

1 Master Plan Steering Committee 10/27/2020 6:30 pm via Zoom

2
3 Dwight Brew called meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

4
5 Dwight stated will need to go back to previous recordings to recover the minutes. For this
6 evening Tracie Adams volunteered to take minutes.

7
8 Natasha read the following required statement: On behalf of the Master Plan Steering
9 Committee, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the
10 COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to
11 Executive Order 2020-04, as extended by Executive Orders 2020-05, 08, 09, 10, 14, 15, 16, this
12 public body is authorized to meet 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. However, in
16 accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are providing public access to
17 the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means.

18
19 We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the Board have the ability to
20 communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has
21 access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing
22 the following phone #312-626-6799 and password 853 1972 6815, or by clicking on the
23 following website address: <https://zoom.us/j/85319726815> that was included in the public notice
24 of this meeting.

25
26 Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting: We previously
27 gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how
28 to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. Instructions have also been provided on the
29 website of the Planning Board at: www.amherstnh.gov.

30
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: In the event the public is
35 unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled. Please note that all
36 votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

37
38 Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence,
39 please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is
40 required under the Right-to-Know Law.

41
42 **Attendees present: Tracie Adams in car with her daughter, rest of members present**
43 **and alone included Dwight Brew, Jared Hardner, Joe Ilsley, Tim Kachmar, Will**
44 **Ludt, Tom Quinn and Chris Yates.**
45

Dwight and Chris reported receiving ACC (Amherst Conservation Commission) and Bike/Ped Committee suggestions regarding MP (Master Plan) survey proposed.

Jared related that at the last ACC meeting, Master Plan Survey was discussed in terms of its relevance to the ACC- informed the comments. ACC felt survey was too long. Recommended reducing ACC related questions to a minimum and suggested exercising this discipline in other sections.

Jared shared his screen of ACC Revisions to Survey. Suggested dropping Natural Resources section entirely and replacing the content with a few statements integrated into other areas of survey.

Dwight, Jared, and Chris discussion led to confirmation that this material would be addressed later as the group worked through the survey.

Jared shared his screen and comments from the Bike/Ped Committee. He recommended adding a section for the Bike/Ped Committee questions. He felt it was important that this committee have a section that helps link to the Master Plan. He presented 3 questions to add but they were presented in different format than the survey but he stated he could reformat the questions to work in the survey.

Dwight, Jared, Chris conversation led to determination that first two questions easy to drop into new format. Third proposed question can be added but more difficult to align with the format. Jared stated that he was comfortable with whatever works, either adding new section or dropping questions into other sections.

Dwight asked Chris to bring up the Word document that Nic sent out in preparation for the meeting. Chris suggested editing online during meeting and Dwight agreed.

Dwight presented changing the lead-in section and adding a couple questions. Jared suggested talking about the broader comments about the information collected and how the information would be used for spatial planning. He stated that collecting a lot of information may be interesting and good to know but that not all information being collected useful for how Planning Board conducts its business and zoning.

Chris stated that comments from other boards was reviewed and used to tweak the survey. He spoke to Bill Stoughton yesterday to get his thoughts. He added the first section asking about the resident's priorities. Chris reported that good feedback was received and incorporated while some questions were knocked out.

Dwight reported that common themes and feedback came from the following sources:

Library Board of Trustees - Nancy Baker

Heritage Commission – Will Ludt

Amherst Conservation Commission – Jared Hardner

Bike/Ped Committee – Jared Hardner

Schools – Adam Steel

Director of NRPC – Jay Minkarah

Three individuals provided feedback as citizens not in their other capacities:

Peter Lyons – Chair of BOS

Bill Stoughton – Amherst Conservation Commission and Planning Board

Dean Shankle – Amherst Town Administrator.

Dwight reported that the feedback received fell into comprehensive themes. The themes included stating that the efforts to create the survey were comprehensive and the work it took to create it was appreciated. Suggestions for improvement included concerns about the overall length, utilize this opportunity to get more specific direction, allowing people to voice where they stand on a topic, questions needed clarity, and some survey comments were viewed as unnecessary or intrusive.

Dwight and Chris dealt with the noncontroversial feedback and worked to incorporate the comments for the Master Plan Steering Committee to consider. Dwight stated that the method going forward would be to review each item and move to the next one if there was no comments or desire expressed to change something. Tom Quinn stated that we can't take the next step with the survey so wondered if it was okay for the survey to be long. He thought the survey may be more important this year than in other years.

Jared presented the opposite argument. He stated that due to COVID-19, he is getting surveys to do online every other day and felt that a long survey could play into survey fatigue. Dwight stated the committee should make sure the questions on the survey are there for a reason and provide useful feedback that will govern what to do. Questions might be interesting but not influence the Master Plan product and should be taken out so shortens survey.

Jared stated that the ACC could ask more questions about open spaces but the information may not be used. The ACC has a list of things that are important to consider when each deal comes along and will present the deal based on this and not the data from the survey. People interested in open space may want it for natural preservation or recreation.

Dwight suggested going through and looking at each question at some level to ensure no ridiculous detail in any section.

Will reported that the Heritage Commission took the tack of looking at each question in light of improving/maintaining/preserving rural character. They envisioned an umbrella statement with 10-12 response statements so rural character topic would come through. Chris noted that a few questions were overkill and can be talked about in the Heritage section. He appreciated the Heritage Commission feedback and found it very helpful.

Chris shared his screen.

Dwight asked the group to look at his proposed alternate wording and compare it to previous wording. He asked for thoughts on the proposed change. Tom Quinn thought the questions on the alternate may be more aggressive in getting contact information. Dwight recalled that people had concerns about people outside the Amherst community filling out the survey. He thought it would be useful for people who felt strongly about something could be reached for future communication and participation in the theme groups. He hoped that 70-80% of the people completing the survey would give their personal input as residents or businesses in Amherst. The theme groups could then contact the interested public to participate. He states that he flipped it. Now asking if like to give name and contact information instead of asking if you feel like it then do something. Tom Quinn felt it was useful to have as much information as possible.

Chris and Dwight discussed format and decided to ensure all adults added, add caption instructions and bold it.

Dwight reported that Microsoft Forms may be used for the survey and that the town does not own a copy of Survey Monkey to use. If use Microsoft Forms, Dwight reported he had to change the age categories down to the 7 available on this program. This required dropping out a category so went with 75+.

Dwight stated that he wanted all to present their comments and if there were none then he would move on.

Dwight stated there is a new section but planned to come back to it. Dwight moved to the General Topics Section. All questions lead with a positive wording. He changed the rating scale to Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neutral, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and No opinion. He said the change was an attempt to reflect the ability to disagree with one of the statements. Chris reported this change moved the survey scale back to the original one and he feels it makes more sense. Dwight stated the newly added section was an attempt to look at community member's priorities rated 0 (no concerns) to 4 (most important). The section following this added section would then find out how they stand on the topic. Jared felt that it was repetitive and suggests merging the new section and the following section then decide which scale to use. Dwight stated that there are about 20 LITR scales available online. Jared felt the first table (newly added one) gives importance on scale. If want to disagree then perhaps add negative numbers to the scale. Tom Quinn said if they are for or against that the same number might be given on first table. Dwight said this is why the scale below gives for or against the statement. Jared noted the verbiage is proactive and with this wording cannot say want less unless change the category verbiage. He feels having two similar tables will wear out survey takers.

Chris felt people would simply take the survey and not look at it like this committee who looks at the survey for the data it can provide. The survey has been worked on for 3 months already. Chris suggested going through the proposed updated changes and make suggestions. Jared disagreed with that attitude and felt it was best to get it right and not jump over the hard questions. He felt it important to do it right from the beginning. Tom Quinn asked how important group feels each section is....3-4 questions. No details, just top lines to get top level view. Jared said we could do that. Negative and positive numbers could be used to say if want

more or less of the item relative to what is present today. Tom Q thought goal of this section could be to determine which items more important so can collect more data. Jared felt that having only the headings was too vague.

Will felt this misses community priority of limiting residential development/growth which he hears often from residents. He doesn't feel this idea comes out readily in survey. Jared suggested merging the two tables into one table that would be the core of the survey. Tom agreed with Will's point and stated we should be sure we are not walking into pre-determined answers and felt it was valuable to ask the questions. Will thought we would get write-ins about this concern.

Jared asked if we could get there using 10-12 topics to ask about if want more or less emphasis versus going through the whole survey. Dwight stated that an example of two questions being alike and getting same score would be asking about limiting development. Someone may want better outdoor basketball courts.....

Jared discussed gradation of responses with zero meaning to keep doing it the same way and can add positive and negative gradations to increase the chance of making a distinction. Will thought good information from these groups important where granularity comes up and that this is a good broad-brush effort. Dwight planned to look for good scale examples and Nic will send out the examples. Next meeting can decide which scale to utilize. Jared returned to granularity discussion. He suggested a default of placing questions on one table. At the end of the questions ask if the respondent wants to answer more questions about a certain topic via Survey Monkey. If not, then at least we collected basic data.

Dwight confirmed idea of the list in this form as a topic section and if want to continue please do so or just submit after the first section. Jared thought letting them choose what they care about can easily be done on Survey Monkey. Dwight confirmed that Jared has experience and access to Survey Monkey. He will talk to Jared tomorrow about implementing survey through Survey Monkey.

Dwight suggested getting priority 10 questions or less and asked if these are the right questions? What is important to the community? Jared stated there is nothing about density. This is key topic for large constituency. Dwight suggested looking at the priority table item by item and asking if it is a worthy item for one of the ten.

Jared wanted to look at establish environmental protection and to add example of water resources since we are approaching having issues. Dwight and Jared discussion stated that if there are reasons something must be done anyway, then the feedback does not matter and perhaps the question can dropped from the priority list. Dwight asked if it is one of the 10 most important questions? Jared asked if increased support or outdoor recreation deals with spatial planning? He felt it was not needed in the rural atmosphere section and Chris confirmed. Jared satisfied with response to 12 questions with the option to go into detail on any topic they want to branch into further. He feels not all respondents will want to do a large survey.

Chris stated he looked at hundreds of surveys that are using this. He felt it more confusing to have shorter survey and option to branch out. He felt this may be confusing on a paper survey and may lead to not getting what want from survey. He wanted residents to answer all questions. Tom Q stated the original survey took 6-7 minutes to complete. Chris added this section up front based on feedback received desiring to get priorities. Jared expressed concern that many questions on the survey are not relative to spatial planning. For example, town-wide employment opportunities under the sense of community section.

Will felt increased outdoor recreation was code word for more fields around Amherst. Jared felt it was not rural atmosphere but recreation. For sake of streamlining he suggested using the third one under rural atmosphere. Tom Q suggested getting rid of first two. He asked Jared what levers are pulled at the town level to increase development. Chris stated town could market light industrial use in town. Chris asked are we protecting open space from future developments....to forests. Are we interested in encouraging commercial development? Commercial zones are not being used to their best potential like Will said. He wanted to get surface thoughts and get in-depth when break into theme groups where can delve into subjects deeper. Dwight suggested a top-level view and say only certain types of businesses can locate in Amherst. Amherst doesn't offer sewers, so no large hotels. Light industrial area not good for businesses that are people intensive but good for warehouses. Why the Board of Selectmen (BOS) not fix this? Would need other towns like Merrimack, Nashua, Milford to approve Amherst using their wastewater treatment plant. It is ridiculous to get new one permitted this day and age. Those towns are protective of what they have. Milford needs their capacity. Costs 30-100 million dollars to bring sewers from where they are in end near Merrimack down near Fidelity to Bon Terrain Dr. Want to bring in businesses that want to use municipal services and sent children to schools and pay lots of taxes. Peel it back solution not so simple.

Joe stated that to develop the municipality needs to create economic development model. What NH Dept of Economic Development wants. Look at types of businesses want to bring in, demographic profiles, etc. Modernization of septs to place leach fields under powered types facilities creates increased capacity those types of facilities. Worth looking at type of economic development want because the technology for waste disposal without septic is more of a reality. Don't dismiss offhand because may be a mistake long-term.

Dwight stated to continue to look at because technology changes and types of businesses change. Probably less retail development because it is not happening. Couple years ago CDD and NRPC costed out solutions. BOS dismissed due to amount of upfront costs. Not want to implement solutions today that residents pay for now and residents 20 years from now will benefit from. Data runs 2-3 years old, study was done, Nic can provide the results. Joe said he was responding to Chris's question about how to spur economic development that we want. Models are out there for creating shared septic.

Jared wondered if more employment opportunities in Amherst is fundamentally what this is about? Spur conversation and becomes a category. Wording direct for Tom and Jared. Town-wide employment opportunities under sense of community. Jared suggests change to move jobs in Amherst to be more direct. Dwight thought on scale of asking if it is good or bad, that he

would guess most residents will choose more jobs as good. Jared said he was negatively interested in more jobs and wants a more residential community. That is how he would answer the question. Dwight felt we want answers on both ends of the spectrum, so it is a worthwhile question. If everyone would answer yes then why waste a question. Jared felt it was worth having data because when push for something large, can say everyone definitively said they want more jobs when bring in a factory.

Dwight said ideas that should rework this scale not yet identified, 10 broad questions covering range of things to help narrow down broad range of things is important. Should have detailed section for each one of general questions at the top. Tom Q said this was reasonable. Would be like a Table of Contents for all questions. Jared said gives a broad brush of key topics if get no further in survey. Tom Q suggested can boil down sense of community to small town feel not jobs, tax base, or industrial development. Jared looked at it a different way. He wanted to collect a simplified survey. Example to know sense of community an important topic. Ordinal scale summed up. Useful to say want more residential and business then proceed with 3 different things you might have meant by this like business being a café and tavern in village or more light industry in this part of town. Can determine if could interact in a town hall environment. Hash out but not this level of exchange in a survey. Chris stated that is the idea of the breakdown groups. Survey captures tip of iceberg. Bucket out and create 5, 6, or 7 groups based on buckets to dig in. Jared confirmed survey finds out what breakout groups are needed.

Dwight stated the hope of the survey, not too long so people will fill it out, provide information which groups needed and provide groups with some direction. Thought is to get information in two different levels.

Dwight shared screen. Quality of Life Categories slide he thought may be useful to give another view of what broad categories we might want to look at if going out to survey people in town. Another look at what trying to do. Jared stated that a number of them do not involve spatial planning. Tim K asked why get hung up on spatial planning? Lots of data collected important for planning into the future for zoning and regulations. He felt the data valuable for the town as it moves forward over the next ten years. Jared felt that if we want to redefine the MP that it fine because it will dictate what questions to ask. Chris stated that these pieces are in the MP and that the Master guide discusses this stuff. Jared questioned public health and safety as part of the MP. Chris stated that public health and safety can include walkways, bike paths.

Dwight stated there are no perfect lists of questions. Not have to use this list. He stated the goal is to define top level areas that want in the MP and want to get feedback from residents and businesses about. Can't be everything or end up focusing on nothing. For each top level come up with a bullet under each one. Example: economic development with four bullets. Thinks Jared saying wants summary at top level, like 10 questions. Further expand in more detail is Jared's idea he thinks. Jared stated he was thinking out loud and if it is a terrible idea that's ok. Dwight asked how we get from where we are to this state? Tim K said we should cast a wide net with potential questions to narrow down themes for MP. Tracie agreed that is her understanding. Tim suggested keeping broad and long, use feedback to analyze and make smaller groups based on interest.

Joe stated he preferred we stop coming to the table with work and then throw it out and start over each meeting. He asked what is the broad overarching feedback from the committees? Jared stated the feedback from the committees was 1. Too long 2. Questions should be actionable for spatial planning. Joe felt that every meeting we reinvent the wheel. He wanted to go through the feedback and incorporate it into the survey. Chris stated that he spend 3 ½ hours looking at the feedback Dwight gave from the emails received and incorporated into the survey. Dwight shared a screen of the survey feedback.

Chris shared for example, improve food sustainability to add CSA's, community garden, etc. Example of agritourism – low impact on community but bring people and money. Not grabbing priorities a concern, looked at list from another community. Cut volunteer chart. Dwight and Christ thought about cutting facilities next 10 years list too. Added questions – gives ability to write things out. Joe wants to add feedback and asks so why do we desire a redo? Jared wanted to fix the opening page as being discussed. Dwight asked if we are that far off? We want people to establish their priorities and attempted to do this. Could we just adjust these 10 questions?

Jared is looking to fix page 1, the high-level table and what goes in it. Tim K suggested getting rid of leading terminology like established and increase, encourage. Chris shared his screen of Priorities. Tim suggested leaving as categories. Jared wanted to ask if for or against and scale. Tim K and Jared suggested low, medium, high or no interest, negative interest. Tom Q feels good about this start.

Jared feels respondents sure to respond by answering one page and can go deeper into survey if want to. Survey Monkey can support this option. He states they can finish the first page and can connect to additional pages if they want to go further. Dwight says we want to touch upon broad areas. If want to ask subset then that's more challenging to decide what questions to ask. He wondered if it would be worthwhile to come up with the 10 questions now. Tom Q suggested keeping the topics at gut-instinct level answers, no details initially. Details can come as go down survey. For example, how important is it to keep rural character question with details later on survey or in zoom groups.

Dwight asked if it is worthwhile to take questions home and group them to make it easier? Tom Q said we could skip over sections. Chris suggested using framework of top 10-15 items and they come out below for more information. Dwight asked if we should do the 10 questions now since he felt it should not take too long to come up with them.

Will asked about the next meeting and Natasha confirmed next Thursday Nov 5th. Will suggested working on the questions for the next half hour or so Chris wondered if wanted straight up questions or in buckets like have it. Dwight stated each question could be its own section and get rid of the headings. He also stated we needed the ACC questions because we don't have them yet. Jared said it boils down to do we want to protect more open space? Dwight suggested the question could be "How important is it to protect more open space?" Chris made changes on the screen as changes suggested.

Tim K wanted to ask about how important it is to expand the business base. Dwight thought about housing for seniors. Comments before the MP started involved Amherst not being an easy place to stay for your entire life especially as you get more senior and find there are not as many housing options as you age. Natasha pointed out that affordability in general could be part of the picture. Jared suggested housing for a range of demographics. Nic reported the industry term is age-friendly. Chris discussed having availability for “garden homes” for single people or those who lost a spouse. Tom Q, Natasha, and Tim discussed if Amherst should focus on homes other than single family models.

Jared and Natasha discussed transportation/traffic control and management. The question is about too much traffic that comes with density. Ask how important it is to maintain low levels of traffic in Amherst? Jared stated the Bike/Ped Committee asked how important it is to have safe and comfortable routes for bikers and walkers of all abilities? Natasha wondered where community infrastructure and facilities was broken out into and wondered if it would go here? Dwight was not sure if want to ask about maintaining town buildings at all because this is probably a yes.

Tim and Will thought we needed a school question. Tim suggested “How important are high quality schools?”

Joe, Tim, and Will asked “How important is it to preserve the historical character of the community?”

Dwight and Chris asked “How important is it for Amherst to stay affordable?”

Dwight asked how the MP addresses the quality of schools? Chris stated that if MP allows and provides for more density then we will have more people with kids in the schools. His experience is that if the density goes up then the schools are 10-15 years behind in handling the increased number of children in the schools. There are serious implications to increased density. For example, with increased density the needed infrastructure could not be built out before the density comes to pass for that county. He has seen 3,000 homes added and a road smaller than Ponemah to support them. Dwight wondered if a way to bring quality of schools back to the MP. If allow rapid growth then the schools can’t keep up. Chris stated that if get approval for 200-300 homes with 1 ½ kids per unit then what does that do to class sizes? Will we take the time to be able to meet these needs? If kids increase then could see classroom sizes up to 25-35 students per class instead of the smaller classroom sizes we enjoy. Jared agrees that our schools connect to other issues. Density affects everything...fire, schools, police. Joe stated it connects to the capital improvement plan (CIP). Jared and Chris felt it was important to get the demographics so we know who we are dealing with. Nic stated that generally speaking, all facilities are in the MP, just don’t call out schools. Jared suggested a preamble to explain that concept.

Nic recommended taking out word quality because people think of very different things as they answer the question. It is tricky one. Not able to know what people are thinking as they answer. For Planning Board applications asking for 40-50 houses all these things are reviewed to see if it is scattered and premature for the town based on what facilities we have already.

Chris stated that he understands taxes versus schools and finding a happy medium. Tim felt that this will come out of MP subcommittees as details.

Jared and Joe wondered if Nic would prefer to maintain or improve current levels of public service (emergency services, schools, etc). Jared suggested public services in face of increasing growth? In context of town population growth. Joe feels this is agenda-based. Chris suggested loss of services initially until catch-up. Joe felt it critical so don't lag services. Knows density requirements, growth rates, incorporation of impact fees are factors in planning. Jared wondered how much emphasis PB puts on growth? How important is it to not fall behind? Joe said it is not just the PB that uses the MP. Board of Selectmen (BOS) look at it to see where to take programs. Joe suggested striking population growth since it feels agenda based. Need to cover but not sure how to say it better. Chris felt this area has trade-offs that must be discussed.

Chris typed the question as "How important is it to maintain current levels of public services?" which would include emergency services, public works, schools, recreation, etc., and Chris placed them in alphabetical order. Joe felt that for a short list it was pretty comprehensive and asked what is missing? Joe also asked if we should ask about energy efficiencies? Jared stated that 2 people wanted to include energy, renewable energy. He asked if we should promote solar installation on municipal roofs? Joe felt it would be good to ask how important it is to reduce carbon footprint. Chris, Jared, and Joe discussed promoting public, residential, and commercial. Tim K asked about aquifers and drinking water. Joe and Jared talked about how important it would be to secure and preserve water resources within Amherst? And Joe suggested securing lands with aquifers. Tim stated that Pennichuck has a reservoir. Chris stated Merrimack and wells are sources. Joe stated that Epping, NH is facing economic development issues that are slowed by water capacity.

Chris and Joe wanted to capture hard hitting items on the first page. Will reported that the State of Maine has broadband legislation to increase to all sections of Maine. Chris agreed that this is still an issue in Amherst and that we have a question below to address it. He stated that he is a telecommunications guy. Jared wondered how much influence the public sector has over that? Chris suggesting discussion with telecommunications to get better equipment on cellular towers. He stated seven frequency re-use. More towers not always better. Jared asked about 5G and if requirements different? Chris said that Verizon is starting to work on and BOS can address. Tom Q said this is a Federal issue. Chris felt that towns can have influence too. Joe broad concepts not specific. Chris stated that telecommunications and internet are in the survey.

Tracie felt that this version looks better than the previous one and suggested can eliminate it. Jared was happy with this one and wanted to look at next table. Tom Q wanted to look back up to 3rd one on age friendly housing and suggested for all ages and income levels. Nic corrected third from bottom historical character not charter. Jared asked Dwight if he was looking at changing the scale. Dwight stated that the top part respondents' priorities not sure the scale is useable in the next section. Tom Q suggested using low, medium, high. Dwight felt this might run the risk of everything being a high priority so doesn't help focus what is most important. He hoped for differentiation not just 4's across the board. Chris said the next section goes deeper

understanding. Joe said not 1,2,3 but maybe write in the order of priority 1 through 5 so can't all be scored the same. Jared confirmed idea of rank voting. Dwight said idea is to list in order of importance may be too much for people to deal with. Jared said he has done this for political surveys.

Chris and Joe asked if can reduce redundancies of concept, clarify so not look like three questions in a row about affordable housing. Jared suggested giving top 5 of the 14 priorities in order of importance to you. Can do this in Survey Monkey. Tim K wanted to make statements declarative if ranking. No questions to rank. Jared said whoever enters questions into Survey Monkey can change the verbiage to work. Dwight was comfortable with this. Top 5 in order in top section. He asked if comfortable with scale use down below? Jared and Joe agreed the scale works.

Discussion about ranking 1-5, 1-7, or 1-10. Joe wanted to see which 4 would get left off list of 14. Jared stated the higher ones would give the theme groups. Chris suggested going through the charts to nix. Tom Q said there are repeats in other sections like agricultural lands. Chris agreed in Natural Resources and if choice to live in Amherst. Jared suggested the questions in next sections group accordingly to the top table so get additional information on topics needed. Dwight was willing to take below questions and rec....associating with factor up above. He suggested plowing through it now. Joe agreed link up top to those below. If don't link up then could cut those. Chris said the survey is overall shortened. Already stuff cut out.

Dwight wanted to go through now and cut or discover input questions missed that should go in the top level. Chris said the table breaks down more down below. Tom Q and Chris looked at the section on facilities and agreed could get rid of this section. Joe said could cold eye this later on and getting into diminishing return. Will wanted to conform what trying to do now. Will, Chris, and Joe wanted to keep the general areas and just focus on paring down now. Chris suggested nixing the facilities table also which was agreed to by Joe, Tom, Dwight, and Tracie. Jared suggested take out Natural Resources Section too. Questions about what to conserve. Joe felt some are required. Jared thought already asking these in top section. ACC has a plan and criteria that's too much to explain in the survey. Follow-up component for finer point discussions. Chris and Joe wanted to not delete all but some now. Jared said the discussion can come in Phase 2.

Tom Q wondered if Amherst regulations around building be more stringent than state or federal laws. Jared thought that to make a finer cut, could delete open space. He said could revise this table for people taking the option to do a more detailed discussion. Joe felt could delete because there are municipal requirement for flood plains. Jared said the open space protection was redundant. Tom Q wondered if it is worth asking a question about protecting open space through the Amherst Land Trust versus raising money via taxes to purchase land.

Tim K left the meeting at 2 hours 28 minutes 40 seconds.

Jared said the ACC would prefer not to cover this in the survey. Joe thought the ACC wanted their own plan independent of the MP. Jared said the ACC did not want to exclude people but

that it was too hard to explain in this setting. He wanted to rewrite and run back through ACC then bring this section back.

Chris said the next one covered services needed in Amherst and said he deleted some. Dwight and Chris felt non-emergency services needed more details (transportation to doctor). Tracie confirmed non-emergency is talking about things like wheelchair vans to take people to doctor visits. Joe confirmed non-emergency medical transport. Tom Q suggested taking off less likely services such as performing arts center. Tracie felt the community should determine which services they desire in the next 10 years. Chris used trash service as an example. Costs associated if it is municipally provided. Comes with community growth. Will asked if we have services in the top 14? Chris said it is not there. Tom Q brought up the Village Tavern discussion. Chris, Tracie, and Joe here this discussion often and surprised it is not included.

Dwight said the plan for while was to re-group by items at top and asked if we were still doing that? Chris recommends not. Joe wanted to delete, keep, delete, keep and be done. Will wanted to keep categories. Tom Q wanted to know which can get rid of under categories? Dwight suggested going through each one? Go through General Topics next 10 years. Dwight planned to go through each and wait for comment and if none then keep going. Joe, Chris, Tom Q, and Dwight had discussion about reducing tax rate. Will, Joe, and Chris wanted to delete Improve Town of Amherst Facilities section.

Tom Q brought up safety in Village. Will, Joe, Dwight, Tracie, Natasha looked at Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety in Amherst. Jared and Joe discussed Bike/Ped Committee not just related to roads but also creating connections, creating safe routes, linking recreational trails to schools and getting off the roads. Interested in improving safe routes (connectivity) for pedestrians and bicyclists in Amherst.

Dwight focused on next page, Services Needed in Amherst next 10 years. No deleting.

Dwight focused on next page, Amherst's natural Resources. Jared re-doing this section.

Dwight focused on next page, Use and Development of lands in Amherst. Will pointed out this combined Commercial and Residential Use. Chris said he may be right. Chris will split table back out into a recreational and commercial. Chris said there were two sections that he combined but will split back out. Tom Q spoke about the decrease size of housing lots in specific residential zones. He wanted to make it more personal by talking about it as "in the zone I live in". Joe liked it. NIMBY=not in my back yard.

Chris suggested cutting from this chart the combined use and development heading. Tom Q brought up cluster development will come with increased open space and wanted to keep it. Joe and Tracie wanted to add Tom's point about how impacts in zone I live in Ex: size of housing lots in the zone I live in.

Jared said it is currently against the law to do snow motorized vehicles in Amherst. Not in public space. Ordinance against it. Joe suggested asking the question to see if people wanted to open

the discussion again. Chris, Joe, and Jared discussion that if add on that use is in conservation area then people may say no to it. If do not qualify conservation area then may say yes. Tom Q asked what is the relevance to residential land development and ATV, boating, fishing, swimming? Are they relevant? Chris said he will pull out to recreational. Joe said if public wants it but not on conservation land then town may look to acquire property for it or carve out areas that can be for that use. Dwight wanted to confirm if we want to keep ATV and snow mobiles? Joe said yes or it looks like we are trying not to open discussion. Chris asked if we have boating area in Amherst? Dwight said yes, Baboosic Lake. Chris and Tom wondered where we could increase if there are no other bodies of water? Joe said can open up roof-top boating. Dwight said there is no public launch at Baboosic Lake unless carry in a boat because lake area greater than 10 acres so town does not control the lake. Chris suggested changing to increase public access to motorized boating, fishing, swimming.

Tom Q asked how these are relevant to land use and development? With exception ATV and snowmobiles the others are offered. What are we looking to do with this information? Joe and Jared said it returns to the issue of connectivity and decisions about which properties to pursue and how to develop them. Chris said there are large horse farms on the Amherst/Milford line. He wanted to keep horse riding trails after discussion. Joe suggested deleting ice skating rink because we must delete something.

Tom Q questioned increasing mixed use? Nic stated that some residential can be in the commercial zone.

Jared suggested eliminating increase natural habitat for wildlife and nonhuman use. Chris wanted to clarify if nonhuman was like a dog park? Jared said this was not the original intent. Delete.

Increase safe cycling routes can be deleted because added safe routes. Covered.

Tom Q edit increase size of housing lots to include in the zone I live in. Chris, Tom Q, Jared, and Joe discussion about permit high residential density as a bonus for creation of affordable housing in the zone I live in. Final wording: permit high residential density on the area I live in to preserve rural area elsewhere. Dwight asked Nic for comments on these two. Nic stated the IIHO was voted out. She suggested broaden out to be just density question may be better. Tom Q suggested support high density I live in for certain reasons...what types of trade-offs? Jared said if high density housing developments then could explain statement, I support high density housing development in the area I live in for specific reasons.

Next section Chris will break down into two categories again...residential and commercial.

Next section on Amherst Rural Character, Heritage, and History. Chris cut a couple already. Will said demolition delay, metal detector deleted and that these will come out in theme breakout groups. Keep all. Will asked if the Historic District Commission was invited? Nic confirmed they are involved.

Next section Choice to Live in Amherst. Chris deleted a couple already. Jared wanted to add open space, conserve land, natural aesthetic, tree-lined streets captured. Open space, conserved lands, and natural aesthetic added. Tom Q wanted to review first what we are going for. Tom Q, Joe, and Will wanted to change to availability to purchase and rent related to availability of housing stock.

Nic said when reformat will need more space to write-in other (please specify) tabs.

Chris suggested getting rid of volunteer list. Dwight, Chris, and Joe agreed to get rid of volunteer activities section completely. Chris suggested if we find out where people volunteer their time we can reach those groups. He felt removed the invasive ones. Joe wanted to delete the table and both Tracie and Will agreed.

Next discussion about adding 2 questions: Are there things we as a town should be doing that we are not? Are there other important issues that we have not addressed? Group okay with adding these.

Dwight wanted to address Comments Section. Dwight suggested a change in the capture of personal information from we'd like /optional to we encourage it. Dwight wanted to add, ask to be on the mailing list for MP. Would appear as Your Name (optional but encourage), Email, Phone number (optional), and Would you consider volunteering to work on the Amherst MP Update?

Dwight concluded we are done with the survey for tonight.

Dwight said the survey is not ready yet so we will not have a survey ready to hand out next Tuesday on election day. No booth at the election. Dwight hoped to meet next week and present final draft of online survey version. Chris said if not have survey out perhaps have flyer available at election saying updating MP, be on lookout for the survey link. Joe said survey coming soon... Perhaps put up a poster board, not manned, Dwight has to be inside by law as BOS. Joe asked if Moderator could be asked if can put poster board inside building. Dwight said if it is not political there is some flexibility. He would need write-up then get it blown up to poster. Can do. Jared said print shop on 101 near Post Office does that with plasticized, corrugated material.

Dwight asked if people had read the Minutes. Due to the late hour approval of minutes was postponed to next meeting with group in agreement.

Dwight reported no old/new business.

Joe MOVED for meeting to be adjourned. Tom Q seconded.

Roll call vote to adjourn meeting: Tracie, Dwight, Jared, Joe, Will, Tom Q, Chris all responded affirmatively.

Meeting adjourned at 3 hours 32 minutes and 45 seconds. Approximately 10:33pm.

629

630

631

632 Respectfully submitted by Tracie Adams

633

634 Minutes approved: January 28, 2021

635

636

637