

Master Plan Committee

Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2024

Attendance: Matt Benoit Director of Community Development, Rich Preston, Ross Smith, Meg Schlesman, Bob Minarik, Carol Gogolinski, Gordon Larrivee, Linda Brown and Bob Moran. Mike Zwicker excused.

1. Minutes of October 30, 2024 and November 14, 2024. Ross Smith motions to approve both meeting minutes as presented. Bob Minarik seconds the motion. The motion passes.
2. Possible new members. Rebecca Lavallee, resident in attendance tonight, wishes to become a Master Plan Committee member. We do have two members that recently resigned. The Planning Board will be notified and would need to appoint Rebecca. Richard Preston stated that at the Open House another resident, Robert Leonardi, had expressed interest to become a Master Plan Committee member.
3. Open House Workshop: Discussion and review data with CMRPC. Emily Glaubitz and Sam Carter are here from CMRPC. Committee members that attended the Open House said that it was well planned and executed. Emily handed Bob Minarik three checks made out to the 3 local pizza houses to pay for the pizza we served at the workshop. Bob will deliver these checks to the appropriate proprietors.
 - Welcome Station and Raffle: There were 3 winners for the gift cards. Emily said the winners have not been contacted, yet. Emily will contact the winners, after this meeting, and will make sure they are given their gift cards. A Passport to Douglas business card was handed out to participants at the Welcome station that needed to get stamped at all 7 stations in order to qualify for a raffle ticket to win a gift card. Obtaining stamps for 4 stations earned 1 raffle ticket and stamps for all 7 stations would get 2 raffle tickets. Open house attendance was 65 residents plus 11 CMRPC staff and 8 Master Plan Committee members and Staff.
 - Population & Housing Station: Mixed use housing was most desired. Large apartment complexes were not desired.
 - Economic Development Station: Downtown area got the most votes for walkability and aesthetics.
 - Land Use Station: Results not finalized. A lot of need for recreation votes near the school locations.
 - Preferred growth strategies: Most favorable was business as usual. And least favorable was development outside of village & commercial areas.
 - Developing the town owned property on Gilboa Street that includes a paved area, Gilboa Pond dam and some town area surrounding the pond for the use of open space and a river walk.
 - There were some concerns about the support of local farms.

- Transportation and Circulation Station: Not finalized. Categories were strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Off street parking downtown is needed.
- Open Space & Recreation Station: Playgrounds needed in central and western portion of the town. Martin Road playground and North Street playgrounds are the only two town owned playgrounds. This station was the busiest out of the 7 stations. One comment was the need for a dog park. A member made the comment that the dog park should be fenced in.
- Cultural & Historic Resources Station: Many comments on recognizing our historic buildings and the remaining Douglas Axe mills and locations. There were some comments for a Mumford River Walk in the downtown area. Some comments wanted something that would commemorate the Yankees vs Red Sox game held at Soldiers Field.
- Town Services and Facilities: Douglas Dollars were used at this station. Most favorable votes were for parks, recreation and conservation. Least favorable was public health. Comments were speeding issues, Adult Social Center is overcrowded and the dimness of the street lights along Main Street in the downtown area.
- Children's Station: Was well liked and used. We did get a written response from Clyde Rowel, a 1st grader, stating "Please make a BMX Park". Bob Moran motions to send a hand written letter/thank you to the volunteers at this station, Kristen & Jeffrey Inman & family, in recognition of their volunteer efforts. They live at 19 Orange Street.

4. Survey results and data: So far we have received 669 completed surveys. Linda Brown stated she and the Town Clerk still have not received the postcard for the survey. Perhaps in the future, if we do a town wide mailing again put a stick-on physical address label instead of just local resident. Linda Brown and Gordon Larrivee volunteer to do the stick on labels if needed. By consensus we agree to leave the survey open until the end of January 2025. We need to publicize about the survey again by publicizing the Master Plan Survey QR code, drop off locations and our mission in the 3 local newspapers. The 3 papers are Blackstone Valley Tribune, Blackstone Valley Express and the New Uxbridge Times. We also need to promote the survey again on the Dynamic Douglas website. Emily will see if there are enough funds to put the survey back on our Facebook page.
5. Discussion for future: Who are the Stakeholders in town? CMRPC needs to have a tour of Douglas. Not just the businesses or Main Street but our recreation facilities, State Forest and scenic vistas, etc...
6. Discussion is held regarding a time change for our meetings. Carol motions to change our regular meeting times from 7:00pm to 5:00pm. Linda seconds the motion. The motion passes.
7. Meg Schlesman motions to adjourn at 7:00. Ross Smith seconds the motion. The motion passes.

Linda Brown
Master Plan Committee
Secretary