

July 19, 2021

APPROVED

1 In attendance: Dwight Brew, Tom Gauthier, Chris Yates, Tracie Adams, Joe Ilsley, and Tim
2 Kachmar.

3 Staff in attendance: Nic Strong – Community Development Director, Natasha Kypfer – Town
4 Planner, and Kristan Patenaude – Recording Secretary

5
6 **1. Roll Call to Order**

7 Dwight Brew called the meeting to order at 6:32pm.
8

9 **2. Update on Outreach and Engagement:**

10 **- Feedback related to the draft website**

11 **- Feedback on the flyer and draft language**

12 Steve Whitman, of Resilience Planning & Design, LLC, reviewed the draft flyer with the group.
13 The flyer looks to update the public on the process and also introduce them to the website.
14

15 In response to a question from Tim Kachmar, Steve Whitman explained that the updated
16 documents worked on by the groups will be available on the website. There can also be pop-ups
17 on the website that alert the public as to the first public forum date. There will also be digital
18 copies of this pop-up available that can be placed on the Town website and on social media.
19

20 In response to a question from Dwight Brew, Steve Whitman stated that the Committee was
21 given standard language that could be used in a press release and that could be used to notify
22 other boards and commissions in Town regarding the process.
23

24 Dwight Brew and Nic Strong agreed to work on sending these mailings to Town boards and
25 commissions.
26

27 Steve Whitman explained that an additional mailing will be sent in September with a forum date.
28 Giving the public multiple points of contact gives the knowledge that the Master Plan update is
29 being actively worked on.
30

31 The group discussed making sure that any updates are also sent to the Amherst School Board and
32 Souhegan Cooperative School Board.
33

34 Joe Ilsley suggested that information on forums and updates could be placed in front of the
35 public during Recreation Department events.
36

37 Steve Whitman explained that this information should also be shared with Department Heads.
38

39 Chris Yates suggested that the Town could create standard distribution lists, so that when new
40 information is ready to send out it can go straight to the right people.
41

42 **3. Existing Conditions Analysis:**

43 **-Review of Natural Resources Profile**

44 Zak Brohinsky joined the group via Zoom.

July 19, 2021

APPROVED

In response to a question from Chris Yates, Steve Whitman explained that only one of the profiles has identified goals because only one of the profiles previously had associated goals. Steve Whitman suggested that the Committee could use the public outreach process to come up with goals for the other profiles.

Zak Brohinsky explained that he does not only look within the boundaries of Amherst for this profile, but also looks at how Amherst sits with surrounding towns. He noted that Amherst falls into the “average” category in terms of a data perspective in comparison to other towns. Amherst falls in between surrounding towns in terms of percentage of conserved land, percentage of forested land, and percentage of Tier 1 habitat conserved. He noted that there seems to be a special pattern in Town, with northern areas being less developed, and the southern section of Town being more developed, in general.

Zak Brohinsky stated that Amherst has significant blocks of unfragmented area, with the larger blocks connecting vital, but common, habitats, and the smaller blocks holding rarer types of habitats. The question is what Amherst’s natural resources goals are. There are approximately 1,200 acres of existing agricultural land in Town, 2/3 of which is forested.

Joe Ilsley suggested that some of the profiles bring forward action items under key findings in order to see if Department Heads can review and vet them as achievable items that are synergistic with other goals.

Zak Brohinsky reviewed some of the comments made by Dwight Brew on the profile.

Zak Brohinsky explained that 65% of the conserved land in Amherst is owned by the Town, and 32% is owned by nearby municipalities.

In response to a question from Dwight Brew, Nic Strong suggested that this data could be clarified using data from the Assessor’s Department. Zak Brohinsky stated that the data used is publicly available through the State and UNH Conservation Land data. He will also reach out to NRPC to see if this information coincides with their most recent data.

Steve Whitman stated that the data could also be run by ACC Vice Chair, Jared Hardner.

Joe Ilsley suggested that there also be information included regarding how much land from surrounding municipalities is owned by Amherst.

-Review of Water Resources Profile

Zak Brohinsky explained that there are 73 miles of streams in Amherst, with 6 miles of that being the Souhegan River, a 5th ordered stream. He noted that Amherst has a responsibility to manage those miles. While vernal pools are hard to track, 86% of the wetlands in Town could be associated with vernal pools. There is also a highly productive aquifer beneath Amherst. 45% of the land on top of this aquifer has been developed. There are a small number of upstream sites on the Souhegan that have the potential to impact Amherst as contamination sites.

July 19, 2021

APPROVED

In response to a question from Joe Ilsley, Steve Whitman stated that the source documents for this profile will be hyperlinked through the Town and Master Plan website.

Nic Strong suggested that the profile also include mention of the recently revised Stormwater Regulations, Amherst's participation in the MS4 permitting process, the DPW's recent changes to use of sand and salt, agricultural pollution, and the concern from townspeople in the face of development proposals to the groundwater and their wells.

-Review of Transportation Profile

Steve Whitman noted that the Town's Multimodal Master Plan is a great document that lays out a very solid plan with a clear vision. He noted that more information is needed on the five bridges in Town that are red listed. He suggested that one of the goals that might come from this process is a Complete Streets policy for the Town. He would also recommend that this policy might, in fact, become a Complete and Green Streets policy. He will sit down to discuss items with the DPW and Town staff.

The group discussed incoming developments and infrastructure improvements as part of the Master Plan.

In response to a question from Steve Whitman, Nic Strong stated that the regulations have not yet been revised to point to the recommendations made in the Multimodal Master Plan.

Nic Strong pointed out a few edits to the profile including mentioning more than just Route 101 in the existing transportation infrastructure section, that there is a bus service through Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative, that the Subdivision Regulations contain classifications for streets based on trips per day to assign different right-of-way and pavement widths, etc., that the Stormwater Regulations apply to construction or reconstruction of roads, the sand and salt usage from the DPW, some kind of link to economic development in terms community character along certain corridors and aesthetics and access management.

-Review of Historic and Cultural Profile

The group reviewed the profile. Steve Whitman noted that this profile was with Will Ludt for him and the Heritage Commission to review and comment on. Dwight Brew noted that he would like the profile to start with a top-level view and then delve deeper. Steve Whitman stated that a refined version of this profile will be brought back to the group at the next meeting, including some GIS data.

There was discussion regarding posting the draft copies of these documents on the websites. It was noted that once the Committee had taken a pass through the profiles and edits were made based on those comments, the documents could be posted to the website, noted as drafts, with the revision dates included. It was also noted that these were works in progress and could be further updated in the future.

July 19, 2021

APPROVED

-Existing Conditions Analysis Next Steps

Steve Whitman noted that they were working on Recreation and Existing Land Use and that he also would like to let the Department Heads know that they would be contacted with regard to Community Facilities and Utilities.

4. Update on Build Out Analysis - Review proposal from NRPC in response to RFP

Nic Strong explained that the build out analysis was put out to bid and NRPC was the only bidder. This item will next go to the Board of Selectmen for their approval of the contract, if the Committee is in favor of it.

Joe Ilsley moved that the Master Plan Steering Committee recommend that the Board of Selectmen approve NRPC's build out analysis proposal. Seconded by Tim Kachmar.

Voting: 6-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

5. Old/New Business

a. Approval of minutes of 8/17/20; 9/11/20; 9/24/20; 11/5/20; 1/28/21; 3/29/21; 3/30/21; 4/5/21; 4/22/21; 5/17/21; 6/21/21

Joe Ilsley moved to approve the meeting minutes of August 17, 2020, as presented.

Seconded by Tracie Adams.

Voting: 6-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

Joe Ilsley moved to approve the meeting minutes of September 11, 2020, as presented. Seconded by Tim Kachmar.

Voting: 6-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

Joe Ilsley moved to approve the meeting minutes of September 24, 2020, as presented. Seconded by Chris Yates.

Voting: 6-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

Joe Ilsley moved to approve the meeting minutes of November 5, 2020, as presented.

Seconded by Tim Kachmar.

Voting: 6-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

Tim Kachmar moved to approve the meeting minutes of January 28, 2021, as presented. Seconded by Tom Gauthier.

Voting: 6-0-1; motion carried [J. Ilsley abstaining].

Tim Kachmar moved to approve the meeting minutes of March 29, 2021, as presented. Seconded by Chris Yates.

Voting: 3-0-3; motion carried [J. Ilsley; T. Gauthier; T. Adams abstaining].

July 19, 2021

APPROVED

**Tim Kachmar moved to approve the meeting minutes of March 30, 2021, as presented. Seconded by Tracie Adams.
Voting: 5-0-1; motion carried [T. Gauthier abstaining].**

**Joe Ilsley moved to approve the meeting minutes of April 5, 2021, as presented. Seconded by Chris Yates.
Voting: 5-0-1; motion carried [T. Gauthier abstaining].**

**Joe Ilsley moved to approve the meeting minutes of April 22, 2021, as presented. Seconded by Tracie Adams.
Voting: 4-0-2; motion carried [T. Kachmar; T. Gauthier abstaining].**

**Tracie Adams moved to approve the meeting minutes of May 17, 2021, as presented. Seconded by Tim Kachmar.
Voting: 4-0-2; motion carried [J. Ilsley; C. Yates abstaining].**

**Tracie Adams moved to approve the meeting minutes of June 21, 2021, as presented. Seconded by Tom Gauthier.
Voting: 5-0-1; motion carried [J. Ilsley abstaining].**

Joe Ilsley noted that he hopes the action items for each profile will be evaluated in terms of synergy and possible conflicts. He also noted that he often has conflicts with Monday evening meetings. Dwight Brew stated that staff could look into potential different nights that would work with the Town calendar and the committee.

**Chris Yates moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:06pm PM. Joe Ilsley seconded.
Voting: 6-0-0; motion carried unanimously.**

*Respectfully submitted,
Kristan Patenaude*

Minutes approved: August 24, 2021