

**CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**JOINT PUBLIC WORKSHOP
PLANNING BOARD/
PLANNING, LICENSES, AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, February 8, 2016

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

Planning Board Members Present

Gary Spykman, Chair Spykman
Nathaniel Stout
Christine Weeks
Andrew Bohannon
Mayor Kendall Lane
Douglas Barrett
James Duffy, Alternate

Planning Board Members Not Present

Councilor George Hansel
Pamela Russell Slack
Tammy Adams, Alternate

**Planning, Licenses and Development
Committee Members Present**

Councilor David Richards, Chairman
Councilor Philip Jones
Councilor Robert Sutherland

**Planning, Licenses and Development
Committee Members Not Present**

Councilor Bettina Chadbourne
Councilor George Hansel

Staff Present

Rhett Lamb, Planning Director
Michele Chalice, Planner
Tara Kessler, Planner

1. Roll Call

Chair Richards called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and a roll call was taken.

2. November 9, 2015 and January 11, 2016 meeting minutes

November 9, 2015

Douglas Barrett offered the following correction - Page 2 of 20, under item 2, change Mr. Douglas to Mr. Barrett.

Nathaniel Stout offered the following correction. Bottom of page 10, to read as "Attract *and* recruit..."

A motion was made by Christine Weeks that the Joint Committee accept the November 9, 2015 and January 11, 2016 meeting minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Douglas Barrett and was unanimously approved.

3. Prioritization of Comprehensive Master Plan Implementation Strategies

Planner Tara Kessler and Planner Michele Chalice addressed the Joint Committee. Ms. Kessler stated this is a continuation of a discussion from January regarding Master Plan implementation strategies. She reminded the Committee that there was a handout circulated at last month's meeting which outlined the various strategies outlined in the Master Plan and organized them by six separate goal areas. She indicated for this month's meeting the Committee was asked to further reflect on those strategies and come back with the Committee's most important priority strategies the community should consider. Ms. Kessler noted there were four criteria the Committee was asked to use to determine these strategies and they are as follows:

- has the strategy been completed or is in the process of being completed
- does the strategy address more than one goal or topic area
- is this strategy feasible with consideration for available resources

- is the strategy timely in relation to community needs

Ms. Chalice explained how the exercise was going to take place. The Committee was asked to pick their top three favorites overall.

Chair Spykman noted according to the second strategy the Committee was asked to use, the Committee should not be constrained as to what topic area to choose. If it covers more than one, staff would find a way to incorporate that item into one of the topic areas.

Councilor Sutherland stated he had a question about “provide quality housing” element and suggested perhaps “facilitate” would be a better term as he did not feel it was the City’s charge to provide housing. He felt the City could perhaps look to the real estate community to assist with this. Ms. Chalice felt this may have been a poor choice of words on the part of staff as it is not the intention of the City to provide housing. Ms. Chalice asked the Committee whether they would have any objection to changing the wording to facilitate. Chair Spykman stated because this is Councilor Sutherland’s strategy he could always change the wording. Councilor Sutherland proposed the following language “*facilitate a mix of housing choice options that meet the needs of young professionals ...*”

The following are the strategies the Committee outlined:

Transportation:

Develop effective way-finding

Focus on Keene as an intermodal transportation hub

Mr. Bohannon explained the term “way-finding” as signage for instance on the trail system or in the downtown which could assist people who come to Keene from out of town.

Mayor Lane emphasized making Keene a transportation hub.

Housing:

Facilitate mix of housing choice options

Develop a strategy to redevelop existing buildings into space for housing and mixed uses.

Facilitate infill development

Establish high standards of sustainable design features for new or rehabilitate residential uses.

Facilitate more options for workforce housing.

Mr. Barrett for his housing strategy stated he understands that young professionals and executives were called out in the Master Plan and it was identified as a gap in housing but felt it was important to go back to the Master Plan where it talks about providing quality and safe housing for all sectors of Keene’s demographics.

Mayor Lane stated if the City doesn’t create attractive workforce housing the City is not going to get employees to stay here which jeopardizes the City to be able to retain companies. He felt the east side Keene has the potential to create workforce housing.

Natural Environment:

Enhance further the natural environment and assets

Devise incentives to promote green buildings

Reduce residential carbon footprint

Actively pursue the integration of renewable energy

Explore opportunities for making Keene a zero-waste community

Pursue funding for the development of a community-wide weatherization program

Balanced Growth and Infrastructure:

Improve broadband
Develop higher design standards for green infrastructure
Develop a City-wide multipronged strategy to address stormwater management and flooding
Grow and enhance an already impressive Capital Improvement Program

Community Vitality:

Make better use of existing facilities
Increase academic and social competence through cooperation between entities
Identify strategies to retain younger individuals (e.g. millennials) in the community
Support the Keene Public Library at becoming a 21st century facility (to target populations that are underserved)
Enhance communication and collaboration among social service providers

Balanced Economy:

Encourage economic development
Set fiscal goals to develop an attractive economic environment for development
Collaboration with business owners and developers to ensure the Master Plan is viable
Don't equate growth and prosperity

The Committee was asked to vote on the topic areas next using colored “dots” placed next to the strategies of choice.

Ms. Kessler stated staff will take the results and for the next meeting further clarify, discuss and narrow those strategy areas. Mayor Lane asked once the report has been formulated whether there was further opportunity to discuss topic areas that did not get as many votes. He stated he did not want to disregard some of these topic areas, for example stormwater management did not get as many votes. Ms. Kessler stated nothing is set in stone and this can be addressed in a future meeting.

Mr. Duffy asked what specifically the Joint Committee would be doing with this in the future. He also noted the Committee is going to be talking about the inter-relationships between these areas and asked whether this is something the Committee is going to be on its own discussing or whether staff will point out those relationships. Ms. Kessler stated staff was planning on reporting back on the issue of inter-relationships but it would also come up during conversation as well. As far as the future – this is a time to identify through the Committee’s lenses what the priorities are for the community and different Boards. There are implementation strategies outlined in the Master Plan and this exercise will help narrow that further.

4. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Krishni Pahl,
Minute Taker
Reviewed by Rhett Lamb, Planning Director