

**MINUTES**

**PLANNING BOARD  
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**CITY HALL, MUNICIPAL COMPLEX, 1 JUNKINS AVENUE**

**6:00 P.M.**

**JANUARY 26, 2017**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Elizabeth Moreau, Vice Chairman; Rebecca Perkins, City Council Representative; Nancy Colbert-Puff, Deputy City Manager; David Moore, Assistant City Manager; Colby Gamester; Dexter Legg; and Jeffrey Kisiel, Alternate; and Jane Begala, Alternate

**ALSO PRESENT:** Rick Taintor, Planning Director; Jessa Berna, Planner I

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** John Ricci, Chairman; Jay Leduc; Jody Record

.....

**I. WORK SESSION**

A. Review Draft Master Plan.

Ms. Berna provided a brief background and overview of the Master Plan planning process, themes, focus areas, implementation, statutory requirements, and forward action plan. Mr. Taintor added that the draft document is available online and in the City Hall.

Mr. Legg felt that the document is readable, approachable, and user friendly. He asked whether necessary zoning ordinance changes that contribute to the Master Plan have been identified. Mr. Taintor replied that there still remain changes in the ordinance sensitive to neighborhood contexts. That process would likely begin in Quarter 3 in priority order based on availability of resources and sense of urgency.

Ms. Begala estimated around 300 community members were engaged in the planning process. She asked for a clearer identification of the budgetary implications imposed by the Master Plan given the low expected population growth over the next few decades. Mr. Taintor explained that the Plan is initially suggestive in nature while definitive budgetary implications are later evaluated as each action step is implemented. He added that a list of items for zoning improvements would be developed based on a combination of the needs identified in the existing ordinance and Master Plan. Ms. Berna mentioned that the Implementation Plan is an iterative, living document to be used over the next decade.

Ms. Begala emphasized the importance of planning related to water resource usage and protection. Vice Chairman Moreau noted the Master Plan serves as an evaluation tool in each future development application.

Councilor Perkins asked for additional insight that explains how all the Departments integrate the priorities together. Ms. Colbert Puff noted that portions of the Implementation Plan have already begun implementation based on the community needs and urgency of those needs. It is expected to change over time in response to fluctuations in demands and resource availability.

Mr. Legg suggested an annual report be provided by the Board to City Council that would monitor the progress of implementation.

Mr. Moore felt an effective approach was the use of Focus Areas, the geographic areas within the City with common characteristics, objectives, and challenges. He noted an implementation strategy included in the Plan is to improve the parks and recreational connections.

Ms. Begala encouraged any and all efforts to sustain the public participation and engagement level. Councilor Perkins and Ms. Begala mentioned ways to continue gathering feedback such as surveying. Mr. Moore noted the Department of Public Works has used online surveying to receive issue notifications and it may be a successful procedure in other departments. Vice Chairman Moreau mentioned that the February 16, 2017 public hearing may be an opportunity to invite feedback on public engagement.

An unnamed individual encouraged the Board to postpone voting until after the public hearing. Vice Chairman Moreau replied that given the level of public involvement had, it would be unlikely that substantive comments would require postponing the vote. Mr. Moore noted that comments related to specific phrasing and terms could be submitted directly to staff. Mr. Taintor noted comments are not limited to the public hearing and Mr. Legg encouraged public comments focused on fundamental aspects of the Plan.

Councilor Perkins provided feedback to specific sections related to labor constraints, flexible zoning, and mixed uses. Mr. Taintor clarified the Focus Areas and existing conditions labeled on the map. Councilor Perkins asked whether it is identified in the Plan to streamline the inspection process. Mr. Taintor replied that it is being considered, but the best approach has yet to be identified.

.....  
**II. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn at 6:58 pm was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

.....  
Respectfully Submitted,

Marissa Day  
Acting Secretary for the Planning Board

These minutes were approved at the Planning Board meeting on February 16, 2017.