

**TOWN OF ALTON
MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE (MP)
MINUTES OF 2020
OCTOBER 7, 2020**

APPROVED

Members Present: Bob Regan, Planning Board
Russ Wilder, Planning Board

Others Present: Jessica A. Call, Town Planner

Others Attending Remotely: 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”. To remotely attend the meeting, audio only, visit our website: www.alton.nh.gov the day of the meeting for telephone access and Zoom instructions listed under News and Announcements on the home page, or telephone the Planning Department’s office at (603) 875-2162 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. for the dial-in code and meeting ID for each Master Plan meeting. If you are having difficulties accessing the remote meeting, please call (603) 507-1002 for assistance.

Roll Call Attendance

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. From the front stairs of the Town Hall, the following motion was made:

Bob Regan MOVED that the Master Plan Committee was temporarily suspending in-person public attendance and all verbal public input during the meetings, instead, the public may attend remotely but will be muted. If the public has any comments or questions, the comments can be emailed to the Planning Department at planner@alton.nh.gov, or sent via US Postal Mail to the Town of Alton Master Plan Committee, P.O. Box 659, Alton, NH 03809, and they will be read into the record at a future meeting.

Russ Wilder seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Tom Hoopes, Aye; Russ Wilder, Aye; Bob Regan, Aye.

The Committee took a five (5) minute recess in order to enter the building and proceed to the Heidke Room to continue the meeting.

The Committee was back in session. Mr. Regan noted that the Committee voted out on the front steps to temporarily suspend in-person public attendance and reiterated that if the public had any comments or questions, they could submit them to the Planning Office to be read into the record at a future meeting.

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The members decided that a Chairman should be voted in.

**Mr. Wilder MOVED to appoint Mr. Regan as Chairman.
Mr. Hoopes seconded.**

**Roll Call Vote:
Russ Wilder, Aye; Tom Hoopes, Aye; Bob Regan, Abstained**

The Committee determined that their Mission would be to produce a Master Plan for the Town of Alton, which would last a minimum of ten years from the date of completion (2022-2032). The Master Plan, the Vision, the Zoning Ordinance, and Land Use Regulations all had to coincide with each other, otherwise, if they conflicted, it was not defensible in court. For example, if cottage type housing was going to be proposed in the future, the concept of looking at that idea needed to be included. It was pointed out that right now, the Committee's focus was to obtain goals for the process and public participation, more than content of the Plan. The Committee's purpose was to organize and promote the development of the Plan, and drive the process to ensure the document was complete, had a large base of public input, and that it would be accepted by the Town and that the Boards would follow it.

Mr. Wilder noted that there had been many changes happening recently that could change a lot of things in town, like more people working from home, and housing. It was also noted that some of the people in town that have lived here for a very long time did not want to see any changes occurring. It was further mentioned that if the natural changes that are occurring with the town were not planned for, then the state of the town the way it was now was not going to stay the same. For example, being able to hunt, or having clean water.

Mr. Hoopes noted that when he worked on one of the regional planning commission's years ago, when one of the town's sent out their questionnaire, they assigned a person for each road who would come by at a specified date and time to pick them back up, and the end result was that a pretty significant percentage of questionnaires were submitted. It was noted that it was their hopes that the Master Plan Consultant could contribute new ways to get the community involved.

Mr. Wilder stressed that it was important to have the support from the Board of Selectmen with the update. Mr. Regan thought it would be good to add a Selectmen to the Committee. The Committee thought it would be a good idea to attend a Selectmen's meeting before the Master Plan Consultant RFP was sent out to discuss participation and to give them an update on the RFP. Ms. Call noted that it was really important for the townspeople and the town to get the Master Plan updated considering there had been some previous attempts and they did not come to fruition. She was going to make an appointment for the Committee to speak to the Selectmen.

Mr. Hoopes noted that the current Master Plan had a section, Recommendations Overview, that listed items that appeared to be ongoing that should be looked at. The Committee felt that the current Master Plan was a good for informational purposes, but the update should not necessarily be guided or driven by it.

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The Committee discussed putting together an RFP. Ms. Call noted that she reached out to Plan-link and received some Master Plan RFPs from other towns throughout the state. She was going to choose a few RFPs for a point of reference, one from a rural community, a second one from a community that relied upon tourists and vacation homes, and a third from a community that had an opportunity to grow because of changes in society and technology that hasn't, and to keep in mind a low tax rate. Communities from the lakes region were suggested, or places like Sunapee and Conway. The Town Administrator would be consulted with drafting up the RFP. It was noted that in the RFP, it was important to indicate that the Committee was looking for advice on the process and not necessarily content. Ms. Call indicated that this concept coincided with the Rationale that was included on the Master Plan Consultant Warrant Article. The Committee thought that maybe a consulting firm may have more experience and depth than a freelance consultant, but they were willing to see who applied.

The Committee decided to meet every three (3) weeks with a potential of updating the Selectmen every couple of months. The goal was to have the RFP prepared by the end of January. Subsequent meetings were scheduled for Wednesday, October 28th, November 18th, and December 9, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. The thought was to potentially meet with the Selectmen in mid-November to give them an update.

**At 6:55 p.m. Tom Hoopes MOVED to adjourn.
Russ Wilder seconded the motion and it PASSED unanimously.**

**Roll Call Vote:
Tom Hoopes, Aye; Russ Wilder, Aye; Bob Regan, Aye.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica A. Call
Town Planner

Minutes approved as presented: January 27, 2021