



Town of Southwick

Master Plan Advisory Committee



MINUTES

November 4, 2021, 7:00 p.m.

**Joint “Hybrid” Meeting of the Master Plan Advisory Committee and the Planning Board:
In-person at the Town Hall Auditorium, Southwick Town Hall, 454 College Highway,
Southwick, MA and also open for participation via Zoom (Per the Chapter 20 Acts of 2021)**

Written Minutes

(Not verbatim - comments can be heard on recordings available at www.southwick.org)

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

PLANNING BOARD CHAIR & MPAC MEMBER (*ex officio*) Michael Doherty
PLANNING BOARD MEMBER & MPAC MEMBER Marcus Phelps
PLANNING BOARD MEMBER David Sutton
PLANNING BOARD MEMBER & MPAC MEMBER David Spina
PLANNING BOARD ASSOCIATE MEMBER Jessica Thornton
SELECT BOARD MEMBER Doug Moglin
DPW MEMBER Randy Brown
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEMBER David DeiDolori
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION MEMBER Burt Hansen
CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEMBER Dave MacWilliams
LAKES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBER Norm Cheever
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE Amber Bach
OWNER OF TOWN BUSINESS Scott Lamon, Tynic Landscaping
RESIDENT Dorrie Boyd
RESIDENT Roz Terry
RESIDENT Jessica Whitmore Parker
RESIDENT Maryssa Cook-Obregón

ABSENT:

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBER Aleda De Maria
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER Patrick Jubb
RESIDENT David Massai
STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE MEMBERS
PLANNING BOARD MEMBER Richard Utzinger

Also attending the meeting were 4 members of the public and several people were identified in on Zoom.

The “hybrid” meeting of the Master Plan Advisory Committee (hereinafter referred to as the MPAC) was scheduled to take place via Zoom and in-person at the Town Hall Auditorium and was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Mr. Phelps. He stated that the meeting was being recorded, if anyone else was recording the meeting and asked if all persons could hear via Zoom.

1. Call to Order

Marcus Phelps, Vice Chair of the Planning Board, is facilitating the MPAC meeting until the committee votes to establish the Chair and Vice Chair positions.

2. Planning Board Appointment of Master Plan Advisory Committee Members

Jon Goddard, Town Planner, read the names of committee members for appointment, excluding Mr. MacWilliams and Ms. Bach, owing to their pending nominations by their respective bodies (the Conservation Commission for Mr. MacWilliams and the Economic Development Committee for Ms. Bach) to formalize their eligibility.

*A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Sutton and **SECONDED** by Mr. Spina to appoint the members to the Master Plan Advisory Committee.*

Roll call vote:

Mr. Doherty, yes

Mr. Phelps, yes

Mr. Sutton, yes

Mr. Spina, yes

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

3. Swearing in of Committee Members by Town Clerk

Jessica Menzone of the Town Clerks office went around the table to swear in the members of the Committee.

4. Summary of Meeting Procedures

Mr. Phelps gave some information on procedures for the Committee and noted that the meeting was posted as a Joint event between the MPAC and Planning Board, owing to the fact that attendance by three (3) Planning Board members constitutes a quorum of that body. He introduced Jon Goddard, Town Planner and Meghan Lightcap, Planning Board Administrative Assistant. Mr. Moglin noted for the Committee that in the event of inclement weather and a town hall closure, the meeting can be held fully remotely, subject to the will of the chair.

5. Member Introductions

- David Spina of 7 Great Brook Drive is a member of the Planning Board and he wants to be on this committee for the same reasons he is on the Planning Board. He has lived here almost 20 years and he loves the town; he's seen it slowly evolving and knows it needs some guidance to do that.
- Amber Bach of 10 Pine Knoll Road is on the Economic Development Committee and has also lived here for 20 years. She has seen a lot of changes in town since then and feels there needs to be guidelines as well, specifically for the future of her kids and someday grandchildren.
- Randy Brown of 95 Fred Jackson Road is the Southwick Department of Public Works (DPW) Director and a lifelong resident who has a deep love for this community. He wants to make sure things are done correctly for the town and the next generation.
- Jessica Whitmore Parker of 62 Sheep Pasture Road is a Resident member who's lived here for 7 years. She owns a business in town and feels it's important to be involved in the future of the community.
- Norm Cheever of 100 Berkshire Avenue is the Lake Management Committee member appointee. He moved to Southwick to retire and has 35 years of management experience for large corporations and 15 years of public service.
- Maryssa Cook-Obregon of 126 South Loomis Street was born and raised here and is on this committee as a Resident member. She is very passionate about conservation and long-term planning as it relates to sustainability.
- Burt Hansen of 153 Mort Vining Road is on the Agricultural Commission. He has lived here for about 35 years and has daughters that went through the school system and believes we have important work ahead balancing conservation and development.
- Scott Lamon is a Non-Resident Business Owner Member that owns two properties in town, 22 Tannery Road and 475 College Highway, and he has been here since 2007. He loves this town and credits his business success to the residents and he feels you need to give a little more than you take.
- Roz Terry of 228 South Loomis Street is a former Planning Board Member and she first started out as Planning Board Secretary when they began working on the 1997 Master Plan, but it didn't get adopted. They worked on quite a few bylaw changes and things that are suggested as part of this plan and she hopes this committee will move forward from that point and use what they already have.
- David DeiDolori of 52 Congamond Road is on the Parks and Recreation Commission and has been on other committees in the past. He is semi-retired and would like to be involved with this committee.
- David MacWilliams of 4 Pinnacle Drive is a Conservation Commission member and has lived here for 29 years and raised children here. He has been on Recreation Center Boards and wants to make sure his kids have a great place to grow up here and he wants to give back to the community.
- Doug Moglin of 5 Hidden Place is the Select Board designee and former Associate Member, 3-term elected Planning Board member, and former

Planning Board Chair. He is excited about this process as it's something that needs to be re-done and to guide this process forward as to what the visioning process for Southwick to aspire to 20 to 30 years from now.

- Dorrie Boyd of 44 Bugbee Road is a lifelong resident. She and her husband own a home business in town and she comes from generations of farmers here. She wants to participate in this so that her daughter will be able to afford a home here when she grows up.
- Marcus Phelps of 28 Depot Street grew up here but left for 34 years, during which time he worked for Department of Agriculture Forest Service. He retired in 2004 and was on the Conservation Commission and then Town Planner for five years. He went on to become a member of the Planning Board after that and feels a Master Plan is important as it sets a pathway to the future.
- Michael Doherty of 16 Lexington Circle is the Chair of the Planning Board, attending as an ex-officio member of the MPAC, and will only be attending meetings as needed but feels it's very important to begin working on a Master Plan.

6. Committee Member Notebooks

Mr. Phelps reviewed the handouts provided in the member notebook, detailing the contents of the Master Plan and Housing Plan briefings and draft consultant's scope of services.

7. Committee Organization and Meeting Schedule

a. *Officer Selections*

Mr. Phelps noted that the Committee members should be prepared to select members for the chair and vice chair positions at the next meeting.

b. *Future Meeting Dates and Times*

Mr. Hansen suggested the committee meet in two weeks and then go to monthly meetings. The committee decided to meet again November 18 at 7:00 p.m. There was a brief discussion about high school students joining the committee and if they would be voting members. Mrs. Bach asked if they are joining for a two year period or as freshman or sophomores. Mr. Doherty responded and said he would leave that up to the school to decide.

8. Master Plan Funding and Consultant Selection Process

Mr. Phelps referred to the document in notebook, Master Plan Phase 1, and this is what the committee would be asking a Consultant to do with an appropriation of \$25,000 only. He would like to see Phase 1 complete vision statements, goals and objectives with public participation.

Mr. Phelps stated that there are two ways to get a Consultant; one way is to issue request for proposals. The other one is working directly with the Pioneer Valley

Planning Commission (PVPC); Mr. Phelps noted that there is an online presentation to the Planning Board from them on October 5, 2021 and it's at the 25 minute mark if members want to listen. Cori Rolland, a resident of Southwick, expressed interest in helping consult with the committee, unpaid, as she has decades of experience in planning and visioning. She said imagine Southwick in the year 2045 and what the trends are that will exist then. Mrs. Cook-Obregon asked if it was possible to get more funding and Mr. Phelps said there were opportunities from the State of Massachusetts that may come up in the future where they could justify requesting additional money. Mrs. Bach asked if they would be able to consult with the PVPC and would they utilize grants; Mr. Moglin explained that it's a multiyear effort, they know that \$100,000 is needed to complete the project but the process will take a few years so they will be able to go back and ask for more money in time. Mrs. Boyd asked if this falls under American Rescue Plan act (ARPA) funds and Mr. Moglin said he will find out. Mr. Brown said that ARPA is very limited and sewer and water projects typically fall under ARPA he doesn't think this will as he is familiar with the process. Mr. Phelps said the scope of work needs to be discussed at the next meeting.

9. Housing Plan Funding and Consultant Selection

- a. *Work Group Formation*
- b. *Process for selection*

Mr. Phelps said we have separate funding from the Community Preservation Act that is up to \$25,000 for a housing plan. The briefing paper, included in documents for the group, explains the components of a housing plan and it is a part of the master plan. The second paper explains the scope for housing plan adapted from the Town of Easthampton. The plan meets state standards which in turn enable grants for the town. An RFP should be sent out by December. There would be a need to establish a work group for the housing plan: a sub, sub-committee with 4-5 people including someone from the Southwick Housing Authority.

10. Planning Reference Library at Town Hall

The Open Space and Recreation Plan from 2020 and Master Plan documents from 1967 and 1997 are all available to view in the Planning Office. Mr. Phelps said please let Mr. Goddard know if you want to see them.

11. Future Meeting Agenda Items for Discussion

The group identified the following items to be discussed at the next meeting:

1. *Leadership selection*
2. *Master plan consultant*
3. *Housing plan consultant*
4. *Schedule for future meetings*

Mr. Cheever asked why the previous Master Plan was not adopted; Mrs. Terry said that she could call some previous members that are still around to ask specifically, but

as she remembers it was because they ran out of money and time. The Open Space and Flexible Residential District were completed and she suggested they use what was produced in the previous document and move forward with it, rather than to start from scratch. Mr. Moglin said he became a volunteer on the Planning Board in 1999 and there was a lot of talk about the Master Plan but the Planning Board chose not to accept it. Ms. Terry said the consultant they had hired, did not meet expectations.

Mr. MacWilliams asked if new business/old business would be added to the next agenda and Mr. Phelps said yes. He asked about adding public comments and there was brief discussion to add that to the agenda.

12. Other Discussion Items Not Anticipated Prior to Agenda Posting

Mr. Doherty suggested that there were online seminars that members would want to listen to and information can be sent to people who want to participate. Mrs. Rolland suggested the book “Urban Planning for Dummies” as it has great information.

13. Meeting Adjournment

*Being no further business to be brought before the committee, a **MOTION** was made by Mr. Hansen and **SECONDED** by Mr. Moglin to close the meeting at 8:14 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.*

The Next Scheduled Meeting is November 18th, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Meghan Lightcap
Planning Board Administrative Assistant

Marcus Phelps

Jessica Whitmore Parker

Michael Doherty

David Sutton

David Spina

Jessica Thornton

Doug Moglin

Randy Brown

David DeiDolori

Burt Hansen

Dave MacWilliams

Norm Cheever

Amber Bach

Scott Lamon

Dorrie Boyd

Roz Terry

Maryssa Cook- Obregon