

Town of Chelmsford
Master Plan Update Committee
50 Billerica Rd., Room 205 Chelmsford, Ma 01824
Regular Meeting
MINUTES
August 29, 2019
Approved September 12, 2019

Attending: George Zaharoolis, Donald Van Dyne, Nancy Araway, Bill Murphy, Joseph Ready, Scott Rummel, Kenneth Lefebvre (7:03PM)

Not Present:

Others Present: Evan Belansky, Community Development Director, Beverly Woods-Director, NMCOG, Jay Donovan-NMCOG

Please note that all documents referenced in these minutes are on file at the Town Manager's Office, 50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford, Mass. This meeting was hand recorded by the Recording Secretary.

This meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by Chairman Zaharoolis.

7:00- 7:15 Open Session

No one came forward at this time.

Vision Statement Discussion

There were no further developments at this time.

NMCOG – Economic Development Section Update

A draft document was provided to committee members. Mr. Donovan summarized the information and data in the document. Mr. Rummel asked if any forecasting data on transportation could be provided. Ms. Woods will research whether any modeling data is available. She has not found any data at all on the impacts of Uber/Lyft ride traffic, and Amazon delivery traffic.

It is estimated that more people will work from home over the next few years. Unemployment data is still being compiled. Regarding employment, 2016 showed a peak point in employment for Chelmsford businesses, after which several major employers moved out of town. Mr. Rummel requested data on how many businesses opened over the last ten years, as compared to how many businesses closed, as a way to try to determine what types of businesses were stable, and which were more volatile. Mr. Belansky referred to a study that was done related to the Rt. 129 area. No other areas have been looked at to date. This study will be provided to the Committee.

Location quotient data for Chelmsford was provided from 2009-2018. Education, Healthcare and Social Services rated very high in the Greater Lowell area. NMCOG keeps data on eight communities around Lowell; data in Chelmsford was compared to data in the overall Lowell area. Members with questions were encouraged to send them electronically to Mr. Belansky. More data will be forthcoming. The Town will need to contact the Lowell Water District to get information on water and sewerage utilization data.

Ms. Woods noted that an Oddfellows LLC was created two weeks ago. Mr. Belansky advised he was aware the owners were looking for interested developers, but he had not heard anything definitive to date. The existing lease will expire in June, 2020. Other sites' statuses in other commercial districts were updated in the document. The future of retail over the next ten years is uncertain due to the growing trend of online shopping. There might be a trend toward more service related businesses where there is retail activity now, which could impact the Drum Hill area. The Town has acknowledged that multi-family residential uses may be an option or an opportunity in these areas. CEIOD Zoning would allow for this.

Committee members were asked to provide comments to Mr. Belansky. The document will be provided electronically.

Mr. Van Dyne suggested mentioning the Split Tax rate which was recently implemented in Town, as well as the role of the Business Development Director.

NMCOG Land Use Section Updates

Ms. Woods provided an updated document based on comments received at the previous meeting. Overall, there has not been a lot of development in Chelmsford over the last ten years, except for multi-family housing developments. Tax assessment data was also provided, which shows a different perspective. A summary of public input will be added once it is received, as well as other development data.

Questions can be sent to Mr. Belansky. An electronic version of this document will be forwarded to Committee members.

Survey Example

A survey used in the Town of Pepperell was provided to the Committee. The average time it took respondents to complete the survey was nine minutes. Mr. Belansky was concerned about what approach to use in a survey, as Chelmsford is built out. Surveys can be done electronically, or paper copies could be obtained from the library and senior center.

There will be a visioning session where people will personally explain what they would like to see in Chelmsford.

The Committee supported doing a written survey as a way to obtain public input. The Committee discussed how to tailor questions for Chelmsford. Mr. Rummel suggested asking some forecasting-type questions as way to be able to plan for the future, i.e. Age Friendly initiatives, or options for youths.

Committee members were asked to suggest additional or alternative questions, and send them to Mr. Belansky.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting

- Open Space, Natural, Historic and Cultural Resources-September 12, 2019.
- Update of Survey Questions-September 12, 2019.
- Revised Economic Development Chapter-September 26, 2019.
- Public Input Session Scheduling-September 26, 2019.

Approval of Minutes

July 25, 2019

Motion: by Mr. Lefebvre to approve the Meeting Minutes of July 25, 2019, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Ready. **Motion carries, unanimous.**

Adjourn

Motion: by Mr. Lefebvre to adjourn the meeting at 8:48PM. Seconded by Mr. Ready. **Motion carries, unanimous.**

Respectfully Submitted,
Vivian W. Merrill,
Recording Secretary

Supporting Documents:

- 2010 Chelmsford Master Plan Economic Development and Land Use Sections
- Draft Minutes