

Draft Acton 2020 Committee
Meeting Minutes – 7 March 2011

Attendees: Sahana Purohit, Margaret Wooley Busse (chair), Celia Kent, Jim Snyder-Grant (note-taker).
Staff: Roland Bartl, Kristin Alexander. The Collaborative: Jim Purdy, Daphne Politis. Guests: Ryan Bettez (planning board).

Minutes of 2/9: moved to accept by Jim, seconded by Sahana, with minor corrections. Minutes accepted unanimously

Minutes of 2/23: moved to accept by Sahana, seconded by Celia, with minor corrections. Minutes accepted unanimously

Blog entries:

Pace of comment entries picked up again. 160+ comments from a wide variety of people.

Discussed Big Box store comments: looked at pros & cons with respect to our goals. Complex!

- Other blog entries to be reviewed next time (couldn't get online).

Next blog posting:

Agreed that one will be environmental (written by Jim). One will be on school class sizes (written by Sahana). Written Tuesday & advertised Wednesday by Margaret.

Committee membership:

Reviewed possible candidates for committee, and follow ups needed. Some good possibilities.

Public meeting review:

Reviewed previous open meeting (on economic development, Thursday Mar 3)

Over-all – really great. Committee learned a lot, which was key goal, most resource people were there, lots of ideas raised and discussed.

Some questions didn't get asked. Was that OK? Mostly, but some missed were good ones. Some possible strategies: Committee members AND Daphne keep track of questions that are unasked & find ways to say them. Daphne also to take a minute near the end to ask if any questions unasked.

Aerial map not so useful, other map was good.

Idea: label the traffic lights and key roads for next meeting (on transportation).

Content Discussion: a bunch of new commercial development is NOT a likely candidate for bringing down tax rates in Acton. Location is hard to travel to, compared to Concord (from the East) or 495 (North & South). Incubators for small business in villages & other ideas are the way to go, but they won't help our taxes in a big way. Share of tax base from commercial has been falling for years, and that trend is hard to reverse. Reminder: once we figure out what specific kinds of development we want, THEN figure out how to build incentives for that (and for success, there must be some natural incentives in place already – Acton's natural advantages.). And make connections between businesses. Attracting new businesses is complex. EDC has been working hard, but extra staff time may eventually be needed to make this happen effectively.

Preview of next two meetings:

Similar agenda as last time. Reminder: MAPC person Jenny will meet with committee separately, so maybe some questions can be deferred (there are probably too many questions). We reviewed questions and simplified some and eliminated others – Daphne has the detailed notes and will get us revised

packets.

Another attempt was made to get a school resource person to Saturday's meeting.

Reviewed agenda: changed some names & questions. Raised issues about estimation of people/housing unit in the scenario. Kristin will ask Ashtons to see if we can get more data on actual school enrollment from Avalon. Reviewed 40B rules (rentals count 100% even though only 25% are deeded affordable, owned house counts only for the deeded affordable ones). Reviewed pros & cons.

Housing: Sahana town assets; Celia town character Con; Jim Sustainability Pro; Margaret Financial sustainability Con; Bill: Inclusion/Diversity Pro;

Transport: reviewed scenario and questions and maps, and made adjustments. Roles: Town Character Con Celia; Sustain: Pro Jim; Financial Con Margaret; Connections: Pro Bill (or Ryan); Diversity: Pro Sahana;

Reviewed list of resource people & who is coming & who isn't.

Reviewed publicity & who is doing what.

Discussed filming – it would be good to have an operator to focus & move the camera from the control room. We couldn't find a particular for now. That's OK. Kristin will keep her eyes open for possibilities.

March 23 next meeting without the Collaborative – we will review learnings from our three open meetings. Review comments & start planning for May.

Adjourned at 10:20 PM.