

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CPAC)
REGULAR MEETING**

MINUTES OF MARCH 26, 2008

(As Approved April 23, 2008)

Present:

Members: Kate Bedard, Connie Clancy, Lucia Foley, Bob Gelinas, Martha Johnson, Dale Johnston, Jeremy King, Jeff Labrecque, Dan Luis, Jesse Lytle, Melissa O'Brien, Kurt Schenker (arrived at 8:30), Martha Terry, Linda Young
(Excused: Nathan Therien)

Consultant: VHB – Ralph Wilmer

Staff: Richard Harris, Town Planner

Liaisons: Helen Fantini (Planning Board)

Public: Wendy Kelliher and Joan Rosner

Ms. Young called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

1. Minutes of February 27, 2008 and March 12, 2008 meetings

Motion – Ms. Clancy moved and Mr. King seconded the motion to approve the March 12, 2008 minutes as presented. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

Ms. Young noted that Mr. Harris did not have a record of the February 27, 2008 meeting minutes being approved. Therefore, she suggested that the Committee reaffirm approval of the February 27, 2008 meeting minutes as presented at the March 12, 2008 meeting.

Motion – Ms. Clancy moved and Ms. Terry seconded the motion to reaffirm the Committee's approval of the February 27, 2008 minutes as presented. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

2. Update on website

Mr. Wilmer noted that VHB, Inc. is working on an "Extranet" system. This feature will provide CPAC members the opportunity to review and comment on draft chapters/elements of the plan.

Mr. Harris reviewed the status of the existing website. He will be working with Mr. Wilmer to develop the website on the VHB website with a link from the Town's website. This approach will provide a number of benefits which Mr. Harris reviewed.

Members discussed and commented on how to best involve committee members in the development and operation of the website. Mr. Harris suggested that this issue was more of a contract management function. Therefore, the role of the committee members is different from their role in the plan development functions. He stated he would communicate with Lucia Foley and Dale Johnston for technical resources as necessary.

3. Update on Survey

Ms. Young noted that Mr. Harris had provided each member with copies of the survey responses from the community and 14-15 of the survey responses from the high school students. She asked each member to comment as to the recurring themes in the survey responses. Members commented on the many different issues raised in the surveys, but the following concerns appeared to be the most common:

- Open space (including the riverfront)
- Overdevelopment (including too many condos and banks)
- Unplanned and uneconomic development
- The Ledges
- Taxes
- Housing (especially senior and affordable housing needs, what is affordable)
- Community facilities (such as, schools, libraries, Buttery Brook park, and other recreational facilities)
- Need for more opportunities for youth and seniors
- No objection to the master planning effort

Ms. Johnson inquired if VHB was aware of the previous water studies which have been undertaken. Mr. Wilmer responded in the affirmative.

4. Review of Community Gathering

Ms. Young stated that Mr. Harris had provided copies of the “community votes” at the Community Gathering. Members commented that the Community Gathering went well and the participants were very active.

Mr. Wilmer noted that the survey and Community Gathering inputs reflect the comments gathered in the community interviews and the Planning Board meeting.

Ms. Young asked how does the committee get this information out to the community. Mr. Wilmer stated that, when the website is up and running, the committee will be able to have documents posted for review.

Ms. Rosner suggested having an informational display at Town Hall. Ms. Bedard offered to help work on that project.

Mr. Harris also stated that some of the materials can be emailed to the residents who provided their email address.

5. Examples of VHB Comprehensive Plans and lessons learned

Mr. Wilmer circulated copies of 4 different plans which VHB has prepared. He highlighted several projects where communities have aggressively implemented plan recommendations. This is the real measure of success of a planning process

He suggested that lessons learned have included:

- Implementation requires having an entity charged with oversight of the plan's implementation
- There needs to be some metrics set to measure implementation
- Active community participation in the planning process is essential to achieve the community "buy-in" required to obtain support for plan implementation

Regarding this last point, Mr. Harris stated that is one reason the Planning Board intends to take the plan to Town Meeting. Adoption of a plan only requires Planning Board approval, but implementation will require broader community acceptance.

Mr. Harris stated that he will make two copies of each of the 4 plans Mr. Wilmer circulated. The committee members will be able to check out the plan document from the Planning Board office.

Mr. Wilmer also indicated that he will have some plans on-line which committee members can also review.

6. Planning process priorities in advance of May Town Meeting update and report

Mr. Wilmer discussed the elements envisioned in the contract as being the priorities for the initial phase of the work:

- Visioning, Goals and Policies and Interactive Participation
- Comprehensive Plan Elements:
 - a. Housing Plan (including a Planned Production Plan for State approval)
 - b. Economic Development (including Falls Revitalization)
 - c. Services and Facilities (Schools, libraries, sewer, water, etc.)
 - d. Circulation (Transportation)

He suggested that the committee needs to decide how it wants to review the draft elements as they are generated. Among the options are the committee could utilize a subcommittee approach, review each item collectively, etc.

Committee members discussed what should be presented to Town Meeting members on May 10th. All concurred that it would be helpful to have the draft of the Vision Statement and overall goals/objectives for the first phase available for Town Meeting members. Mr. Wilmer stated that he will have those items for the committee to review at the next meeting.

7. Set April and May meeting schedule

Mr. Wilmer cannot meet on April 30th. The committee members indicated that meeting on April 2nd and April 23rd would be good dates. The April 2nd meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m.

Instead of three meetings in May, the committee members concurred that a 3-hour meeting on May 14th and the regular meeting on May 28th would be better. Therefore, the committee will meet from 6:30 to 9:30 on May 14th. Ms. Young will attempt to schedule the two water superintendents and the school superintendent for May 14th.

- 8. Brief Update/Discussion on the “CPAC Corner” appearing in Town Reminder**
Mr. King and Ms. Johnson reviewed the CPAC Corner article topics which have been published. They suggested that the committee have a half dozen topics lined up for articles with different members writing the articles.

Ms. O’Brien offered to do the next article with editorial input from Mr. King, Ms. Johnson, and Mr. Harris. This article will focus on the SWOT analysis which was part of the Community Gathering activities.

Mr. Harris will circulate a list of the topics (a draft to be supplied by Mr. King) for the members to edit and select.

9. Adjournment

Motion – Ms. Clancy moved and Mr. Luis seconded the motion to adjourn. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Harris, Recorder