

TOWN OF ALTON
MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE (MP)
MINUTES OF 2021
FEBRUARY 10, 2021

APPROVED

Members Present: Paul LaRochelle, Selectmen's Rep.
Phil Wittmann, Selectmen's Rep. Alternate

Others Present: Jessica A. Call, Town Planner
Amelia Cate, Planning Secretary

Others Attending Remotely: Bob Regan, Planning Board, Chair
Ron Rubbico, Citizen Member
Russ Wilder, Planning Board
Tom Hoopes, Planning Board

Mr. Regan read the remote attendance instructions into the record.

“UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE: To keep our members and staff safe, and to comply with RSA 91-A, the COVID-19 State of Emergency, and the Governor's Orders on restrictions at public gatherings, the Town of Alton is holding "remote audio participation meetings". If you cannot attend remotely, please contact the Planning Department at (603) 875-2162 or planner@alton.nh.gov for further instructions. To remotely attend the meeting, visit our website: www.alton.nh.gov for telephone access and Zoom access instructions listed under News and Announcements on the home page the day of the meeting. If you are having difficulties accessing the remote meeting, please call (603) 507-1002.

**As a reminder, at the Master Plan Committee's October 7, 2020, meeting, the Committee voted to temporarily suspend in-person public attendance. If the public has any comments on anything discussed at the meeting, they can email their comments to the Planning Department at planner@alton.nh.gov, or mail them to: Town of Alton Master Plan Committee, PO Box 659, Alton, NH 03809.”*

Roll Call Attendance

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. +/-

Mr. Regan asked if there were any changes to the agenda; Ms. Call stated, no.

Mr. Regan started the meeting with going over the interview questions. The Committee came up with questions like, how would the consultant address community outreach/engagement, which was one of the most important tasks; how did the consultant see the timing of the project and what would the sequencing look like; and what were the different ways that the town could be broken down into groups. Mr. Hoopes thought that it was important to get the townspeople involved as much as possible because it should not be the consultant writing up what they thought the town needed. Another questions was, did the consultant have a preexisting outline of how they thought a town's master plan would be organized. Mr. Hoopes thought that the consultant would have to learn what the town's priorities were, and they would have to learn about the geography of the town. Mr. Regan did not think that the characteristics of the town indicated in the current Master Plan have changed a lot. Ms. Call asked the Committee if they wanted to have her send these questions to the applicants ahead of time to answer them at the interview.

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The Committee pointed out that there were some community groups that they were already aware of like Alton Shores and other associations, church groups, and the different economic and age groups that may have different visions of what they'd like to see in town. Ms. Call thought that the Committee was focused on how to get the townspeople to participate in an initiative that the town generated, but she thought the opposite, which was, how the Committee could bring the opportunity to the townspeople. She suggested setting up a booth/tent at a scheduled event in town, like the Winter Carnival, with information so the townspeople could learn about the update and give them an opportunity to give their feedback. Mr. Wilder thought that the Committee should attend other different meetings in town instead of having everyone attend a Committee meeting, and having a designated person in each area to spearhead gathering people together. The Committee thought that having a questionnaire available for the townspeople to complete was probably necessary to get the general consensus of what they wanted to see happen or not in town.

Ms. Call shared that a couple of potential consultants reached out to her to let her know they were not interested. One company did not think it was a good idea to separate the process into two (2) phases, therefore, they were not interested. Tara Bamford reached out and informed her that her submission was in the mail. Mr. Regan wondered what an acceptable minimum number of submittals would be. Ms. Call hoped that they would receive at least three (3) proposals. Mr. Regan wondered if they did not get at least three (3), did the Committee have to send out a second RFP. Ms. Call stated that they could if they were not happy with the proposals that were submitted. The RFP allowed the Committee to not have to choose from anyone if they did not qualify.

The Committee discussed the amount money they had to work with, and Mr. Rubbico pointed out that the town had 2.5-3 billion dollars in assets that the Committee was trying to improve the value of, and only \$25,000 was allocated to update a Master Plan. Mr. LaRochelle stated that there were townspeople that thought that the town was capable of updating their own Plan without having to spend \$100,000 or more to get it done. Ms. Call pointed out that at the town vote for the Master Plan Consultant, 419 people voted yes, and 313 people voted no. She thought that this update needed to be explained to the people that did not understand it. Mr. Wilder pointed out that it would take a lot of manpower to put this Plan together and get it written. With the last update, the town received help from the Lakes Region Planning Commission; it was a lot of work. The Committee agreed that they would probably need help from the consultant to write the Plan after they have compiled all of the information.

The Committee's next meeting was scheduled for February 24, 2021. Ms. Call thought that on that night, the Committee could review the RFP proposals that were submitted and they could talk about scheduling interviews. The Committee scheduled another meeting for Wednesday, February 10, 2021. The minutes of October 28, 2020, would be continued to the next meeting to approve.

Mr. Regan asked the Committee for their final thoughts.

Mr. Rubbico was glad that things were moving along.

Mr. Wilder was excited and interested in who the Committee was going to get for a consultant.

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Mr. LaRochelle was looking forward to seeing who the Committee could get on board so they could start to move forward. He mentioned that he had never done anything like this and thought it was a good experience.

Ms. Call was on board with everyone else. She was excited to see who the Committee chose as their consultant to get the show on the road.

Mr. Hoopes agreed with everyone else.

Mr. Regan thought setting expectations in mid-March for the Committee to really start moving would be reasonable. Progress had been somewhat slow up until this point, but he thought that things could move in the near future.

**At 6:50 p.m. +/- Mr. Hoopes MOVED to adjourn the meeting.
Mr. LaRochelle seconded the motion.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica A. Call
Town Planner

Minutes approved as amended: April 29, 2021