



**Planning Board Meeting**  
Monday, January 10, 2011  
Council Chambers, City Hall at 7:00 pm

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Approved 1/24/11**

**I. Roll Call**

**Present:** Peter Guillette, Richard Wahrlich, Lori Richardson, Catherine MacKenzie, Adam Burke, Bruce Kolenda, Ruben Ramirez

**Absent:** Deborah Cutts, Amanda Silvers, Erwin Caplan

**City Staff:** Katrina Spaulding, Business Development; Michael McCrory, previous Interim City Planner; Tracey Thibault, City Planner; Kelly LeBlanc, Administrative Assistant

Bruce Kolenda will sit in for Amanda Silvers.

Ruben Ramirez will sit in for Erwin Caplan.

**II. Review of Meeting Minutes from November 22, 2010 and December 13, 2010**

**Motion:** to approve meeting minutes from November 22, 2010

**Made By:** Adam Burke      **Second:** Bruce Kolenda      **Vote:** Unanimous

**Motion:** to approve meeting minutes from December 13, 2010

**Made By:** Bruce Kolenda      **Second:** Ruben Ramirez      **Vote:** Unanimous

**III. New Business**

Tracey Thibault, Claremont's new City Planner, introduced herself to the Planning Board. Peter Guillette Welcomed Tracey and thanked Mike McCrory from the UVLSRPC as well for his work and service to the City of Claremont.

Bernie Folta, Ward III, would like to mention that the Boards and Planning Department previously utilized the services of the UVLSRPC. Mr. Folta would like to state that the City has been well served with the two consultant planners (Peter Dzwaltowski and Mike McCrory) and also welcomes Ms. Thibault.

New Hampshire Planning and Land Use Regulation 2010-2011 Handbooks were distributed to the board.

**Election of Officers - 2011**

Planning Board Chair:

Nomination of Peter Guillette for Chair of the Planning Board; no other nominations from the Board

**Motion:** To nominate Peter Guillette as Chair of the Planning Board

**Made By:** Lori Richardson    **Second:** Adam Burke    **Vote:** Unanimous

Planning Board Vice-Chair:

Nomination of Lori Richardson for Vice-Chair; no other nominations from the Board

**Motion:** To nominate Lori Richardson as Vice-Chair of the Planning Board

**Made By:** Adam Burke    **Second:** Bruce Kolenda    **Vote:** Unanimous

#### **IV. Reports from Boards and Commissions**

**Review of the following Master Plan Chapters:** (1) Community Facilities, (2) Recreation, (3) Historic Resources, (1) Natural Resources

- **(1) Natural Resources**

Ms. Thibault presented the Natural Resources Chapter as an Inventory Based Chapter. Sections of the Natural Resources Chapter have been taken from previous editions of the Master Plan.

One of the most important pieces in this Chapter is the recommendation for a Natural Resources Inventory. It is recommended that the Planning Board pays particular attention to goal one; the inventory.

The three goals documented in the Natural Resources Chapter are: (1) Natural Resources Inventory, (2) Forest Management Plan, and (3) Encourage Land Owners being Stewards of their own Properties.

Ms. Thibault reported that the Natural Resources Inventory is usually not completed in-house. However, the recommendations and language for this chapter was developed with Steve Wood, Chair of the Conservation Commission and Nancy Merrill, Director of the Planning and Development Department.

Mr. McCrory, previous Interim City Planner, stated as a reminder that these Chapters are drafts and subject to change with comments from the Planning Board. The Master Plan Chapters are Planning Documents.

- **(2) Community Facilities**

This Chapter was constructed on an inventory basis. Community Facilities include but are not limited to: Education facilities, municipal facilities, utilities (i.e. water, sewer, electric), telecommunications, and communications. The recreation section has been extracted and is now a stand-alone chapter.

In terms of Planning Board review, the department is looking for input on what the board feels might be important or missing from the chapter. It should be recognized that the City does maintain a Capital Improvements Program but that this is a separate document. The CIP is a parallel program that addresses the physical improvements that are necessary for equipment or facilities. The chapter looks at what the community has in terms of buildings, municipal buildings, and services. The MP addresses more of the municipal buildings and

services. If there is something important to the City that the board feels is municipal coverage please let staff know.

Bernie Folta, Ward III, has been a member of the MPAC for 3-4 years. The following information applies to multiple chapters as there has been a continual issue regarding public input. The Visioning Chapter and Land Use Chapter (required by state law) have been accepted by the Planning Board and there were at least three community meetings and break-out groups for citizen input. Mr. Folta stated that finding a way to get the same public response for these 6 chapters has not been resolved and he would like to urge the Planning Board to voice their ideas to maximize public input.

Mr. McCrory stated that we do seek to have as much public input as possible. These are first pass Chapters. Once the planning board approves these 7 chapters they will go before public review and be bundled into one document. The Planning Board and MPAC can discuss the public rollout.

Chair Guillette agrees that the PB will look at these chapters for review. This is a reminder that these documents can always be amended.

Mr. Folta stated that a lot of communities do Master Plans with varying chapters. There is an impression that Claremont wants to look good with other communities. Claremont is trying to change the 'gritty' image that it has with other NH communities. The MP will make the community look good if the content, format and presentation are solid. The MP is not just an internal home document; it is a document that other places look at.

- **(3) Historic Resources**

Katrina Spaulding presented the progress made on the Historic Resources Chapter.

The Historic Resources Committee thought it would be appropriate to look into the Attitude Survey taken by the Claremont community in 2007 (when the MP was first initially started). This survey took into account the attributes of Claremont with three major examples studied: (1) Preservation of Historic structures and area, (2) Encouragement of Downtown Redevelopment and (3) Preservation of the Small City Character. Participants could choose to strongly disagree, mildly disagree, no opinion, mildly agree or strongly agree to the listed attributes. The attributes used in the Chapter were all listed as mildly or strongly agree (very few participants having no opinion).

The rating scale shows how important specific features are to Claremont and not just to the designated historic district. Farm lands, agriculture, bridges and the like are all important to the City of Claremont. This Chapter is more about what we want to preserve versus change.

Preservation methods, including tools and tips, were documented in the Chapter. Goal #13 States the importance of developing a review process and that a Heritage Commission would be formed for this process.

A Heritage Commission would be relevant to architectural changes and can handle funding and development proposals whereas the HDC does not handle cash flow. This type of organization could help maintain and support some of the properties we have in Claremont. A project example might be historic building labels that would identify community markers

(i.e. for a community walking map). This type of project would need funding and a Heritage Commission could handle this.

Most of the goals in this chapter have recommendations with the understanding that these goals can be enhanced and changed per recommendations. The original Historic Resources Chapter of the master plan was very basic and only contained a few pages of information.

Mr. Folta, Ward III, would like to point out that the Heritage Commission is a creature established by State Law. The RSA lists the goals, duties, prohibitions etc and recommends that the Planning Board familiarizes itself with what the state wants these Heritage Commissions in a community to be and do.

- **(4) Recreation**

Mr. McCrory reported on the Recreation Chapter of the Master plan citing that the Director (Scott Hausler) of the Recreation Department provided very strong participation in the writing of this Chapter. Mr. Hausler has also shared this chapter with members of the Parks & Recreation committee. The Parks & Recreation department manages a number of properties and facilities including but not limited to the Goodwin Community Center and eleven (11) parks of varying sizes and functions. This chapter reviews the existing conditions and the existing facilities (including their uses) and goes further by discussing planned needs and improvements (including overall planning, short-term and long-term needs and goals identified by Mr. Hausler).

A section of the chapter looks at the Recreation Needs Assessment conducted around 2001 when a new community center was proposed/planned. Figures and responses from the assessment are included in the chapter. The Goals and objectives were somewhat in response to the short-term needs as well as the understanding that there is an evolving community need. Recreation has been seen recently as an asset that is important to the community and an important impact on the quality of life for that community. Perhaps an assessment of the programs and how the community is enjoying them would be helpful if it is not already done.

There was a recently developed Forestry Plan for the City of Claremont as there are a number of City owned forested land parcels (i.e. Moody Park and the surrounding forested lands). The Forestry Plan is an important part of maintaining the quality of the existing recreation facilities.

Lori Richardson inquired about the summary table and what the definition of a 'neighborhood' park would be as Barnes Park has Basketball Courts and Monadnock Park has a beautiful play area for children. Ms. Richardson inquired if there is a definition that would leave these parks out as they do not appear on the inventory. Mr. McCrory stated that this might have been an oversight.

Adam Burke asked about the customer satisfaction survey for the Parks and Recreation program and if this was discussed with Scott Hausler. Mr. McCrory stated that Mr. Hausler has reviewed the chapter but it has not been discussed directly (there is a possibility that the survey was already completed). The new community center (and fundraising) is addressed in this chapter of the MP.

Mr. Burke inquired about Goal #2 and the facilitation of the fundraising process. Mr. McCrory stated that the non-profit continues to work on the project.

- **Master Plan General**

Chair Guillette reminded the board that this is a working document with the potential for updating and changes as needed.

Ms. Thibault stated that the department will work on unifying the chapter format.

Steve Wood, Chair of the Conservation Commission, attended the meeting for the benefit of the Planning Board should there be any questions. The biggest challenge for the Conservation Commission would be compiling/overseeing the Natural Resources Inventory. The pressing need for the inventory is to document what Claremont has before it is gone.

Chair Guillette inquired about upcoming applications for the next Planning Board meeting. Ms. Thibault stated that there are two boundary line adjustments coming up but it is uncertain if they will be heard at the next meeting. There will be sufficient time for Master Plan discussion after the applications.

## **V. Other**

Mr. Wood, as an aside, stated that members on the Conservation Commission have noted a lack of Planning Board representation on the Commission. It would make sense logistically for the Planning Board and Conservation Commission to know what the other is doing. Mr. Burke, previous Planning Board representative on the Conservation Commission, acknowledged that it was helpful to have Planning Board representative on the Conservation Commission.

Chair Guillette reiterated that there is a free workshop ‘Your Water, Your Decisions’ coming up on Tues, February 1, from 9:00am-3:00pm at the Kilton Library in West Lebanon, NH. Interested members may register with Rachel Ruppel at the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission at (603) 448-1680.

Mr. Folta, Ward III, stated that the Heritage Commission is defined in RSA 674:44-b. Other possible commissions are the Agricultural Commission, Historic District Commission and a Housing Commission.

## **VI. Correspondence**

## **VII. Adjournment**

**Motion:** to adjourn

**Made By:** Adam Burke

**Second:** Bruce Kolenda

**Vote:** Unanimous

Adjourned at 7:50 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly LeBlanc

Administrative Assistant