

TOWN OF ALTON
MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE (MP)
MINUTES OF 2021
APRIL 15, 2021

APPROVED

Members Attending Remotely: Bob Regan, Planning Board, Chair
Tom Hoopes, Planning Board
Russ Wilder, Planning Board
Paul Monziona, ZBA
Aimee Terravechia, Citizen Member
Paul LaRochelle, Selectmen's Rep.

Others Attending Remotely: Jessica A. Call, Town Planner

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. +/-

The members that attended the interviews that were held on Friday, April 9, 2021, shared their thoughts.

Mr. Wilder thought that both consultants interviewed were qualified, but he liked Tara Bamford better. He shared that Ms. Bamford knew New Hampshire better and she produced what the Committee was looking for. The SE Group was going to leave the Committee with a lot more public involvement work, and Ms. Bamford would lead the Committee through that. Mr. Wilder noted that the SE Group left the Committee to write up the Vision statement first, and then they would take it and go out and get the input. He noted that Ms. Bamford would give the Committee more of what they wanted. Mr. Wilder commented that the schedule that was laid out by SE Group was useful, but Ms. Bamford would probably be more in tune to what the Committee needed and she was more economical.

Mr. Monziona shared that Ms. Bamford was interviewed first. At the beginning of her presentation, she showed the Committee pictures of a lake with a water canal leading into it. She

pointed out that there was a subdivision constructed near the lake when she was a child, and after a while she noticed some green algae starting to build up and it was coming from the septic systems from that subdivision. So, as a young child, she was influenced to become interested in conservation, planning, development, and things of that nature. She has had a lot of experience working in New Hampshire, and she was familiar with the divide between people who wanted to see progress, and those that wanted to preserve. She seemed to be intelligent and showed that she had the ability to get things accomplished. She was also a one person show, and expressed that she knew what New Hampshire was all about and how the residents viewed their surroundings. Mr. Monziona was very impressed with Ms. Bamford's presentation. He pointed out that although Ms. Bamford admitted that graphics were not her strength, but she was going to assist the Committee in writing the Plan. He pointed out that Ms. Bamford talked about sending out post cards with a link to a survey on the Town's website.

Mr. Monziona pointed out that SE Group was very different. They appeared to be very polished and capable. They were a team of three (3) and had completed projects in Colorado, and in other places that were sophisticated. Mr. Monziona thought that they would have the abilities to provide graphics. He was not so sure that SE Group was New Hampshire oriented and probably would be able to get a good feel of things, but he thought that the service they would provide would not be as much as Ms. Bamford was describing that she would be involved in. Mr. Monziona pointed out that the SE Group did mention that they could do some of the writing, but not for the amount approved in the warrant article.

Ms. Call agreed with Mr. Wilder and Mr. Monziona. She noted that Ms. Bamford would be a good fit for Alton. Ms. Call noted that if Alton was more like Wolfeboro, then the SE Group would have been perfect. She thought that with Ms. Bamford being an individual, she thought that there may be a better working relationship with just one person.

Mr. Wilder asked Ms. Call if she knew Ms. Bamford from planning interactions. Ms. Call noted that she did not know Ms. Bamford personally, but she did see her answer questions often in the Planlink and New England planner's forums. Ms. Call noted that Ms. Bamford appeared to be very educated. Mr. Wilder liked Ms. Bamford's background, which was in northern New England, even though she did not live in New Hampshire.

Mr. Regan thought that if Alton was Wolfeboro, first we probably would have more than \$25,000 to spend on this project, and secondly, he would have picked SE Group. Mr. Regan compared the types of projects that Ms. Bamford and SE Group had done, and SE Group worked on Aspen and Waterville Valley. When you drive into Wolfeboro from Alton, the first thing you see if the sign that says, "First summer resort in America". Alton was not a summer resort, it had vacation people that stayed here. The towns that Ms. Bamford worked with were Easton, Gorham, Lisbon, Carroll, Monroe, Rumney, Sugar Hill, and they were similar to Alton. Mr. Regan thought that Ms. Bamford would bring an ability to hit the ground running more that SE Group. He also noted that Ms. Bamford came in with a lower rate than SE Group. He pointed out that the other three (3) members that participated with the interviews contributed greatly to the conversations with both candidates.

**TOWN OF ALTON
MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE (MP)
MINUTES OF 2021
APRIL 15, 2021**

APPROVED

Mr. Hoopes was in agreement with what the others had shared. Ms. Terravechia agreed as well. She shared that when the Committee was talking about the RFP, Ms. Bamford stood out because her proposal seemed much more customized to what the Committee was asking for, and she showed that she thought about what type of community Alton was.

Mr. Wilder noted that before the Committee made a final decision, he wanted Ms. Call to contact some of her references. She pointed out that was what was normally done before the town hired someone. Mr. LaRochelle thanked Mr. Wilder, Mr. Monziona, Mr. Regan, and Ms. Call for doing the interviews, and he thought that they did a great job. Mr. LaRochelle further shared that he thought that Committee on a whole did a great job choosing who they thought would be good for interviews. He wholeheartedly agreed with everyone's decision that Ms. Bamford would be the perfect fit for Alton. He also agreed with Mr. Regan's comment that Alton was not Wolfeboro, and Alton needed someone to be more personable and not so large where it may go off the direction of where the town wanted to go to in keeping the character of the town. Mr. LaRochelle thought that Ms. Bamford's fees were reasonable. He did not want to see a corporation coming into town that would be relatively expensive in the long run.

Mr. Regan thought that there was little doubt that the Committee was going to need more funding than what they had. In order to get onto next year's town meeting, a proposal would need to be submitted by December of this year. Mr. Regan pointed out that one of the biggest audiences of the Master Plan was the CIP Committee, along with the Selectmen, Planning Board, and the Zoning Board.

Mr. Regan stated that as long as Ms. Bamford had positive references, he wanted a couple of the members to be able to give her a guided tour of Alton. He thought that Mr. Wilder would be good to show Ms. Bamford around to the open spaces, conservation land, and trails, the characteristics of what the town wanted to preserve; and one other member should show her around to other sites like businesses and town operations. Ms. Terravechia and Mr. LaRochelle offered their time. Mr. Regan also thought that as the minutes were prepared, he wanted to be able to recommend to Ms. Bamford that she read the minutes of the meetings because there was a lot of material that had been covered that would be very helpful to get her up to speed. Mr. LaRochelle thought it was important that Ms. Bamford get the general consensus of where this Committee was going and what they were expecting out of her.

Mr. Wilder thought that Ms. Call would be able to get the opportunity to talk to Ms. Bamford's references within 7-10 days, and he hoped things could get going by the first week in May. Ms. Call thought that was reasonable. If Ms. Bamford started in May, six (6) months from now was the month of October, and that gave the Committee time to propose something if they had to take any further steps. Mr. Wilder was hoping that Ms. Bamford could get her work schedule that she proposed completed by the end of October. Mr. Regan stated that one of the things in Ms. Bamford's proposal was that she talked about interviewing the department heads, and what he had in mind was that she have a meeting with not just the department heads, but with all of the employees in each department.

TOWN OF ALTON
MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE (MP)
MINUTES OF 2021
APRIL 15, 2021

APPROVED

The Committee talked about the town growing, and how there were some things that the town could control and other things they could not, but they better be prepared for it. People were on the move, they were selling down south and moving to places up north like Vermont, Maine, and New Hampshire in large groups.

The Committee set the next meeting for Thursday, April 29, 2021, at 6:00 pm. Ms. Call asked what the Committee would be discussing that night. Mr. Regan wanted Ms. Call to contact the references and notify Ms. Bamford that they wanted to hire her sometime next week. Mr. Wilder wanted Ms. Call to inform Ms. Bamford that she was a finalist and that she would be checking her references, and that the Committee was having a meeting on April 29th and could she keep that open.

**Mr. Hoopes MOVED to accept Tara Bamford as the Master Plan Consultant conditionally upon receiving positive results from her references.
Mrs. Terravechia seconded the motion.**

The Chair called for a roll call vote:

Paul LaRochelle, Yes; Paul Monziona, Aye; Russ Wilder, Aye; Tom Hoopes, Aye; Aimee Terravechia, Aye; Bob Regan, Aye.

(Mr. LaRochelle stated that the Selectmen said, "Yes", and not "Aye".

Ms. Call wanted the Committee members to know that it was important to inform her ahead of time if they could not attend a meeting. She was aware that if there was an emergency or last minute things it may be difficult to do that, but if they knew for sure, to please let her know. Mr. Regan wanted Ms. Call to send out an email to the Committee as soon as possible letting them know that the next meeting was on April 29th, and that Ms. Bamford was tentatively hired.

**At 6:40 p.m. +/- Mr. LaRochelle MOVED to adjourn the meeting.
Mr. Monziona seconded the motion.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica A. Call
Town Planner

Minutes approved as amended: April 29, 2021