

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, June 17, 2024**

**6:00 PM**

**Council Chamber,  
City Hall**

**Members Present:**

Harold Farrington, Chair  
Alex Henkel, Vice Chair  
Councilor Michael Remy  
Cody Morrison (via Teams)  
Joshua Meehan  
Joseph Perras (via Teams; arrived at 6:11 PM)  
Juliana Bergeron  
Joe Walier  
Kenneth Kost, Alternate (Voting)  
Councilor Philip Jones, Alternate (Voting)  
Mayor Jay Kahn, Alternate (Voting)

**Staff Present:**

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner  
Evan Clements, Planner  
Andy Bohannon, Deputy City Manager

**Members Not Present:**

Elizabeth Wood  
Emily Lavigne-Bernier  
Alexander Von Plinksy, IV  
Leatrice Oram  
Councilor Catherine Workman, Alternate

**1) Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair Farrington called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM and Ms. Brunner called roll.

Project consultants were present: David Beurle (Future IQ), Heather Branigin (Future IQ; via Teams), and Courtney Powell (WGI; via Teams).

**2) Minutes of the Previous Meeting – May 7, 2024**

A motion by Mr. Meehan to adopt the May 7, 2024 minutes was duly seconded by Mr. Walier. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

**3) Think Tank Workshop Overview**

Chair Farrington welcomed Mr. Beurle, who noted that materials from the think tank (May 30–31) were available on the project website: [www.KeeneMasterPlan.com](http://www.KeeneMasterPlan.com).

Mr. Beurle referred to the project schedule and noted that we are now at the end of Step 2 of the first phase of the project. This step was heavy on community outreach and included the first community survey, key stakeholder interviews, the Snapshot report, the 2-day think tank workshop, and then later this week and throughout the summer there will be visioning sessions. By the end of this step, we should have a clear idea of what the vision is that people have for the community, how tightly aligned people are with that vision, and a good understanding of the desired trajectory and velocity of change. Step 3 will begin in August when he will be back in Keene for a roundtable at the August Steering Committee meeting. This will be a workshop-style meeting to work on the strategic pillars (key themes). The transition from the visioning phase to the more technical phase of the Master Plan will happen at a Future Summit on October 5.

Mr. Beurle gave an overview of the visioning sessions scheduled for the week. He said there are eight sessions in different forms that are scheduled. At each session, they will recap the think tank outcomes, explore the preferred future (building on and validating the think tank results), identify key desired outcomes and objectives, and then participants will be asked to complete a heat map survey.

Next, Mr. Beurle gave an overview of the think tank. The think tank had a great turnout (~ 60 participants) and Mr. Beurle thought the results pointed to the community's appetite for change. He said the goal of the think tank was accomplished: an opportunity for creative, deep thinking about the future (*not* making a decision, but rather mapping out what the future could look like). The group considered future trends and developed a set of future scenarios to consider (would be shared with the community the week of this meeting for feedback through the end of July). The framing for the think tank was to explore the future (plausible different future scenarios), ask the hard questions (what if things don't turn out as we hope?), and think creatively with the understanding that the outcome could be a new view of the future.

Mr. Perras arrived.

#### **4) Community Survey Results & Data Visualization**

Mr. Beurle reported that in total, 648 people completed the project survey. The survey was open longer than planned to solicit more feedback. Mr. Beurle described the survey and data collected and showed some of the charts from the online data visualization. Survey questions (not verbatim) included:

- How satisfied people feel about living and working in Keene, plotted against opportunity to grow and thrive in personal life and/or work (most people in upper right corner, which is a good sign).
- Growth opportunities: career, family, etc.?
  - Most respondents were satisfied.

- How does Keene fit in the broader fabric of NH and New England?
  - Many respondents identified the importance of collectivity in the region.
  - Many participants said Keene has a role to play in the future of NH.
  - Mr. Beurle noted that this is an indicator that the Master Plan should not be an insular document that is only inward looking, but rather should think about the role the community plays in the broader context of New Hampshire and the region.
- From here, the data gets less clear (there is less alignment among respondents). For example, one question asked “How do you feel about the current direction of Keene? And plotted that against the speed of change, in other words, Is it moving too slowly or quickly?”
  - A cluster of responses were in the middle, which could mean “I don’t know” or “it’s okay,” the rest of the data was spread across the possible responses. To him it looks like responses are all over the map.

Mr. Beurle noted that the consultants were still analyzing all of this data, but everyone was welcome to explore the data visualizations on the project portal. Early assessments showed: little difference in the spread of data by age group, no clear consensus about how the community sees its future unfolding (the visioning part of this process could help provide some certainty about a future direction), and no overwhelming consensus on Keene’s current direction and ability to adapt (this master planning process could help the community to envision a future direction and adaptability). Throughout the engagement efforts, community members will be asked to identify their future vision that will help the community to adapt.

Next, Mr. Beurle gave an overview of some of the highlights of the Snapshot report. The AARP Livability Index was used to compare Keene to median U.S. neighborhoods. Keene was rated “outstanding” or higher for transportation, likely because everyone lives close to their destinations. Mayor Kahn noted that for Health, Keene has a score of 50 – what does that mean? Mr. Beurle responded that for each of these metrics there is subtext, for example health includes wellness, access to healthcare, those types of items. He said they can break that out.

The data in the Snapshot report included the forecast for population growth out to 2040 (compared to 2020 baseline). Based on modeling, Keene could experience population roll over because the population is aging and population growth is relatively low; thus, stagnation or decline are predicted and is a real possibility. However, at the think tank they discussed other data including macro trends and the cumulative impact of climate change and long-term GDP impact. This data shows that the country/world is on a tipping point of changing migration patterns, e.g., people moving south to north and coast to inland.

Regarding the population, Mayor Kahn said it appeared to him that growth over the next twenty years would be stagnant; it doesn’t show population going below the 2020 baseline. Although it goes up in the next five years, we don’t sustain that growth. Mr. Beurle replied that is correct. He noted that if you look at the population data against the background of population growth

predicted for the rest of the state, our relative growth is falling behind. Yet, in an absolute sense, Keene is expected to grow slightly by 2030, but would be largely the same in 2040 because of population loss, low birth rates, and an aging population. Even though the population in 2040 would be the same as 2020 in terms of numbers, the age profile and makeup will be different. Does Keene have the economic engine to change this population outlook? The consultants needed more time to understand the full implication of this data. He said that this slide deck is on the project portal, and they are also producing a video that will show some of this.

Next, Mr. Beurle discussed what think tank participants identified as key drivers shaping the future of Keene. Participants did a group brainstorming exercise and came up with twenty drivers, then ranked them based on importance with respect to social and economic health as well as the built and natural environment:

1. Smarter land use
2. Changing job landscape
3. Future of higher education
4. Local business character and control
5. Geographic location
6. Climate resilience and buffering
7. Climate refugees
8. Sense of community and collaboration
9. Aging population
10. Lack of transit options
11. Cost and availability of energy
12. Political climate refugees
13. Locally sourced food production
14. Aging infrastructure
15. Greater availability of housing
16. Technology allowing remote work
17. Local economic impact of downtown project
18. Access to healthcare
19. Importance of arts and culture
20. Electrification through renewables

The key drivers could be used to develop a “future impact score.” From these 20 key drivers, macro themes were identified with significant influence on the future of Keene: (1) community evolution (access to healthcare, sense of community and collaboration, changing job landscape, aging population, future of higher education in Keene) and (2) development trajectory (availability of housing, aging infrastructure, smarter land use in Keene). This gave the consultants a framework for a future scenario matrix. On one end of the spectrum, they looked at what would happen if we “stay the course” on community evolution or, on the other end, lean into collaboration to adopt. In addition, they looked at what would happen if the city is very conservative/measured in its investments versus aggressive about building new housing, transportation, utilities, etc. This led to four plausible scenarios.

Participants considered what would happen if Keene stayed on its current course, sustaining the existing fabric and experiences. Participants discussed Keene’s “secret power,” which is collaboration for adaptation. The participants also considered what would happen if Keene focused on grabbing new opportunities and seizing the moment. The consultants shared a handout displaying the scenario matrix of these various features and their implications. For example, one scenario was called “growing older, growing smarter,” meaning a more traditional approach with some investments in innovative solutions, but with implications for environmental sustainability and fixed resident incomes.

In summary, the think tank participants considered future-splitting themes based on clusters of key drivers:

- Community evolution:
  - Access to healthcare
  - Sense of community and collaboration
  - Changing job landscape
  - Aging population
  - Future of higher education in Keene
- Development trajectory:
  - Greater availability of housing
  - Aging infrastructure
  - Smarter land use in Keene

The consultants mapped the very different potential outcomes of these themes, which will be reviewed with participants of the community visioning sessions.

All of this data led the consultants to identify a plausible 2040 scenario matrix, based on the factors of community evolution and development trajectory. This resulted in four possible scenarios:

- Scenario A: Growing Older, Growing Smarter
  - This scenario forecasts a future where Keene invests heavily in its traditional community amenities while at the same time aggressively incorporating smart technologies and environmental sustainability into its development trajectory. Public investment is focused primarily on familiar businesses and economic drivers of education, manufacturing, and services. Keene is attractive to retirees but more difficult for young families to afford.
  - Future Implications:
    - A traditional approach to community amenities and economic drivers.
    - The population ages and healthcare needs increase.
    - Environmental sustainability is a priority.
    - Investment in innovative transit solutions, hard infrastructure, and smart technologies.
    - Cost of living increases put pressure on fixed-income residents and youth.

- Scenario B: Innovative and Intentional Change
  - This scenario forecasts a future where the community actively and intentionally explores new ways to build opportunities that position the community as environmentally sustainable, innovative, and forward-looking. The community seizes the moment to invest in future-oriented infrastructure that is climate resilient and sustainable while relying on collaborative approaches to help drive local solutions.
  - Future implications:
    - The community is welcoming to newcomers and immigrants, with a reputation of inclusivity and collaboration.
    - Aggressive investment in future-oriented infrastructure prepares the community to deal with climate change.
    - Housing, utilities, and transportation options are expanded.
    - Local food production is encouraged and becomes a driver of the local economy.
    - Accessibility to food, housing, and transportation becomes equitable.
  
- Scenario C: Thoughtful Community-Based Innovations
  - This scenario forecasts a future where the community strives to create deeply collaborative and inclusive approaches to local issues while at the same time applying a steady and considered approach to development in the City. Keene establishes itself as a welcoming place with a diversity of restaurants and shops. Development is market-driven and limited investment in infrastructure hinders business attraction and innovation.
  - Future implications:
    - The community builds on its history of collaboration to form new partnerships and alliances especially in the areas of education and local food production.
    - There is a strong focus on new areas such as the bio-sciences, renewable energies, and local food systems.
    - Investment in infrastructure is measured and cost-conscious causing lost opportunities to attract new business and industry.
    - Market forces are allowed to dictate decision-making.
    - Housing availability remains constrained.
  
- Scenario D: Keep on Keeping on
  - This scenario forecasts a future where the community stays the course in its strong support for traditional amenities and services and its overall approach to development is steady and considered. The City maintains its green space and rural character. Development in Keene is market-driven, and little is done to build climate resiliency. Keene becomes time capsule of traditional values and an attractive retirement community.

- Future implications:
  - Development approach is focused on “tried and tested” solutions with carefully considered infrastructure investment.
  - There is a lack of regional and collaborative approach.
  - Transportation options and mobility are limited.
  - Traditional values predominate and the area becomes attractive to retirees.
  - There is a lack of affordable housing and housing options.
  - An aging population increases healthcare needs in the area.

Mr. Beurle said these results showed that the community did not have a huge appetite for dramatic change – the least preferred future clips out the corners of the matrix. Interestingly though, the preferred future was most aligned with “innovative and intentional change.” This would involve learning to collaborate more, being more intentional about adaptation, and embracing new economic dimensions. How could the City seize the moment from a development trajectory when it comes with investment and risk? All of this engagement and data help to develop the community vision. Mr. Beurle thought the think tank goal was accomplished by exploring hard questions and thinking creatively about the future. Next, the vision would be tested with the community, using the same scenario matrix.

Mayor Kahn wanted to hear from his fellow Committee members on what they thought about what we just heard. Mayor Kahn began, discussing the think tank group’s identified aspirations. He thought the identification of community collaboration was important as Keene prides itself on this strength and any adaptation would be possible because of this highly collaborative environment. He thought this was captured well in the aspirational “seize the moment” future scenario, which he thought needed to be tempered with more reality, like how to sustain the downtown as a centerpiece. Biotech is a great idea, but will that really be a strength for use by 2040? That seems like a stretch. The Mayor thought that within the microcosm of NH, Keene could be a standout in 2040, but he questioned whether there would be State investment and whether Keene could invest in seizing the moment.

Chair Farrington agreed about needing to temper the aspirational data. Mr. Beurle said it was a good point, noting how much the City could accomplish in the next 15 years. He thought the tempering Mayor Kahn mentioned had occurred to some extent in the data already; survey respondents chose options indicating a consensus around the middle of Scenario B (not the corner which would be the extreme version of it). In other responses, participants indicated that some of the extremes of the future scenarios presented would be going too far (“clipping out the corners”), so it was a natural tempering. The next steps of this process would involve mapping out what would be required to attain the aspirational vision, and focusing on the reality of the economic development, policies, and population required to attain the aspiration. Mr. Beurle said that over the next 8–12 months, these aspirations would be refined significantly.

Councilor Jones asked whether the macro vs. micro trends referred to time lapse or subject matter. Mr. Beurle said macro was the big picture context of what is happening nationally/globally (e.g., demographics, social values, climate change, etc.). He noted this was a

quick scan and was by no means comprehensive – they only had an hour to go over these. The “micro” trends (local) was refined into the community snapshot and micro focus on how people feel about what is happening in Keene specifically. Councilor Jones also referred to the axes on the graphs that Mr. Beurle presented (available on project website), noting that they were infinite, so he asked if there was consideration of when Keene will need to repeat this process 10–20 years from now. Mr. Beurle said it was a good question, noting that they might evolve, and he suggested keeping an eye on it because the axes were built from identifying the highest ranked key drivers, which could shift over time. He encourages all municipalities that take this approach to review this data every few years to determine whether the assumptions when the key drivers were developed still apply. Still, Mr. Beurle thought the axes were stable as core drivers for Keene’s foreseeable future and provided traction for planning.

Mr. Kost was happy to see that most think tank participants identified a dynamic vision for Keene (top right on matrix). He was interested to see how the broader community would react. The matrix is fairly abstract, but he was pleased that the 20 key drivers were relatively specific and he did not want to lose track of them (especially the scatter plot) as this process transitions into more of a planning phase. He added that this change over time would be incremental, and he expected to see short-term, mid-term, and long-term action steps to realistically accomplish some of these aspirations. Mr. Beurle agreed, noting that the process was in the early stages of visioning, and he suggested reviewing some of the interesting data on the community range, which showed that participants were thinking about the best way for Keene to make it into the future. He felt that a vision is inherently abstract, and during the visioning stage he feels its important to let people dream a little and voice their aspirations.

Councilor Remy would have been concerned when looking at the population chart if there was significant data favoring “stay the course” after seeing the downward curve. To the Mayor’s point, if you look at the population projection out to 2040 it doesn’t dip down below where we are now, but if you go out another five years, it would. And it would probably get steeper in that direction which is the scary part. He hoped to see the public align on collaborating to adapt vs. staying the course.

Vice Chair Henkel said that during the think tank, he facilitated the group reviewing Scenario B: Innovative and Intentional Change. He said it was interesting because many responses were aspirational, but there were good conversations about what the City would have to coordinate in tandem with others to achieve various goals. Many negative tradeoffs were identified if things don’t align, and he was unsure they were all reported out to the larger group, so he suggested soliciting additional feedback to capture those perspectives. What would have to go right together to reach this vision? If that doesn’t occur, what would be the impact? Mr. Beurle said that if this data holds, it will provide a good sense of these factors, which is what he would focus on during the August brainstorming workshop with the Committee.

Chair Farrington attended the think tank, and he was not surprised by the aspirational outcome. Still, he echoed Mayor Kahn’s suggestion of practicality. The Chair questioned what it would cost to achieve some of these aspirations, and to what extent a municipal government would be



able to achieve some of these things (what are our practical levers?). So, like his colleagues, Chair Farrington suggested a focus on a collaborative community. Mr. Beurle agreed and said that healthy skepticism is welcome as it puts realistic boundaries around the aspirations.

Mr. Meehan said the Committee's job is to respond to this community feedback (i.e., how will the Committee listen and help) and generate a plan that respects the community's desires. Mr. Beurle agreed, explaining that mathematically, there were 100 think tank choices and almost everyone was within one degree, indicating a tight concentration of perspectives and allowing some clarity to emerge from the data to guide actions. Mr. Meehan added that at this Steering Committee's first meeting, there was a focus on being very intentional to capture the voices of those who are not a part of this process. He wanted to ensure the consultants, City staff, and Committee remain very thoughtful in capturing all perspectives.

Ms. Bergeron said that she might have expected more responses on the "stay the course" side of the graph. For example, Keene had a goal to be the healthiest community in 2020, but then a significant drug issue developed in addition to Covid. Additionally, Cheshire County has the oldest population in NH, and she said there would be serious population declines without attracting younger people to the community. Ms. Bergeron added that she thinks Keene's greatest strength is willingness to collaborate. For example, the whole community came together to develop solutions when enrollment declined at Keene State College. She was pleased to see where people ended up on the future scenario matrix. She agreed that the community should work to bring more voices to the table as this progresses.

Mr. Walier agreed with most of his colleagues' comments, particularly on the topic of collaboration. However, he asked who the City should be collaborating with. Mr. Beurle referred to Mr. Meehan's comments about taking all of this community feedback and developing collaborations to solve challenges. He agreed that the think tank participants also emphasized the need for Keene to leverage its ability to collaborate. Mr. Walier asked if that meant bringing in partners from outside of Keene. Mr. Beurle said it could. At the macro scale, he said Keene is very close to a strong innovation cluster in North America, radiating out from around Boston, that could present collaboration opportunities. He referenced even more opportunities globally, like philanthropy. It's permission to think creatively, if this data holds up. Mr. Walier agreed with the need to share this information. Mr. Beurle reiterated that the data demonstrated that the community has an appetite for change, not the status quo.

Dr. Perras said he found the demographics most daunting. He said hospitals are like the canary in the coal mine because they really feel the pain when community demographics change. About 70% of people walking through Cheshire Medical Center's doors are on Medicare or Medicaid, a scenario that does not lead to a vibrant, healthy, and growing healthcare system. Having only been in Keene for 10 months, Dr. Perras observed large employers desperate for more workers inhibited by housing costs and availability. He thought a large focus of future planning would have to be about housing; he could not envision shifting demographics without a substantial investment in infrastructure needed for denser and more affordable housing. This would require

directed focus and commitment to see it through (we don't need five moonshots – we need one or two). He mentioned similarly sized model communities that are growing and thriving with people moving in but reiterated the challenges of Cheshire County and NH demographics. Dr. Perras also wondered about resistance in the community when changes start happening, like feedback on the downtown project. Still, he thinks Keene needs to be open to more significant, disruptive changes.

Mr. Morrison was encouraged to see an appetite for change in the data. He noted that on occasion, members of the public use opportunities like the think tank or survey to air their grievances and he did not feel that was the case for this project. With a career in economic development, Mr. Morrison remains curious about what keeps people wanting to seize the moment and collaborate to adapt. He noted that as plans like this progress, there are opportunities for civic engagement; for example, is there a housing project that people want to see that would enhance the community? For example, a college student might be excited to see an affordable shopping option like Five Below, while others might be enthusiastic about a nearby Fortune 500 company. As someone who witnesses a lot of great work in the community behind the scenes, Mr. Morrison said it is easy for him to remain focused on seizing the moment and collaborating to adapt. Still, he wonders where the missing link is. There is clear optimism about the future of Keene, so he thinks the community has a good starting point to bolster collaborations and set out to achieve what we intended throughout this planning process.

Mr. Kost said he felt a sense of urgency with all of the focus on demographics and an aging population. Keene needs to attract young families to work in businesses. An aging population has to take care of itself and its community. Mr. Kost cited other older towns hollowed out by population declines; some were able to turn that trend around. Moving forward in developing this Master Plan, he hopes to maintain focus on mitigating this challenge. The rest of New Hampshire is projected to grow, so we should be able to take advantage of that.

Mr. Beurle said that if this data holds, and a think tank usually represents enough of a cross section of the community to hold up, so if the data holds, he agreed with Dr. Perras' emphasis on determining how big the challenge is, the sense of urgency, and the focus areas to mitigate the challenges; this will be a focus at the August meeting (what our "moonshots" should be). Mr. Beurle agreed with Dr. Perras' points about looking at other communities as examples of how to adapt the economy to attract young people. He gave some examples of other smaller cities and towns that weathered change by being strategic and leaning into things like outdoor recreation opportunities. He thought Keene had not yet seen some changes regarding climate change or the impact of gigabyte broadband, for example, also Covid and mass urbanization. Further, he thinks some of this planning needs to be for how the City can position itself to take advantage of these adaptations when they arrive. We need to lay out a roadmap that people can see. Mr. Beurle thought the Committee should be more optimistic than pessimistic about the ability to affect change. Keene also has an opportunity to position itself as a sense of place, which is attractive to many people.

Mr. Walier echoed that Keene is an older community in a part of the State that is largely forgotten. We should figure out how to turn it from an obstacle to an opportunity. Mr. Beurle said Keene might be closer to overcoming some obstacles than it thinks; if broadband arrives in addition to multiple regional airports, it provides the opportunity to be based in Keene but work from almost anywhere in the world.

Mr. Clements, Planner, shared an example regarding demographics and attracting young people. EVS Metal Fabrication (located on Optical Avenue) received a permit a couple years ago to double the square footage of their production space, but did not move forward with construction for some time. When discussing the proposal, the owner essentially indicated that the only thing keeping them from moving forward with building the addition was needing 14 engineers to move to Keene, which he was struggling to accomplish. He has a facility in New Jersey with young engineers that he was trying to entice to move to the Keene location. He had a really hard time convincing them to move up, and what stood out to Mr. Clements was that one reason the workers declined to move to Keene was because they did not want to have cars. He said that EVS ultimately pulled their building permit a year and a half later to build the addition, and he imagined they found workers and would move forward with that expansion. Mr. Clements said it may be helpful to ask similar businesses how they convinced staff to move here; for example, was public transportation an issue? Many businesses in Keene were facing this challenge. Keene has a capacity issue, and a population of 23,000 people is not enough to support a robust dynamic transportation system, despite almost 50,000 people coming to work, shop, etc., in Keene every day. Mr. Clements said that perhaps investment in a County-wide, robust, and dynamic transportation system might help to solve many goals. Mr. Walier agreed with Mr. Clements and said that might be part of the challenge facing the residency program at Cheshire Medical Center to keep the residency doctors here. Chair Farrington thought that one manifestation of collaboration in the community would be if EVS Metals figures out how to bring the staff it needs to Keene, we should make that story accessible to everyone who is looking for people.

Mr. Beurle shared some updates on the project portal: [www.KeeneMasterPlan.com](http://www.KeeneMasterPlan.com), which is the go-to place for updates. Materials from all meetings and community engagement are available in addition to the interactive, raw survey data. Committee members can encourage others in the community to engage with these resources. The consultants were still working to analyze all the data and most of the data categorization should be ready by the August meeting for a more granular level of insight (e.g., public engagement needs).

While she had not read every open-ended response, Ms. Brunner, Senior Planner, said it was interesting to her that at least 2–3 people mentioned having an option for remote participation in these master planning activities for wider representation. So, she was considering ways to accommodate remote visioning sessions in addition to evening options in the future.

- 5) **Visioning Sessions – June 18–21, 2024**
  - A) **“Train the Trainer” Sessions**

Visioning sessions were beginning the day after this meeting. Details are listed on the project portal. In addition, there will be a “train the trainer” session on Wednesday. The sessions will include a recap of the think tank outcomes and exploring preferred futures to build upon and validate the think tank results.

6) **Next Steps:**

**A) Continued Strategic Visioning in July**

Throughout the month with various stakeholder groups.

**B) Strategic Pillars Roundtable in August**

Step 3 of this process, when Mr. Beurle returns in August, would involve the Committee working together in a workshop format. In October, (October 5<sup>th</sup>, a Saturday) there will be a future summit that will conclude the visioning portion of the project, leading into the more comprehensive planning part of the project.

**C) Future Summit October 5<sup>th</sup>**

Between the August meeting and the Future Summit, the Committee will work to develop a report and move into development of a more detailed roadmap.

7) **New Business**

Chair Farrington recalled from the last meeting that Mayor Kahn requested adding a hyphen to “Keene 20-Forward,” and he thanked the consultants for making the change. He also recalled mention of involving the relator community in this process. Mr. Beurle said there should be more capacity to lead visioning sessions with other targeted groups (e.g., realtors, regional shopping groups, etc.) in July, once City staff have been trained to lead the sessions. Since this is not a political organization, Councilor Remy said engagement with the Keene Young Professionals Network could happen at their next happy hour. Mayor Kahn added that there is a human resources managers group in Keene and Cheshire County that meets monthly. The summer Parks & Recreation interns were also suggested, he has a high school group, as well as Dr. Perras’ weekly critical incident group. Ms. Brunner confirmed that City staff would be happy to lead visioning sessions with any of these groups; they could also train a community member for further outreach without City staff present.

Chair Farrington opened the floor to public comment.

Ward One Councilor, Jacob Favolise, said he appreciated that the think tank was consultant-led but felt community-driven. He thought the sessions were useful in pinpointing the key drivers for a sustainable and successful City. He appreciated that the participants identified housing as a critical focus. Councilor Favolise thought this Committee was on the right track and he was

optimistic about focusing energy and resources to achieve these goals by 2040, despite demographic and other challenges.

- 8) **Next Meeting: Tuesday, August 6 at 6:00 PM**
- 9) **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Farrington adjourned the meeting at 7:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Katie Kibler, Minute Taker  
June 24, 2024

Reviewed and edited by,  
Mari Brunner, Senior Planner