



**PLANNING BOARD
WORK SESSION**

Monday, May 8, 2017 6:00 PM
Council Chambers, City Hall

**MINUTES
Approved 5/22/2017**

Mr. Wahrlich called the meeting to order and asked for a roll call.

I. Roll Call

Present: Bruce Kolenda, James Short, Victor Bergeron, Richard Wahrlich, David Putnam

Absent: Charlene Lovett, Marilyn Harris, Marlene Jordan, William Greenrose, Nicholas Koloski

City Staff: Michael McCrory, City Planner

II. Review of Minutes – April 24, 2017

Motion: Approve as presented

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

III. Master Plan Update

a. Land Use chapter

(Note: Planning Board members David Putnam and Marilyn Harris served on the Land Use chapter subcommittee.)

Mr. Putnam stated that this chapter is required by state statutes. The 2008 Land Use chapter was almost 100 pages long as it contains many other topics besides land use. This new chapter is only 18 pages long and focuses only on land use. The subcommittee identified four bullets – positive growth, a place to call home, where we live and play, and working landscape. Land use was heavily focused on during the community forum (held in March 2016) and the subsequent surveys. The Land Use chapter sets the foundation for the other remaining chapters.

Mr. Wahrlich said the chapter was well done.

Mr. Kolenda asked if there is a specific order in which the chapters will appear in the final Master Plan? Mr. McCrory said there are a number of ways it can be set out. The final decision has not been made yet, but he felt it will most likely have the Vision and

Land Use chapters first, with the remaining chapters appearing in the same order as the vision statement.

Mr. Short said that proper land use is most important. Ruin the land, and everything else suffers.

Mr. McCrory said the chapter is sensitive to the context of the City. The City has a densely-settled core surrounded by rural landscapes. The context provides people with a sense of place. Population analysis, community input and parcel use analysis are provided as appendices. Input from the forum, surveys, the subcommittee and the steering committee indicate that personal safety is the #1 concern as well as a strong desire to maintain the City's rural character.

Mr. McCrory said he wanted to include photos in the chapter, but has been reluctant to include anything with Mt. Ascutney in the background, because it is not in Claremont. The Steering Committee felt it should be included as it is part of the City's skyline.

The section on future land use describes future land use districts, the purpose of each district and an array of typical uses for each. Mr. Putnam said the zoning board should be familiar with these purpose statements for the guidance they provide.

Mr. McCrory said that the I3 and City Center zoning districts are the only districts at present to have purpose statements. Once the Plan is adopted, all of the zoning districts will have purpose statements based on the future land use districts. These will be very helpful to the zoning board and the planning board.

The existing land use section describes the existing land use regulations including the zoning ordinance and map. Land use regulations carry out the pattern of development as envisioned in the land use chapter. The CIP is included in the regulations discussions because impact fees cannot be developed without it.

The Future Land Use Plan is progressive in its layout. Sections 4.2.1 – 4.2.4 reflect the vision. *Positive growth* is about taking care of what we have; *a place to call home* recognizes the importance of housing and community engagement; *where we live and play* speaks to our recreational resources, including culture and entertainment. *Working Landscape* speaks to farm and forest land, open space and natural resources.

The online survey and community forum participants desire a population of 20,000 in the next 20 years. Mr. McCrory said projections put our population at 13,500. Claremont would have to “buck the trend” and will need to have something special to make the City attractive to new, young families.

Mr. McCrory said the future land use districts are a more “broad brush” picture than zoning – they provide the best development solutions for each area.

The northeast and southeast quadrants are areas of high value natural resource areas – they are identified in the Natural Resources Inventory as ecologically significant. It is intended to keep them as a natural landscape. These areas are principally forested and agricultural areas with prime agricultural soils. It is the intent to maintain and enhance the soils and agricultural farms.

The gateway commercial district consists of residential development with city services and areas just beyond the extent of those city services. This area is designated for strong residential growth; it has the infrastructure and fewer natural resources; neighborhoods that have moderate to high density, city services; transportation resources. The intention is to infill with high density, smart growth areas.

The downtown consists of mixed uses. It is intended to continue the existing uses with infill encouraged.

The highway commercial district consists of Washington Street and Charlestown Road. These areas are to be maintained. They are a regional draw. They are gateways – Charlestown Road to Charlestown; Washington Street to Newport. We don’t want substantial change - they still appear rural with trees in the background. We want maintain the scenic quality.

It was agreed to discuss the goals and objectives at the next work session. Mr. McCrory said the Steering Committee is asking for glossary of terms for the chapter and asked the members to contribute to the list of terms to be included.

IV. Other

There was no other business.

V. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:58.

Respectfully submitted,
deForest Bearse
Resource Coordinator