

The Master Plan Steering Subcommittee met on February 11, 2021, at 6:35pm, at City Hall room 200A.

Meeting called to order at 6:36pm.

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Present via-Zoom were: Planning Board members Peter Brunette, Rich MacNeill and Stacy Soucy, and citizen representatives Gary Dionne and Gail Ober. Present in-person was citizen representative Mike Foote, Planning Director Dean Trefethen and Assistant Planner Rob Mora. Absent were City Councilors Bruce Cheney and Henry Lipman, and Mayor Andrew Hosmer.

Trefethen presented a brief summary of what the previous version of the committee accomplished in the 2017-2018 timeframe, leading to adoption of the 2018 Land Use Chapter and Vision Statement of the Master plan. Reviewed were the specific recommendations from that document and which ones have either been accomplished or progress has been made. Also discussed were the plans for the coming two years for additional chapters, specifically planned are the Economic Chapter (waiting on 2020 Census info) and the Natural Resources Chapter, which will include an updated natural resource inventory study.

The Committee started discussing staff proposals for zoning and land use chart changes, but the discussion evolved into a more general discussion of the long-range goals and prospects for the City. These included topics such as the WOW Trail and how an expansion could lead to increased economic growth, Public Transportation possibilities, and how to create more pedestrian opportunities, especially in the downtown area. Proposed was the possibility of combining/creating one commission that would oversee Natural Resource, Heritage and Historical issues, with Brunette seeing a possible synergy in doing that.

When the discussion turned to reviewing density regulations, there was a lengthy back and forth concerning the challenge that so called "tiny houses" might represent and the regulation there of. Staff noted that we meant density of traditional types of housing.

The committee talked about how we might want to reach out to someone from DPW and Schools at appropriate times to get their input. Also talked about how the members might be facilitators to get progress on things like the WOW trail, downtown parking issues and more activity at the Lakes Business Park.

Next meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2021 at 6:30pm at City Hall and on Zoom.

Adjournment was declared at 8:35pm