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AUG - 5 2011

TOWN CLERK, ACTON

Acton 2020 Committee
Minutes
July 13, 2011 – 7:00 PM
Room 204, Acton Town Hall

Margaret Woolley Busse (Chair), Paulina Knibbe (Associate, by phone), Sahana Purohit, Celia Kent, Jim Snyder-Grant, Charles Mercier, Vasilious (Bill) Marathias, Sandeep Verma (Associate, minute-taker), Roland Bartl, Kristin Alexander, John Sonner (BoS rep). Consultants from “The Collaborative” (formerly known as the “Planner’s Collaborative”) Daphne Politis, Jim Purdy.

I. Approve minutes from June 30, 2011

Approved with amendments. Jim SG and Charles will work together on one posting to focus feedback on the chosen IIIrd alternative along with other requested attributes, which together comprise what we will refer to as the “Proposed Plan”.

II. Discuss feedback/results from June 23rd meeting

Question about the recent rate of land protection in Acton. (acres / year)

Jim P to research this rate and report back. Kristin to also report to Margaret on current open space in Acton, with help from Roland.

Concord’s Land Trust was cited as a possible mechanism for preserving open space.

III BLOG entry

Discussed a blog entry which prompted us to ask whether the master plan should consider behavioral transformations needed to affect civic changes in addition to the role of infrastructure in possibly facilitating this change. There was some discussion centered on what is more important in achieving the goal of town centers – whether we need to incentivize people with attractive town centers within walking distance or will town centers emerge around places that people like to visit? Discussion veered towards the Douglas School Jazz Band as a possible example.

040 - IV Discussion on Acton 2020 Report Outline

Discussion on “Goals and Objectives” versus “Elements”. Jim P. mentioned that Elements are required to meet the official format for submission to State.

Celia – assigning dots is open to debate as potentially there are many more inter-relations.

042 – IV Discussion of Proposed Plan Concept

Celia – At the top level – we need a compelling story about what Acton is and how the master plan will honor that, e.g., What is Acton’s identity? How do we want to be known? We agree generally that Acton is about great schools, but we’re less clear on what else characterizes our town – different people would offer different answers. Is there a way to transform that diversity of opinion from an appearance of confusion to a positive source of strength?

It was decided that we’ll make a distinction between a “Town Center” in Kelley’s Corner and “village centers” in other parts of town like West Acton and South Acton.

Margaret – this doesn't address all goals, e.g., sustainability. This is a good starting place for the executive summary for the Proposed Plan.

Roland – Marketing executive summary needed after the November 7th, Public Workshop.

050 – V Project Countdown

Various meetings and schedules leading up to the November and March Public Workshops were discussed. It was decided to have the next committee meetings on July 27th and August 3rd, 2011. Meetings on August 10th and 24th were cancelled due to unavailability of members.

There was a significant amount of discussion on which experts should potentially be invited to speak to committee members on topics such as affordable housing. Margaret wanted both advocates and opponents to get a balanced view. September 28th was suggested as a suitable date for these experts. Amongst the names mentioned were Nancy Tavernier, Kelly Cronin, Bob Whittlesey, Jennifer Raitt (MAPC), Kathy Acerbo-Bachmann, Jim Stockard, Jamie Eldridge.

Roland suggested that we prepare questions in advance for the experts and have a moderator during the information sessions. These meetings and the invited experts should be well publicized and advertized, and possibly recorded and posted on the website (Charlie). We should allow about ten minutes for questions from the audience though the primary purpose of these meetings is to educate the Acton 2020 members (Daphne).

Under "Potential Topics", Daphne to provide a specific plan specific to Acton for "Economic Development". It was felt that "Tools" better described what was proposed under "Precedents". Also, since "Town Character" mostly referred to "Open Space", perhaps that described it better. Growth management was proposed as a possible addition.

Jim P suggested the plan will need to address three questions (on potential changes) – (1) Precedents: Will we like the results? (2) Tools: How do we accomplish it? (3) Feasibility: What does it cost and how can we afford it?

064-VI Summary of the June 23rd meeting

All committee members were requested to read the summary document and email the committee and the Collaborative their comments by 5:00 p.m., July 15th, 2011. Sahana to finalize the email Acton2020 friends/subscriber list. Margaret to email the summary document to entire email list. Jim S-G and Celia to post summary on the website the week of July 18th, 2011.

Jim S-G – Use a single color for the chart on most popular elements.

Member assignment for various Goals and Objectives are as follows:

1. Preserve Town Character – Celia
2. Ensure Environmental Sustainability – Jim S-G and Sandeep
3. Improve Connections – Bill
4. Provide More Opportunities for Community Gathering and Recreation – Paulina
5. Support Inclusion and Diversity – Charlie
6. Preserve and Enhance Town Owned Assets – Sahana and Paulina advising
7. Maintain and Improve Financial Well Being of Town – Margaret

Roland suggested that individual committee members who are assigned to various goals should email town committees in advance with possible dates when they would like to get on the agenda, possibly request a "standing agenda item".

In addition, members are requested to read documents related to Goals and Objectives, especially the ones assigned to them, for possible discussion according to the following schedule.

July 27th, 2011: 2 and 3

August 3rd, 2011: 1 and 4

August 31st, 2011: 5, 6 and 7

The screenshot shows a Xerox DocuShare web interface. The page title is "07-13-2011 Meeting Documents". The breadcrumb trail is: Home > Public Meetings > Acton 2020 Committee > 2011 Meetings > 07-13-2011 Meeting Documents Listing. The main content area displays a list of documents with the following columns: Type, Title, Owner, Edited, and Size. Each document entry includes a checkbox, a document icon, and a dropdown menu for actions.

Type	Title	Owner	Edited	Size
<input type="checkbox"/>	00 - 07-13-2011 Acton 2020 Committee Meeting Agenda	kalexander	07/11/11	107 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	010 - 06-30-11 Acton 2020 Committee Meeting Minutes - Draft	kalexander	07/11/11	40 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	040 - IV. - Acton 2020 Report Outline - draft - JP - 7-12-11	kalexander	07/12/11	9 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	042 - IV. - Acton Proposed Plan Concept - draft - JP - 7-12-11	kalexander	07/12/11	167 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	044 - IV. - Acton Goals Objectives Strategies - DRAFT 4	is	07/14/11	210 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	046 - IV. - Recommended Implementation Program Outline - Draft Example - 7-13-11	kalexander	07/14/11	12 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	048 - IV. - Relationship of Strategies to Goals & Elements Chart - Draft Example - 7-13-11	kalexander	07/14/11	204 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	050 - V. - Project Countdown - DP - 7-12-11	kalexander	07/12/11	11 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	052 - V. - 2011 Meetings Schedule - rev. 7-7-11	kalexander	07/12/11	12 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	054 - VI. - June 23 2011 Workshop - Final Write-up	kalexander	07/12/11	525 KB

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Acton 2020 Committee
Minutes
June 30, 2011 – 7:00 PM
Acton Memorial Library Meeting Room

TOWN CLERK, ACTON

Margaret Woolley Busse (Chair), Paulina Knibbe (Associate), Sahana Purohit, Celia Kent, Jim Snyder-Grant (minutes-taker), John Sonner (BoS rep), Kristin Alexander (staff). Consultants from “The Collaborative” (formerly known as “Planner's Collaborative”) Daphne Politis, Jim Purdy.

I. Approve minutes from 6-15-11

Sahana moves to accept June 15 minutes, Celia seconds, approved with one abstention.
One change: \$125 → \$125K (price per acre used in land purchase calculations for Alternative 2).

II. Discuss feedback/results from June 23rd meeting

Question about the recent rate of land protection in Acton. (acres / year)

TODO Jim P to research this rate and report back. Committee discussed the type of protection. (cluster zoning, land purchases, etc.)

Summary of meeting: See PACKET - “Preliminary Write-up”.

Certainly Alternative 3 (concentrate growth) was far preferred in any way to measure it. Additional discussion includes these ideas:

-Because we didn't discuss mechanisms very much, many folks were concerned that Alt 3 was not obtainable. Or wouldn't protect open space enough. Or would be too dense. Or there wouldn't be enough design review. Next stage: need images. And let's not over-promise. Even with site control, you can only keep stuff out. You can't force a business in if their market studies don't say it will work.

-Discussed transfer of development rights, and its options, including “banking” the rights by the town, and/or the town making contributions to such a bank. Reviewed some previous precedent to start learning from it: EDIC formed but not funded. Kelly's Corner plan proposed at town meeting, and voted down by organized local residents.

-The desire for Alt 3 was most strongly about connections, secondarily about ecology.

Discussed pros & cons of the various centers/villages as targets. (mostly Kelly/West Acton/South Acton). It was generally agreed that prioritizing them one at a time with a prioritized order was a good idea, with an understanding that the town will need to be flexible and multi-focused so it can take advantage of fortuitous circumstances. Next stage of committee discussion will include BIG maps so we can get in to details. Discussed the concept of a more or less formal village study, to understand the role of each village. Discussion of how deep and formal we need to go before we can proceed. Eager to start making progress now.

-Political will can be developed with a well-supported and well-communicated vision.

-FYI: Kelly's corner has multiple large owners. Reviewed who they were. There is a need to bring them together to share rewards and incentives, such as a business improvement district.

-Discussed the use of the words 'village' vs 'villages' vs. 'town center'. We agreed that Kelley's' Corner is not a village, and we don't want a village there – it's a Town Center.

-2A is where most businesses are most initially comfortable when they look at Acton's options. But Kelley's'

corner could be an easy sell because of car access, AND sewers. 2A == no sewers.

Wildcard review: discussed rotary traffic patterns, how that impacts 2A, and how any rotary redevelopment would impact that.

-Future resilience comments: also leaned strongly toward Alt 3, except for natural environment, where groups seemed to figure that Alt 2 would address protecting land more directly & successfully.

And see the detailed reports in DocuShare for more.

Also discussed other topics related to Acton's future:

-Discussed Senior Center / Community Center. A new committee has been charged to research it, possibly leading to approval for funding for engineering at April 2012 town meeting. (approx 150K). Discussed location. Arlington Street used to be popular location, but schools not interested in having a center there. Next spot is next to Nara, existing land, or maybe (speculation) buy Rex Lumber. Discussed use pattern: seniors generally have and want activities during weekdays, rest of community wants activities on nights and weekends.

Discussed open space – what do people mean when they say they want open space? Do they mean active or passive recreation? Do they mean only uplands or only wetlands, or both? In terms of active recreation: Morrison Farm plan had really good detailed look at active rec needs – Jim S-G is seeking to meet with Cathy F. (rec director) to discuss perhaps updating that info, for both OSRP and Acton 2020.

Reviewed the Town's overall financial flow: little state aid, little commercial revenue, most income from property taxes, mostly going to schools.

III. Plan for additional feedback (30 min)

a. Blog/facebook

Summarize results publicly as soon as revised results document is ready. Use blog and facebook to move the discussion forward, not a rehash, since meeting results were so definitive. Drop previous plan to re-do the entire June 23 question stream in a survey. Forward-moving questions instead might include posts on uncovering thoughts on pros & cons of how to prioritize each area, and what to focus on in each area; and which of the features from each alternative to carry forward, and why.

TODO: Daphne to write final June 23 results, Jim S-G to use as base for blog, facebook & web updates.

b. Survey?

Pros & cons of doing a survey. Decided to focus on needs of next public meeting. Focus on communicating directions already agreed on. (rather than revisiting decisions already made).

c. Communicate with major committees the results?

Discussed schedule with major committees, but no dates set for meetings in the near term with BoS or planning. **TODO: Jim S-G is still trying to set up meeting with WRAC reps, will refocus that meeting on action items / recommendations discussion, while still finishing off the overdue inventory elements discussion. Same switch needed for other committee meetings still not scheduled, such as a meeting with recreation reps. See below for more on Fall / Winter meetings with committees.**

Discussed how to close out the inventory chapters that may need feedback from key committees. Example: how to get input from WRAC, and reconcile it with staff comments if they are different. If we do end up with specific disagreements on the element chapters we can bring them back to the committee to settle them. Jim P. has some particular feedback to integrate in to some chapters.

IV Discuss committee responsibilities (30 min)

We had a shortened version of this discussion, since we were missing so many committee members. We did agree these next meetings over the next few months require really high participation. A reasonable standard would be 75% or more of the next meetings over next 6-10 months. We are making decisions now. We are not going back to revisit decisions. And we need to make work assignments. Other options if current committee members can't make enough meetings: drop back and become a reviewer.

V. Agree on next steps (45 min)

- a. Agree on approximate date of next public meeting
- b. Discuss what we need to accomplish before next meeting
- c. Agree on summer meeting schedule

These three topics a-c were discussed together, as they overlapped.

Discussed pros & cons and schedule of future public meetings. Current plan: one to present proposed implementation plan, and another for final plan. Paulina especially concerned about how many tricky decisions the committee needs to make between now and getting something to BoS and then Town Meeting, but public meeting prep sucks up a LOT of committee time.

How to get committees and boards and departments on board. Meeting with them? How to get them signed up to support and own certain parts.

What is our documentation plan? Final plan includes implementation plan. Goals/Objectives/strategies/phasing. Phasing in implementation plan has to do with money and logical relationships, and urgency related to health/safety, and the possibility of some actions having quick payback to build support or build fiscal capacity. Next steps for consultants also has to include financial analysis over time, instead of just at the end of 20 years.

The proposed November meeting is NOT open ended – it would be a draft actual proposal with actual strategies, priorities, phases. Meetings between now and then are about narrowing and making specific decisions in complex areas that need to be nailed down.

When does town staff get engaged? Sep / Oct. We should ask Town Manager to take some of some of one or more of the weekly staff meetings during those times. And key committees need to be scheduled.

Working backwards: Town Meeting is in April. February formal roll-out, or maybe even early March. Let's say Mar 7 for final plan roll-out. Key committee sign-off in Jan/Feb. Let's be in front of selectmen in January for approval. Finish off writing in December and mini-presentation in mid-December to BoS. Let's say Dec. 5 for BoS. Public event in November – let's say November 9.

We need to come up with a summer meeting schedule. Polled those present.

July 13 – No: Paulina, maybe not Sahana, rest: yes.

July 27: Celia no. Paulina no, rest: yes.

Aug 3 – No Consultants, but maybe a Collaborative-less committee meeting.

Aug 10 – no Margaret, No Kristin. No Daphne, No Jim P Hmm.. NO MEETING.

Aug 24 – Yes Jim P., no Margaret, Celia no. Jim S-G no. MEETING NO

Aug 31 – Yes all of us. - meeting YES. Maybe Affordable housing? No.

Sep / Oct for meetings in which others should be there, and we may need extra meetings.

Summer Summary: we will keep with regular meetings for July (13 & 27), but August meetings will switch to 3rd and 31st.

Consultants to sketch out what topics will need to be hashed out, and specifically Margaret and Daphne will be in touch about what can be hashed out for next meeting.

Jim moved to adjourn. Celia seconded. All in favor.

Documents discussed at this meeting are in this collection in the Town's Document Sharing system: <https://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-4382>, and are listed here:

- 010 - I. - Agenda
- 021 - II. - Public Comments on Choose Your Own Acton - Relay for Life - May Fair - Senior Center - May-June - 2011
- 022 - II. - total resilience table
- 023 - II. - Preliminary Thoughts
- 024 - II. - express your preference – results
- 025 - II. - BACK_OF_AGENDAS

Added new object 050 - V - 2011 Meetings - rev 6-30-11

Locations: Home » Public Meetings » Acton 2020 Committee » 2011 Meetings » 06-30-2011 Meeting Documents Listing

06-30-2011 Meeting Documents

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Type	Title	Owner	Edited	Size
<input type="checkbox"/>	010 - I. - Agenda	ISC	07/04/11	17 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	016 - I. - 06-15-11 Acton 2020 Committee Meeting Minutes - Draft	Kalexander	08/05/11	15 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	021 - II. - Public Comments on Choose Your Own Acton - Relay for Life - May Fair - Senior Center - May-June - 2011	ISC	07/04/11	17 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	022 - II. - total resilience table	ISC	07/04/11	119 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	023 - II. - Preliminary Thoughts	ISC	07/04/11	17 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	024 - II. - express your preference - results	ISC	07/04/11	217 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	025 - II. - BACK_OF_AGENDAS	ISC	07/04/11	74 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	027 - II. - Public Comments on Choose Your Own Acton - Relay for Life - May Fair - Senior Center - May-June - 2011	Kalexander	08/05/11	15 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	028 - II. - Public Comments on Actons Uniqueness Board - May 2011	Kalexander	03/05/11	17 KB
<input type="checkbox"/>	050 - V. - 2011 Meetings - rev. 6-30-11	Kalexander	08/05/11	17 KB

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