March* with two “burning issues” for discussion at each meeting – Thurs March 3, Wed March 9, Sat March 12. Ctee meeting to debrief/retool as necessary on Mon March 7<sup>th</sup>.

*Mid-May* – larger public meeting focusing on discussion of alternative scenarios. Margaret emphasized that each scenario should be real, not just extremes with one scenario representing the middle ground. We should aim to illustrate the costs and benefits of the different choices presented. Daphne suggested that one scenario will illustrate likely build-out should there be no intervention (i.e. change in zoning or other regulation, or implementation of any other new strategy). She explained that scenarios will be illustrated with Acton maps and photographs, often from other towns, which illustrate potential or likely outcomes for a given scenario. Jim commented that we will need a way to pick and choose elements from different scenarios to develop the final plan. This meeting will be followed by development of a draft implementation plan to be presented at a 4<sup>th</sup> public event in September.

*Summer* – Touch base with BoS and with Planning Board as we develop the scenario for implementation to make sure both Boards are supportive of the direction we are pursuing.

*September* – Public meeting where present draft implementation plan

*Dec/Jan* – Present final plan. (followed by preparation for Town Meeting)

b. Meeting with key committees:

Margaret presented a status report to BoS Monday. She left them with the questions and invited them to email responses. She has also met with the

Finance Committee and left them the questions. She has begun a discussion with the Planning Board on the questions.

Celia met with the HDC Tuesday. She gave a brief overview of the meeting and said she would distribute written notes soon. She reported that members of the HDC have yet to be contacted by a Planners Collaborative representative for their advice and guidance on completing relevant Inventory data and that they are anxious to assist. She plans to meet with the DRB next Wednesday. Upcoming Historical Commission meetings conflict with Acton 2020 meetings so Celia has sent the questions to the Chair, Kimberley Connors Hughes, who will discuss at a meeting and then Celia will follow up with Kimberley to get feedback.

Clint attended a school strategy meeting which included members of the school administration plus two members from the School Committee. They are looking to develop a 5-10 year plan and discussed outreach to get feedback. Clint suggested to them that we coordinate our efforts. Margaret suggested we should look for a more official liaison to our committee from either the school committee or this strategy group. Margaret will call Steve Mills to discuss.

Jim met with two committees, the Open Space Committee, and a special working group that is working on the updated prioritized parcel list for the Open Space and Recreation Plan. He has notes from the open space committee which he'll pass on when he types them up. He reported on the special working group, which consists of subsets of the Conservation Commission and the Open Space Committee.

Jim will meet with the Green Advisory Committee and he'll talk separately with Chris Schaffner, the chair. He has also gotten some feedback from the Water Resources Advisory Committee and will attend their upcoming meeting. He plans to contact the Recreation Commission as well

Sahana will meet with the school committee later this month. Sue will go to ACHC in February (or perhaps email the questions and follow up with the chair). Sue is also trying to get on the agenda for the next Economic Development Committee meeting.

Ron Beck, chair of the Water Resources Advisory Committee, commented that they are working on a new water bylaw that may have a five-year implementation plan. He would welcome more organized coordination between Acton 2020 and WRAC. Daphne suggested Bill from Planners Collaborative should follow up with Ron. Ron looks forward to advising on the goals and strategies and also has concerns with some of the inventory information. In general, he thinks the information should be presented more neutrally.

c. Inventory Timeline

Jim Purdy will send us a new Inventory draft by the end of January in time for review at the February 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. The goal would be to have a final version ready for posting by mid-February.

d. Burning Issues

Celia will work on organizing the current Blog List for committee discussion at upcoming meeting. Margaret and Jim will work on posting the first two issues for the blog.

III. Revised Goals and Objectives

Daphne reviewed the *Revised Goals and Objectives: DRAFT 2C document* and suggested how to use it to organize the committee discussion productively. Committee discussion followed for each Goal and list of objectives. All recommended changes were noted by Daphne who will distribute a revised Goals document which we will review at one more meeting before posting a final draft. The goals/objectives will be presented to the public as part of the May scenarios meeting. D could organize goal more crisply followed by the value/the reason why behind it.

A few discussion highlights are noted below, but are not meant to reflect the full range of committee discussion. A general improvement discussed was to word the goals more crisply followed by a brief explanation of the value(s) underlying the goal (the reason why it's important). It was then noted that the Goal Statement was actually above the explanatory text, so the title "goal" should be moved up to describe the goal statement. This should be followed by the explanation/why description without a "title".

*Sustainability.*

Given public and committee feedback, it is appropriate to frame the goals and objectives more as action items than as planning items.

Ron commented that people don't understand our water is finite and that there's lots of sources of hazardous materials near our water sources. He said the Water Land Management Advisory Committee (WLMAC) group prepared a report on our water capacity which he will send to the committee.

Margaret asked whether we can find new sources of water other than our groundwater. Ron replied yes, potentially, but we need to develop a plan for how to do it. For instance, can we negotiate with Concord to get back our access to Nagog Pond? We currently have the right to ground water in Boxborough but Boxborough is trying to take that back.

Jim will continue his outreach to related Boards/Committees and submit a new draft for this section.

*Improve Connections*

The Committee approved the strengthening of 2<sup>nd</sup> objective and clarified the wording of 3<sup>rd</sup> objective.

*Provide More Opportunities for Community Gathering*

The Committee decided to list the expansion of the senior/community center as a strategy under the broader objective of providing new and better physical space to support community gathering. We added the phrase “and Recreation” to this goal and removed reference to improving recreational opportunities which had been under the Preserve and Enhance Town Assets goal.

*Support Inclusion and Diversity*

No changes suggested.

*Preserve & Enhance Town Assets and Resources*

Agree to take out “and Resources “ which is now part of Sustainability. We decided to narrow the definition of Assets to just what the Town owns – municipal property and public facilities. The Committee wanted to acknowledge the importance of economic development, which had formerly been an objective in this section, and decided to consider a new goal: *Maintain and improve the financial well-being of the Town and its Residents* with objectives for improving commercial areas, promoting appropriate economic development, achieving an appropriate balance between taxes levied and services provided, and supporting people in choosing to remain in Acton for a lifetime.

*Preserve Town character*

We separated the objectives related to rural characteristics and historic preservation for the sake of clarity. We added a new objective on fostering an appreciation for what makes Acton unique, including its history.

V. Next Steps

We’ve added a new meeting to the schedule February 2, 2011. One of the main agenda items will be final review of the Inventory report.