



## PLANNING BOARD WORK SESSION

Monday, March 13, 2017 6:00 PM  
Council Chambers, City Hall

### MINUTES

Approved 3/27/2017

Mr. Wahrlich called the work session to order at 6:00 PM and asked for a roll call.

#### I. Roll Call

**Present:** Marilyn Harris, Richard Wahrlich, James Short, Charlene Lovett, Victor Bergeron (arrived at 6:55 PM), Marlene Jordan (arrived at 6:55 PM), David Putnam

**Absent:** William Greenrose, Nicholas Koloski, Bruce Kolenda,

**City Staff:** Michael McCrory, City Planner

#### II. Review of Minutes – February 27, 2017 Work Session

**Motion:** To approve the minutes of the February 27, 2017 work session as presented.

**Made by:** Mr. Putnam                      **Second:** Mr. Short

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

#### III. Master Plan Update

##### a. *Community Facilities* chapter

Mr. Putnam summarized the discussion from the Steering Committee. He said each of the department heads had been asked to write their own sections, which explains the variations in writing style between the various sections. The Steering Committee chose to leave the sections as written. The Steering Committee focused primarily on the goals.

Mr. McCrory asked if there were any concerns about the main body of the chapter. Ms. Harris said that the re-organization and reformatting of the chapter have made it much easier to read from the version presented to the Steering Committee. She said the chapter is very specific, but from a CIP-perspective, the specificity is helpful.

Mr. Putnam said the Steering Committee had asked that the readability of the chapter be improved.

Mr. McCrory said there may be additional changes to the layout and format of the chapter when the whole plan is put together.

Mayor Lovett said that the date given for the construction of Stevens High School was incorrect. It states 1879 and it should be 1867.

Mayor Lovett said the name, “*Sugar River Career & Technical Center*” is not correct. It should be “*Sugar River Valley Regional Technical Center*”.

Mayor Lovett said there seems to be redundant language under the Library Opportunities to expand services and Challenges (e.g. “Small meeting rooms” listed under each). She said the section is unclear – it comes across as a “laundry list of things”.

Mr. Putnam suggested eliminating the two separate categories and creating a single, entitled “Opportunities and Challenges to Expand Services”; and eliminate the duplications so they don’t overlap or contradict each other.

Mr. McCrory said opportunities and challenges are two different things when doing a SWOT analysis and the intent of the library must be considered before making any changes. He said he would follow up on this.

Mayor Lovett said that, with regard to the first bullet under “Cemetery Division Future Challenges”, “Restoration of old cemetery books (to include burial/death records)”, has already been done.

The Board turned to reviewing the goals and objectives. Mr. Putnam said that the specificity in Goal #1 and its objectives will be very helpful in the development of the next CIP.

Mr. McCrory said that the subcommittee is emphasizing the importance of maintenance; that it’s integral to any project being undertaken with City facilities.

Ms. Harris asked if there were any deadlines associated with Objective 3. Mr. McCrory said often there are mandates with no funding associated with them, so it is usually a negotiation process.

Mr. Putnam said, under Objective 1, he is sure there are lead pipes throughout the City that are delivering water to homes and maybe larger facilities that host residents or people and he felt this is a top priority to identify where lead pipes are and create a plan to change those out. Mr. McCrory pointed out that Objective #1 addresses sewer lines and Objective #2, bullet 4 states, “Continue the replacement of old lead service lines.” Mr. Putnam said he wanted to put that item at the top. Mr. McCrory said he felt all of these objectives have fairly substantial priority to the DPW. There were no other comments on Goal #1.

Mr. McCrory stated that the specificity of the objectives under Goal 2 should, again, assist in the next CIP. Mayor Lovett asked if the Board would like to include in this goal, with the maintenance of the municipal facilities, given that some of them have historic value, that when we do maintenance, it isn’t detrimental to the historic or architectural aspect of the facility. Mr. Wahrlich said he couldn’t believe that anyone at DPW wouldn’t recognize that. Mr. Putnam said there is another point to the Mayor’s suggestion. If it is included here in the Master Plan, that language, if it’s a separate bullet, that all maintenance has to respect the historic qualities that are acknowledged in our historic chapter, then it gives us opportunities for grants. Mr.

McCrorry said that this seemed a reasonable additional bullet given the number of historic City-owned facilities. There were no other comments on Goal 2.

(Ms. Jordan and Mr. Bergeron joined the meeting at this point.)

Mayor Lovett said that there are a lot of facilities that are at capacity. They are either overly crowded and/or there is no opportunity for expansion. She asked if there had ever been an analysis done about the benefits of continuing with these facilities that we have or consolidating. We have a capital improvements plan that is based on the assumption that we are going to continue in these locations that are already at capacity or over-capacity, which doesn't take into consideration if the City grows – and that is what we really want – she said she thought the ideal number is 20,000 – I don't know if we've ever done the analysis if it would be more cost efficient in the long-term to centralize a number of things under one roof. It may be a discussion for another day.

Mr. Putnam relayed the history of the school district's facilities review process. He said if another goal or objective here that asks for a feasibility study of the future of our buildings and facilities, to figure out with some vision and some planning, when these buildings are going to stop serving us. He said we can't wait until it's too late. Mayor Lovett said sooner rather later – there are places mentioned in this chapter that were at capacity in 1991. Ms. Harris agreed. She said if you read the vision, it is the objective that is missing.

Mr. Putnam suggested adding an objective that a feasibility study be conducted by an ad hoc committee that would review the conditions of, and the future of, the facilities in Claremont that are owned by the City. Mr. McCrorry said in New Hampshire communities, that typically manifests as a facility assessment and feasibility study. It is typically conducted by an architectural or engineer's firm that has specialty in that field. Engaging the consultant would be set aside as a capital item.

Mr. McCrorry asked the Board where this item might best fit. Mayor Lovett thought it was big enough to be its own objective. Mr. McCrorry said this is a big idea and it needed some thought about how it should be structured. He said it could be simply a broad objective with no specific action under it. Achieving it would take some significant collaboration among the departments.

Ms. Harris said, when thinking about how to word it and fit in there, how does it impact other objectives that say, "undertake a feasibility for a new fire station" or for expansion of the library. If we do a global study some of these things are saying the same thing at a more detailed level about a specific building. Mr. Putnam said if those individual action items are rolled into the idea of doing a feasibility study then it's more from an ad hoc committee's perspective rather than from the department itself. There is relevance and value to that.

Mr. Bergeron said, if a feasibility study is to be done on the fire station, then it should be done on everything. If they are all done, the City can prioritize its needs.

He said many of the buildings need updating, but there is never enough money to do it. The community center is an example. The City put it off for so long, it ended up having to build a new one.

It was agreed to continue the discussion of this chapter at the next meeting.

**b. *Historic Resources* chapter**

Vision statement: It was agreed to change the last sentence of the vision statement to read, *“They contribute to our “sense of place”, have substantial historical and architectural value, and are a source of pride in the community.”*

Mr. Putnam challenged the accuracy of this statement:

*“In 1823 the Barber family, former Episcopalians and a rector of Union Church, became Roman Catholics built the first Roman Catholic Church adjacent to their house which stood opposite Union Church.”* He asked that it be verified.

Mr. Short asked that the source of the City’s original charter and the source of its name be added to the full history in the appendix.

The consensus of the Board was that item #ii under Goal #1 be changed to read: *“Continue to update and enhance the inventory of historic sites and structures so as to create a living document.”*

The consensus of the Board was to combine item #i with item #iii under Goal # 2 so as to read, *“Explore possibility of creating a Heritage Commission whose mission will be the long-term protection of the City’s historic resources.”*

There were no other changes.

**Motion:** To approve the Historic Resources chapter as amended.

**Made by:** Mr. Putnam                      **Second:** Mr. Short

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

**IV. CIP**

Mr. McCrory presented the CIP with the eight criteria used to rate each project, and each project’s total score. The total score is an indicator of what the City’s immediate needs are and not an indication that the lower-scoring projects are unimportant. The CIP indicates what needs to be done and what needs to be recognized. It also recognizes that there are finite resources to get things done. This level of review will help the City Council, City Manager, and Finance Director work through the budget process and be more informed on how these capital projects might sit in that budget process. The desire is to work forward with the CIP, to recommend this CIP - as it stands with any modifications the Board might discuss at this meeting - to the City Council. Mr. McCrory suggested that the Board take time at a subsequent meeting to review this year’s CIP process with an eye toward improving future CIP processes.

Mr. Putnam said this CIP goes out a number of years- so when it is presented to the City Council, and they use it to guide them in their budget review on an annual basis, what do they see? Do they see this whole chart? Or do they see recommendations from the administration on what they think are the top priorities based on what's in this chart? Mr. McCrory said the intent in his mind is to have the chart available for more information. He said he would expect the administration to present recommendations based on the CIP.

Mr. Putnam said he wanted “to emphasize – that because of how far out some of the projects go – some serious discussion – not so much from the Planning Board, because the Board is visionary in this respect – how the City funds some of these projects with long-range planning and capital reserve funds – and then looking for grants.” He thought if “that were mentioned better in this CIP, that provides the Board with a better way of tracking and seeing the progress the City is making.” He said what he is looking for is “every year having a report showing the progress the City has made on meeting those timelines.”

Mr. McCrory said it can be done and might be an interesting exercise. (He said the subcommittee had reviewed the previous CIP to note which projects had been funded and completed. Some projects might remain on the CIP for decades - for example, some road projects). Tracking will help note which projects get bumped from year to year and help recognize which urgent needs arise that must be funded immediately, which may be more telling to the City's operations. The CIP helps anticipate costs, level them out, put aside capital reserves, so when there is a major expenditure, the City can “save up” for it. It helps lessen the burden on the taxpayer. It can also assist when grants become available.

Mayor Lovett asked if the department heads had seen the results of the scoring. Mr. McCrory did not know, but did not expect that they had. Mr. McCrory said that might be part of the next step in the process, after the Planning Board is done with it. Mr. Bergeron thought it might be a good idea as they may have a different point of view than the Planning Board does. Mr. McCrory thought it a good idea to give the department heads an opportunity to see it in advance. It could be noted in the transmission to City Council that a copy is being provided to the department heads.

Mr. Putnam asked if it would appropriate for the Board to ask for a report from the department heads. Mr. McCrory said he wasn't sure, as that would seem to re-start the process. The format of this CIP is different than previous years, so it will be a learning process for them as to how they rate or present their projects for the next CIP.

Ms. Harris said, as she looked at the total scoring, for “date needed 2017”, she noticed, for example, *paving* (page 5) scored an 84; *marked cruiser replacement* and *radio console & repeater replacement project* (page 2), scored 96 and 116, respectively, one of the reasons being that one of them states it is contractually required. She said the City has an ongoing budget for paving, road and sidewalk improvements, which she felt is greatly needed as are the other things; but if the Council is working through the budget and they ran out of money before they get to a total score of 84, would the City really not continue to improve the roads.

Mr. McCrory said the intent is not to provide a cut-off for funding, but rather to more inform them. That's why there are so many explicit criteria. He said the CIP rankings are not intended to replace the judgement of the City Council, but rather to inform them.

Mr. Bergeron said it is important to remember that, “you can’t start telling the City Council – no matter who they are – how to spend the money. That’s one thing you can’t do. That lies strictly with the nine people who sit up here. You can give them all the information so they can use good judgement, but you can’t tell them how to spend it.”

Mr. Wahrlich said the Board has tried to say that all along. The Board is here to determine if projects are within the spirit of the Master Plan.

Ms. Harris felt the Board plays a very small role (criterion 8). Mr. Putnam felt the Board is influencing the process each year.

Mayor Lovett said what has happened is more reflective of what Ms. Harris is saying. She said, “Over the past 7-10 years, how much has been invested in the road system – as far as part of the budget - has jumped up and down, from as much as \$750,000 down to zero. It has been dependent upon what money was available and priorities. That’s why using criteria to try to really map out – city-wide – not just about what’s important but what’s feasible with the money that you have.” She said she is not a proponent of “jumping all over the place funding roads”. The City is in a “six or seven-year cycle of bonding all the time to do roads – for maintaining roads – not building new roads – just maintaining them.”

Mr. Wahrlich said it tends to one of the bigger complaints in the community – the road system. He said we have too much of it for the amount of people we have.

Ms. Harris said criterion 4 (contractually or legally required) plays a significant role in some of the differences in the total score. She suggested getting feedback from Council on how they think this is working. Mr. McCrory said the Council could be surveyed for that feedback.

Mayor Lovett said she was hoping to get department head feedback before it goes to Council, because it could be that the evaluation process we’re using is not a sound process.

Ms. Harris said some of the criterion 8 scores might have changed if the Board had had the new Master Plan to go by. The Board was hampered by the lack of specificity in the 2011 Master Plan. However, she said this CIP process was “heads above” what the Board had last year. Mr. Wahrlich said the process had come a long way since the Board’s first involvement many years ago.

Mr. Wahrlich called for a motion on passing the CIP. Mr. Putnam said he wanted to know specifically what the Board would be acknowledging. He said last year the CIP was presented to the Board and the Board could say yes or no on approving it and sending it to City Council. He said now it is a work in progress. He said he wanted to relate to it in the Board’s motion that it is a working document and that it is not just a CIP plan for this year, but it’s long-range planning. From that long-range planning, how should the Board word in its motion – acknowledging that from this “we also have now impact on the yearly budgets.” He said he was trying to be very careful on how the Board acknowledges this. He said he was trying to think of how this would guide the City Council in accepting it from the Board.

Ms. Harris suggested putting those thoughts in a cover letter like the Board did last year. Mr. Putnam agreed with that.

Mr. McCrory said, in this process the Planning Board recommends the CIP to the City Council for consideration in the City budget.

Mr. McCrory read last year's cover letter. Mr. Putnam said he didn't think this year's recommendations could be as specific because of the new process that the Board is following. Mr. McCrory suggested acknowledging the new process and explaining the scoring criteria in this year's cover letter.

It was agreed that Mr. McCrory will draft a letter and circulate it via email to the Board. If there are any issues raised that cannot be easily resolved, the letter will be discussed at the next meeting.

Ms. Harris had some editorial changes, which included:

- Page 1 – 412-02 description should perhaps read, “Sprinkler system in *City Hall*”
- Page 1 – 412-10 description should perhaps read, “Pigeon *waste* is eating away at the copper”
- Page 1 – 412-11: Potholes *create* hazard; it's unsightly and in a *highly* visible area ...
- Page 5 – 441-12: Culvert has *totally* failed
- Page 7 – 450-05: perhaps reference to the church should be deleted
- Page 7 – 481-02: Replace *existing* chipper

Ms. Jordan added that 414-01 (page 1) under “benefits” should read “State required every 5 *years* to be 100%.”

**Motion:** To approve the CIP as amended.

**Made by:** Mayor Lovett

**Second:** Ms. Harris

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

**Motion:** The Planning Board recommends this CIP, acknowledging that it is based on a new process for reviewing the CIP with the rankings and criteria and that the process is under review and the CIP is a working document. It is a community-wide prioritization.

**Made by:** Mr. Putnam

Mayor Lovett asked that an explanation of the review process be included in the cover letter.

Mr. Putnam asked that the letter contain a request for feedback in regards to the process for future years. He said last year when the Board approved the CIP that there was a vagueness to it, without anything one could say was a firm recommendation. He said this plan begins to do that. He said what they recommend in the future must be obtainable. This plan contains priorities, but the Board really needs to focus on capital improvements that the board knows are achievable, practical and reasonable. He said it is a waste of time and misleading to people to include unachievable projects.

Mr. Wahrlich said he thought by putting things in the CIP the hope is the City can get a grant. Mr. Putnam said that was what the Master Plan was for. Mr. McCrory gave an example of how the CIP can serve under certain circumstances. He said the CIP is an opportunity for the City to see the full scope of its needs, whether or not they are all attainable.

Mr. Bergeron said it's not just about time, it's about money. He said time has nothing to do with it – it's what the City can afford to do. He said he would like the department heads to see the ranked CIP before the CIP goes to the Council, so they can see how their projects have been prioritized.

Mr. Wahrlich said he wants it to be recognized that the Board is still trying to fine-tune the process.

Mr. Putnam asked if it would be appropriate to ask the department heads for feedback. Mr. McCrory said it will be stated in the cover letter that it is being shared with the department heads.

**Motion seconded by Ms. Harris. All were in favor of the motion.**

[The Board took a five-minute recess. The meeting was reconvened at 8:01 PM.]

#### **V. Accessory Dwelling Units**

New legislation (RSA 674:71-73) will come into effect as of June 1<sup>st</sup>, that will set the state-wide standard for accessory dwelling units (ADUs). ADUs are already in the City zoning ordinance, but the ordinance is not 100% compliant with the new legislation. The City needs to become compliant with the new legislation. Adjustments can be made to the ordinance after completion of the Master Plan if desired.

The Board had received a “red-lined version” of the zoning ordinance showing the proposed changes. Certain changes are required to bring the ordinance into compliance. State law will trump whatever is not in compliance by the effective date. There are also a number of changes that are optional.

The intent was to have a “first pass read” of this amendment language at this meeting; take the Board's comments back and make revisions as needed for the next meeting (March 27<sup>th</sup>); finalize language at the Planning Board meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup>; present it to City Council for readings in April and May and have it go into effect by the June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline when the state law goes into effect.

Mr. McCrory said the staff had received technical assistance on the ordinance changes from the Regional Planning Commission. The full ordinance was reviewed with RPC, staff gave their input regarding what sections staff felt needed emphasis; RPC made their recommendations.

Section 22-1 Definitions: clarity has been provided on definitions of:

- accessory building;

- Accessory Dwelling Unit (definition taken from State statute);
- accessory uses;
- duplex (different from a single-family home with an ADU; a duplex is two units that may be owned separately); and
- single-family dwelling unit (does not include manufactured housing; may also contain an ADU. Note: Manufactured housing is not the same as modular housing).

Division 6 – Special Use Permits: The State allows for ADUs by right, by Special Exception (ZBA review); or by Special Use (Planning Board review as enabled by the Zoning Ordinance). In the current ordinance, ADU’s are allowed by Special Exception. Staff is recommending a Special Use Permit instead, based on the model presented through the City Center amendments.

Section 22-101 Standards of review: #10a (review of property layout): Mr. McCrory said the ordinance can be more prescriptive if the Board desires it or leave it general and have the permit application prescribe what this means. It has been the practice in conversion reviews to require a plan of the layout of the property and a floor plan of the residential dwelling. The Board could continue this practice as part of its review process in the permit application. With the proposed language, the Board would have greater latitude to require more than just a plan of the property.

Mr. Putnam felt the Board should have “available to itself all the expectations that they have to be aware of to make sure when they review the layout of the property it’s meeting all of the guidelines that it follows.” Therefore, the Board should have those guidelines somewhere. Mr. McCrory said there may be the necessary language in the standards listed further on in the ordinance.

Divisions 2 (AR), 3 (RR), 4 (RR-2), and 5 (R-1): Special Exception language for ADUs has been removed.

Division 11 (MHC): prohibits single family dwellings in the district (language added to resolve a “gap” in the ordinance, consistent with the intent of the district; could be amended at a later date; found similar issues in the Industrial districts)

Division 12 (City Center): Reference to the Special Exception section (22-387.3) has been removed; reference is being changed to Sect. 22-513, a previously reserved, empty line. (Section 22-387.3 will become a blank, to be used for something else at a later time.)

Article 5 – Supplementary District Regulations: “Section 22-513 Accessory Dwelling Units” is being added; contains ADU standards 1-9.

Item #3a: *The ADU shall not occupy more than 40% of the floor area of the dwelling structure or exceed 750 SF of floor area.* There was considerable discussion about this standard, primarily in light of the large, older single family homes in the City. It was felt that this would be too small and too restrictive.

Item #3c: *Exterior entry to the accessory dwelling unit shall not face the street as a second door.* There was considerable discussion about this standard, with some members suggesting that the use of existing street-facing entries be allowed while requiring new construction entries to not face the street.

It was agreed to continue the discussion at the next meeting.

**VI. Other**

There was no other business to discuss.

**VII. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence.

**VIII. Adjournment**

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting

**Made by:** Mr. Putnam                      **Second:** Mr. Short

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

**Respectfully submitted,**

*de Forest Bearse*