



# Town of Plymouth

Planning Board Meeting  
Plymouth Town Hall  
Plymouth, NH 03264

## March 5, 2015

FINAL - Approved 3-19-15

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mike Ahern (Chair), John Kelly, Steve Whitman, Rebecca Hanson (ConCom Rep), Bill Bolton (Selectman's Rep.)

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Sharon Penney, Plymouth Town Planner

**ABSENT/EXCUSED:** John Randlett (Vice Chair), Neil McIver (Selectmen's Rep. Alt.), Bob Dragon (Alternate), Stephen Rhodes (Alternate), Jack Scarborough

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Mike Ahern called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Roll call of members was completed.

**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS:**  
None

**ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: Review of January 20<sup>th</sup>, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> 2015 minutes**

- Mr. John Kelly made a motion to accept the January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015 minutes as written, seconded Ms. Rebecca Hanson. Mr. Mike Ahern in favor, Mr. Bill Bolton and Mr. Steve Whitman abstained.
- Mr. Kelly made a motion to accept the February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 minutes as written, seconded by Bill Bolton. All in favor.
- Ms. Hanson made a motion to accept the February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015 minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Kelly. All in favor.
- Mr. Bolton made a motion to accept the February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015 minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Whitman. Mr. Kelly and Ms. Hanson in favor, Mr. Ahern abstained.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

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- Ms. Sharon Penney handed out paperwork she received from the Department of Energy regarding Northern Pass and the Environmental Impact Statement which is almost completed. The list shows where the document can be found both in hard copies on electronically. She has requested a copy of the EIS on CD.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Ms. Tara Bamford, Planning Coordinator/Senior Planner from North Country Council presenting first consideration of Master Plan process.**

- Ms. Bamford gave an overview of her experience. She has been in the planning world in New Hampshire since 1988 working in the Upper Valley region. One of her first projects was the Claremont Master Plan. She enjoys working with towns to implement a plan which reflect the individual needs of that town. She will follow the specific tasks noted on the Request for Proposal; however every task is open for discussion.
- She stated that it usually takes a couple of meetings with the Board for her to know what direction the Board is going in regarding updating the plan. She would start off by asking questions of the Board and the Board asking her questions. After having the meetings with the Board, she would facilitate a public vision session for input from the residents. She noted that the response to the RFP did not include clerical work in terms of mailings and stated that she would be asking for volunteers to help with these types of tasks. This would be especially helpful with the surveys. She would need labels for the residents and a spreadsheet for the results. She would then compile the information and draft a report that she would present at a public meeting.
- Mr. Bolton asked if the surveys could include long time renters in the community as well as owners of the property. He also asked about the survey being put on a search engine online.
- Ms. Bamford noted that this information is usually difficult to obtain. She has done this in the past and did not receive a lot of response.
- Mr. Whitman noted that they did this in Dover and noted that he would reach out to them. He believes they had to work together with the post office to get this separate list.
- Mr. Kelly asked if someone could find out the total population for Plymouth. He would like to know the number for the general population verses the university population. He is looking for census information for Plymouth and would like to find a basis on who the town is trying to satisfy with the information the Board supplies in the Master Plan.
- Ms. Penney noted that they will be updating the demographics in the addendum.
- Mr. Kelly feels there should be more of an effort receiving the responses back from the surveys. His suggestion was to maybe supply a self-addressed, stamped envelope for them to send it back.
- Ms. Penney she agrees Mr. Kelly and stated that if they are making an effort to mail these to the people that they could perhaps help with the postage by obtaining a bulk mailing permit for the surveys.
- Ms. Bamford asked if the addendum is being addressed separately as this was not on the Request for Proposal task list.

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- Ms. Penney stated the addendum is something which can be updated as needed over time as it includes many charts which could simply updated with census and other data.
  - Mr. Bolton noted that the online options would tabulate results for you. That is why he feels this would be a good resource to use.
  - Mr. Ahern stated his concerns regarding the surveys. He is concerned about who will be filling out the survey and how long they have actually lived in the community and that they might have a specific agenda in mind.
  - Ms. Bamford stated that they could make these questions part of the survey. Example: where they live, approximate age, how long they have lived at that address. She could then tabulate results based on that specific criteria for the Board to see.
  - Mr. Whitman stated that this is just one avenue to use for input. He stated that when they have done Master Plans in other communities that they seldom have the problem of too much data. He stated that you can flag the ones that look like there is a specific agenda.
  - Mr. Kelly feels that the only ones showing up are the people with their own specific agenda.
  - Mr. Ahern would like to see there be a separate survey for PSU students verses full time residents.
  - Mr. Bolton feels you could have the same survey for both, however, just add more demographically oriented questions.
  - Mr. Whitman stated that he feels if they go into the Master Plan process in trusting the residents to answer the survey that the response would be much greater.
  - Ms. Penney stated that undertaking the Master Plan process is like creating a blue print which then becomes a guide book for the town's future, after much public input and refinement.
  - Mr. Ahern asked Ms. Bamford if she has done this kind of survey work in a college community.
  - Ms. Bamford stated that she helped with the Hanover plan years ago.
  - Mr. Ahern reiterated his concern regarding activism in the community and how easy it is to mobilize students.
  - Mr. Kelly feels that with voting and the Master Plan it is easy to mobilize students.
  - Mr. Whitman stated that he feels these are two separate situations and that he would be very surprised if this would happen with the Master Plan. Getting people involved in the Master Plan is one of the hardest things to do.
  - Mr. Ahern asked how many copies to each residence would go out.
  - Ms. Bamford stated that what they do is taking the list of property owners and the voter checklist and merge the two and delete duplicates. One survey would go to each residence with a note stating that they can duplicate the survey as needed for the amount of adults in the home.
  - Mr. Kelly feels this defeats the purpose in Plymouth as a big percentage of the property is student housing, so there would have to be several surveys supplied per residence.
  - Ms. Penney asked how many surveys the Board is considering as they may find that two surveys may suit the purpose better.
  - Mr. Whitman asked if they want to design the survey process tonight or just an overall process.

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- Ms. Penney feels they need to get on with an overall process and not be too specific tonight.
  - Ms. Bamford noted that by using the voter checklist and owner list you are getting their input. You need to know what the tax payers and voters are going to support.
  - Mr. Kelly stated that he feels they need to know what they are working with regarding property as much as the people.
  - Mr. Ahern would like to pin point what they are exactly looking for out of these surveys.
  - Mr. Kelly feels you should take into consideration the months in which you would send these surveys out. He feels you would get a more realistic response if you send them out between May-September.
  - Ms. Hanson noted that the students here now may move on, however, they would still be representing that population for the future. She also noted there is a large percentage of renters who are not students, so she would not want to see renters excluded.
  - Ms. Bamford stated that to decrease land use costs, they have used parcel data and aerial photos. In addition, they will look at the relevant suitability of wetlands, steep slope and look at land use trends. She also stated that she'd like to meet with the Planning Board again to discuss the issues that should be addressed in the Master Plan, and she'd also like to facilitate a public meeting.
  - Mr. Ahern noted that he would like to invite surveyors to discuss the Master Plan in the making since they coordinate with the Master Plan and might make land use recommendations.
  - Ms. Bamford stated that they should have a roundtable meeting to review and update the implementation section.
  - Mr. Kelly noted that the town should have a potential income from rental property, which he believes ought to pay a commercial business tax.
  - Mr. Whitman believes that Mr. Kelly's idea should be further discussed at a roundtable meeting or a Select Board meeting.
  - Mr. Whitman recommends updating the status of the land use sections in the plan because if the Planning Board is working with the North Country Council, then they should share the challenge of the Planning Board and try to guide future land use development in these areas, so they can make recommendations to solve of the challenges the Planning Board faces.
  - Ms. Bamford distributed example of her previous work done on Master Plans. She also thinks that the "Economic Development" chapter should have another round-table discussion topic to discuss economic trends, and then draft the implementation process.
  - Ms. Penney noted that North Country Council has just finished the regional plan for the North Country in addition to updating the Tenney Mountain Highway Corridor study last year and these are great tools for the Planning Board to use as references for the Master Plan update.
  - Mr. Kelly suggested that the Planning Board should invite some of the neighboring towns to a meeting, so they can share their thoughts.
  - Ms. Penney stated that the Planning Board has not received any applications for the regularly scheduled public hearing meeting on March 19, 2015.
  - Mr. Ahern said he would like the board to meet again in a second work session on March 19<sup>th</sup> to continue fleshing out the process. She also noted that the
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Planning Board should coordinate timeframes when they can meet with Ms. Bamford.

- The Planning Board and Ms. Bamford are scheduling to start on April 2, 2015 when they will begin discussing the Master Plan in an 18-24 month timeline.
- Ms. Bamford recommends that the Planning Board read the past Master Plan, so they are prepared for the meeting on April 2<sup>nd</sup> and they will talk about planning the visiting session, and then forming the survey.

**UNFINISHED AND OTHER BUSINESS:**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

- Mr. Ahern made a motion to adjourn; motion seconded by Mr. Bolton. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE:

The public is invited to attend all meetings of the Planning Board. During official public hearings, the public is welcome to speak. For other items the public may speak at the discretion of the chair/board. Files on the applications and items above are available for inspection in the Planning Department in Town Hall, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. These applications and items are subject to change prior to final action. Contact the Planning Department if you have questions or comments about these or any related matters or if you have a disability requiring special provisions for your participation at 536-1731 or you can e-mail the Town Planner, Sharon Penney at: [spenney@plymouth-nh.org](mailto:spenney@plymouth-nh.org).

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jaseya Girona