

TOWN OF AMHERST
Master Plan Steering Committee

April 22, 2021

APPROVED

1 In attendance: Dwight Brew, Chris Yates, Jared Hardner, Tracie Adams, Tom Quinn, Will Ludt,
2 and Joe Ilsley.
3 Staff in attendance: Natasha Kypfer – Town Planner, and Nic Strong – Community Development
4 Director
5

6 **1. Roll Call to Order**

7 Dwight Brew called the meeting to order at 6:30pm., and Natasha Kypfer read the following
8 statement. On behalf of the Master Plan Steering Committee, I find that due to the State of
9 Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in
10 accordance with the Governor’s Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-
11 04, as extended by various Executive Orders, this public body is authorized to meet
12 electronically.
13

14 Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this
15 meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor’s Emergency Order.
16 However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:
17 Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by
18 video or other electronic means:
19

20 We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting.

21 All members of the Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this
22 meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if
23 necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone #312-626-6799
24 and password 892 5332 6221, or by clicking on the following website address:
25 <https://zoom.us/j/89253326221> that was included in the public notice of this meeting.
26 Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:
27

28 We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the
29 meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. Instructions
30 have also been provided on the website of the Planning Board at: www.amherstnh.gov.
31 Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are
32 problems with access: If anybody has a problem, please call 603-341-5290.
33

34 Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:
35 In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and
36 rescheduled.
37

38 Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.
39 Let’s start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their
40 presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this
41 meeting, which is required under the Right-to- Know law.
42

43 **Roll call attendance: Dwight Brew, Chris Yates, Will Ludt, Tom Quinn, Tracie**
44 **Adams, Jared Hardner, and Joe Ilsley – all present and alone.**

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45 **2. Committee discussion with Resilience Planning and Design, LLC to discuss scope of**
46 **work.**

47
48 Steve Whitman, Liz Kelly, and Zak Brohinsky, of Resilience Planning & Design, LLC, joined
49 the Steering Committee.

50
51 Steve Whitman reviewed the Scope of Services document with the group. He explained that task
52 #1 will focus on project management and meetings. Resilience will hold monthly meetings with
53 the group, and others as needed. At least one to two Resilience members will attend meetings at
54 first. In between meetings, Resilience will work with Nic Strong and other staff as needed. The
55 deliverables for this task include agendas and draft documents.

56
57 Task #2 will focus on mapping, analyses and existing conditions reports. During this task,
58 Resilience and the Steering Committee will identify plans and studies that need to be considered
59 and reviewed. The groups will brainstorm on what else is needed. He suggested that the Town
60 use Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) for build out analyses and scenarios.
61 Resilience will work with NRPC to integrate this into the Master Plan. During this phase,
62 Resilience will also set up a website so that interested parties can view background documents.

63
64 Task #3 is outreach and engagement. The groups will brainstorm which outreach techniques to
65 use.

66
67 During task #4, everything will be pulled together. Themes will emerge and information on
68 where Amherst is headed, and the steps needed to get there will become clear. There will be an
69 easy-to-navigate document that the Town can use as a tool moving forward. Resilience will help
70 the Town through the public hearing process and the Story Map will be fine-tuned.

71
72 Steve Whitman explained that he was not able to fit themed working groups into the Scope of
73 Services. He explained that the Town would need a longer time frame for the project in order to
74 have Resilience meet with working groups outside of the Steering Committee each month. This
75 also creates complexity, as not all groups are likely to operate at the same level. He suggested
76 that the Steering Committee could use the existing conditions document to identify people with
77 interest and/or expertise on certain topics to review these items.

78
79 In response to a question from Chris Yates, Steve Whitman stated that he shares the concern
80 about NRPC doing the build out study but believes this can be done well with a two-phase
81 approach. Once Resilience is under contract with the Town, he can reach out to NRPC to work
82 on the study. The groups will then review the study again after the public engagement task to
83 make sure it is on track. Chris Yates noted that the Town needs tools to understand certain
84 tradeoffs for development in areas of Town.

85
86 In response to a question from Dwight Brew, Nic Strong explained that NRPC completed a build
87 out summary for Amherst, along with such summaries or analyses for other surrounding towns a
88 few years ago.

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89 Zak Brohinsky stated that he is happy to have information from NRPC included in this way, as
90 NRPC has this service well-tuned.

91
92 Will Ludt noted that the Heritage Commission is currently working on a story map for certain
93 heritage sites in Town. He would like to see the information shared with the Master Plan story
94 map. Jared Hardner also noted that the Amherst Conservation Commission has a number of GIS
95 map layers that could also be included.

96
97 Zak Brohinsky explained that the story map, once completed, will live under the Town's
98 ARCGIS license. Steve Whitman noted that the budget can be reduced by \$1,500, due to the fact
99 that the Town already has its own license.

100
101 In response to a question from Tom Quinn, Zak Brohinsky stated that he does not believe there
102 will be additional data sets, outside of NRPC's, that the Town will need to contract separately for
103 as part of this project.

104
105 In response to a question from Tom Quinn, Steve Whitman stated that Resilience can be flexible
106 if the Steering Committee needs to meet additional times per month, within reason.

107
108 In response to a question from Joe Ilsley, Steve Whitman stated that it is unclear how much it
109 would cost the Town additionally to add in working groups to the project. Steve Whitman noted
110 that it would probably add six months or more to the project timeline. He believes there are other
111 ways to get the information the Town is seeking to get through these working groups.

112
113 Dwight Brew explained that the schools will likely move forward with a large warrant article on
114 next year's ballot. He is concerned about people voting on this item before being able to view the
115 Master Plan. He asked if it would be possible to create a table with potential Town-wide projects
116 and possible initial prioritizations in the fall in order to show some basic tradeoffs before the
117 March vote. Steve Whitman stated that he believed this would be possible.

118
119 In response to a question from Chris Yates, Steve Whitman stated that the Steering Committee
120 could choose to pursue DES funding for the water study or could pursue it later for things like a
121 detailed water quality analysis.

122
123 In response to a question from Chris Yates, Liz Kelly stated that Resilience prefers if
124 photographers that live in Town send in their pictures to be included in the Master Plan. Zak
125 Brohinsky noted that people can also send in videos and audio clips to be included in the story
126 map.

127
128 In response to a question from Will Ludt, Steve Whitman explained that the 2020 Census data
129 may not be available under the end of the 2021 calendar year. He explained that Resilience will
130 be looking at the 2019 American Community Survey data, along with data for the Town from
131 other time periods.

132

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133 The group discussed dates and times for future meetings.

134

135 In response to a question from Nic Strong, Steve Whitman explained that the overall vision will
136 be drafted after examining the existing conditions by topic. The group will then revisit the
137 previous Master Plan vision and incorporate this information into their public forums. He
138 explained that this process should take place around later summer or early fall.

139

140 **Jared Hardner moved to request that the Board of Selectmen, at its next meeting on**
141 **May 10, 2021, enter into an agreement with Resilience Planning & Design, LLC, to**
142 **be engaged in the development of the Amherst Master Plan. Chris Yates seconded.**

143 **Roll call: Dwight Brew - aye, Chris Yates - aye, Will Ludt - aye, Tom Quinn - aye,**

144 **Tracie Adams, - aye, Jared Hardner - aye, and Joe Ilsley - aye. Motion carried**

145

unanimously.

146

147 **Chris Yates moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:51pm PM. Tracie Adams seconded.**

148 **Roll call: Dwight Brew - aye, Chris Yates - aye, Will Ludt - aye, Tom Quinn - aye,**

149 **Tracie Adams - aye, Jared Hardner - aye, and Joe Ilsley - aye. Motion carried**

150

unanimously.

151

152

153

154 *Respectfully submitted,*

155 *Kristan Patenaude*

156

157 Minutes approved: July 19, 2021

158