

# October 24, 2013

## **Special Meeting**

6:00 p.m. Main Hall, Bryan Memorial Town Hall

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mr. Frank, Ms. Gager, Mrs. Jahnke, Mr. Rimsky, Mrs. Roberts

**ALTERNATE PRESENT:** Mr. Carey

**STAFF PRESENT:** Mrs. Hill

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mr. Bedini, Mr. Charles

Mrs. Roberts called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. and seated Members Frank, Gager, Jahnke, Rimsky, and Roberts.

Mrs. Roberts said she was discouraged by the errors in the October 2013 draft and that the document must be in order prior to the public hearing. Mrs. Hill said that when the Commission had agreed on a list of errors and edits she would report them to the consultant.

It was noted that the Commission would be charged additional fees for any substantial changes requested. That being the case, Mrs. Roberts suggested the Commission concentrate on deleting what it did not want. Mr. Rimsky said the current document did not read well. Mrs. Hill thought although many revisions were needed, the Commission should focus on the many good ideas contained in the draft.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss substantive changes needed in the draft POCD. Mr. Frank and Mrs. Hill had compiled lists of their concerns, these had been circulated prior to the meeting, and they are attached for reference.

Issues discussed included:

- \* Mrs. Roberts noted the village centers were not all alike and could not be treated alike as currently written in the document.

- \* Mr. Carey questioned how/why Cook Street had been zoned commercial on the map, "Generalized Future Land Use."

- \* Mr. Carey and Mr. Frank agreed with Mrs. Hill's comments about the photographs used in the draft; those depicting Marbledale and Woodville, for example, were inappropriate, while others should be cropped to give the document a more professional look.

- \* Several commissioners agreed that the statement on page 43 that the Depot is a vibrant village center with a solid core of businesses does not accurately reflect current conditions. This will be revised to state that commercial vacancies are increasing and efforts should be made to reverse this trend.

- \* Mr. Carey said the document did not acknowledge the country's economic crisis.

- \* References to existing industrial zones on page 22 (and anywhere else in the document) should be deleted because there are none.

\* The draft for the public hearing should be labeled, "Public Hearing" draft, not "Final" draft so that residents will understand their comments are welcome.

\* Mr. Frank's research about the recommendation for business improvement districts was discussed and it was the consensus that these were not appropriate for Washington. It will be deleted.

\* Regarding designation of village districts: Mrs. Roberts asked if Zoning should be encouraged to pursue the designation of village districts. While it was the consensus that there would be value in establishing village districts per state statute, Mr. Frank suggested the language be changed from "The Town should establish village districts" to "The Zoning Commission should consider establishing...." The commissioners agreed to this revision.

\* After a brief discussion it was agreed that the recommendation to designate Woodville as a village district should be eliminated. Woodville has neither a well defined village center nor a distinct character, which would make it difficult to establish and regulate such a district.

\* It was agreed that the Washington Green district is a residential, not a commercial, district and that the Mayflower Inn is not located in this district. Therefore, references to the Mayflower being involved in discussions to coordinate future development should be deleted.

\* After a brief discussion about whether the size of the Woodville business district should be expanded, it was the consensus not to make that recommendation at this time.

\* Regarding pages 37 and 49 where it states that the Zoning Regulations should be revised to require that for new development in the village centers, 50% of the use in each building must be residential, it was the consensus that this recommendation would be deleted. Instead, the following will be inserted; "The Zoning Regulations should be reviewed and revised to encourage mixed use development in the village centers."

\* The commissioners decided expansion of The Green Historic District will not be recommended.

\* Mrs. Hill noted her concern that although the economic health of the village centers was a great problem in need of immediate attention, the Action Agendas put off work on some of the economic development recommendations for 4 to 6 years. This prompted a general discussion about the Action Agendas. Ms. Gager said they had to be realistic. Mr. Frank thought they should all be reviewed to make sure they are appropriate. It was also thought that listing multiple lead agencies was a problem. Mrs. Roberts asked the commissioners to review the Action Agendas and to be prepared to discuss them at the next meeting.

\* Regarding the statement on page 2 that "All applicable boards and commissions shall annually prepare a report that will be submitted to the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Commission summarizing the implementation status of the Action Agendas of the adopted Plan of Conservation and Development." Mr. Frank questioned whether the Commission had the authority to require these reports. Mrs. Hill noted that Planning complains that previous Plans have not been implemented and that this would be one way to make the commissions more accountable. Mr. Rimsky thought that urging cooperation between commissions was a good thing.

\* Ms. Gager noted the action items are based on the Commission's recommendations. She

suggested that instead of providing a timeline in which they should be implemented, that when the Plan is completed, all the boards should get together and set their own priorities and time frames. She thought the commission chairs should meet and report to Planning which of the recommendations they agree to and then a separate committee should be established for ownership. In other words, she recommended that the priority part of the Action Agenda chart be eliminated in order to let the other boards and commissions buy in to the Plan on their own. Mrs. Roberts agreed the Plan should express the Commission's desire that all boards work together to make a collaborative impact and move implementation forward. Ms. Gager said that priorities should be established by October 2014.

\* In the headings for the Action Agendas, "Lead" Agency will be changed to "Key" Agency.

\* Mr. Frank assumed that Milone and MacBroom considers the current draft to be the final draft and so any change requested would be an additional cost. Ms. Gager said the cost of necessary edits and correction of errors should not be absorbed by the Town. Mrs. Hill agreed the Commission should negotiate to keep the cost as low as possible, but urged the Commission to pay whatever is necessary to make the document right.

\* Existing Zoning Map: The color of the business districts should be changed to differentiate them from lakes, which are also shown in blue. Ms. Gager recommended more color contrast between the R-2 and R-3 districts.

\* Existing Land Use Map: Again, more color contrast is needed. Mr. Carey said the map was not completely accurate because some conservation easements were not shown. Ms. Gager asked for a clearer delineation between ROW and Vacant Land and between Residential-single family and Residential-two family. No one was sure what ROW was. This should be explained.

\* Generalized Future Land Use Map: Some commissioners wanted to delete this map, but others thought it was required by state statute. It was noted the commercial use shown across the street from the high school is incorrect and should be changed to residential. The title of this map will be changed to "Conceptual Future Land Use." Mr. Frank noted this map had never been reviewed to see if it was the Commission's concept for future land use. Again, more contrasting colors are needed in this map.

\* Regarding Marbledale, Mr. Carey asked whether the Commission had ever actually discussed whether it wants a market study for this district. Ms. Gager said that would be the next step; setting priorities for future work and studies.

Mr. Frank asked whether the current contract extension was valid through January. Ms. Gager said it went to the completion of the document.

At the next meeting on November 6, the commissioners will review the Action Agendas.

Mrs. Roberts adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:00 p.m.

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL  
Respectfully submitted,

Janet M. Hill, Land Use Administrator