

Town of Chelmsford
Master Plan Update Committee
50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford, Ma 01824
Regular Meeting
MINUTES
January 14, 2021
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
Approved February 25, 2001

Attending: George Zaharoolis, Nancy Araway, Michael Raisbeck, Kenneth Lefebvre, Bill Murphy, Scott Rummel

Not Present: Joe Ready

Others Present: Evan Belansky-Community Development Director, Jay Donovan NMCOG, Beverly Woods-NMCOG, Justin Howard-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 televised via Zoom and Chelmsford Telemedia.

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020, Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place. Town of Chelmsford Master Plan Update Committee will be conducting a remote public meeting on Thursday January 14, 2021, at 7:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by Mr. Zaharoolis.

1. Open Session

No one came forward at this time.

2. Age Friendly Committee - follow up

Mr. Brousseau announced that final edits are being put into the Age Friendly Action Plan. They anticipate being able to present the Plan to the Select Board next month.

3. Land use / zoning– NMCOG

The latest changes were shown and reviewed by the Committee.

It was noted there is not much land left that can be developed, and future growth may be seen through re-development. Ms. Araway noted there may need to be a contingency plan for how the Town can supply services for any future growth. Ms. Woods noted there are separate studies being done to address the sewer capacity issue. There have been decreases in traffic due to the COVID pandemic, and school enrollment is decreasing. Mr. Belansky noted that the recent added residential development has not significantly impacted many Town services.

The Town still has areas of Land Use conflicts and non-conforming use situations.

There is resident concern about having too many used car sales lots in a particular neighborhood. This may require having the Planning Board discussing changing the use from a by-right use to one that requires a Special Permit. A general statement about this concept will be added into the document.

Building Department zoning enforcement issues may need to be addressed by that Department. This may not be able to be addressed by the Master Plan. It was noted that there needs to be a mechanism that encourages enforcement to happen. Over time, legal non-conforming pre-existing uses tend to migrate to other uses. The recommendation that references this topic can be re-iterated in the update.

Additional information about “ghost” or “dark” kitchens and stores will be sent in by Mr. Zaharoolis.

4. Economic Development

The latest revisions were reviewed by the Committee.

Ms. Woods provided a brief history of why there are several independent Water Districts in Chelmsford for Mr. Rummel’s information.

Additional edits were provided by Committee members.

The concept of incentivizing certain types of economic development or re-development, such as TIFs was described for Mr. Rummel’s benefit. Mr. Rummel asked whether local banks could offer programs which do the same thing. Mr. Donovan noted there are several communities that were able to create a corporate program that required state legislation that could help accelerate or facilitate redevelopment. Mrs. Woods agreed to provide information on creating a redevelopment authority and urban renewal plan for the Committee to discuss as a research topic.

5. Transportation - NMCOG

Mr. Howard reviewed all of the changes that were put into the current draft document.

Mr. Brousseau noted that the 2010 Plan mentioned a Transportation Advisory Committee. Mr. Belansky noted a Traffic Safety Committee has been formed, but this committee addresses safety issues, not transportation issues. Mr. Brousseau suggested recommending a process to address resident transportation concerns.

The Rourke Bridge redesign/replacement project has been included in the update, as well as State updates to the local highways.

Survey response and SWOT analysis data related to transportation issues was added to this section.

Rideshare and sidewalk paving program funding information provided by Mr. Belansky will be added to the section. Narrative discussing roadway improvements on state owned roads can be added, as well as information about growth in the number of vehicles registered to residents in town. Excise tax records

show that some homes have more registered vehicles than licensed family members. Mr. Belansky suggested adding some of this information to dispel the notion that increased development is creating too much traffic congestion.

This will be discussed more at the next meeting.

NMCOG representatives will work on the Recommendations, Issues and Opportunities section. Additional information can be sent to Mr. Belansky or Ms. Woods. Mr. Brousseau suggested referring to the Age Friendly Plan transportation data & goals as a resource for this section.

The Committee reviewed Bicycle and Pedestrian Recommendations, as well as Public Transportation Recommendations, which were read into the record. Committee members discussed whether to change, eliminate, or enhance the recommendations.

Providing information to the public about what services are available needs to be enhanced. Many people are not aware of their transportation options.

6. Vision statement - discussion

Discussion was tabled.

7. Public input sessions – discussion

Discussion was tabled.

8. Agenda items for next meeting

NMCOG agreed to attend the meeting on February 11, 2020. Facilities and Historic will be reviewed, and there will be more discussion regarding Transportation.

The Committee will also have a meeting on January 28, 2021.

9. Approval of Minutes

October 29, 2020

Motion: by Mr. Raisbeck to approve the meeting minutes of October 29, 2020, as presented.

Seconded by Mr. Lefebvre.

Roll Call:

Ms. Araway: Aye

Mr. Rummel: Abstained

Mr. Lefebvre: Abstained

Mr. Raisbeck: Aye

Mr. Murphy: Aye

Mr. Zaharoolis: Aye

Motion carries, unanimous, 6-0.

November 12, 2020

Motion: by Mr. Lefebvre to approve the meeting minutes of November 12, 2020, as presented.
Seconded by Mr. Raisbeck.

Roll Call:

Ms. Araway: Aye
Mr. Rummel: Aye
Mr. Lefebvre: Aye
Mr. Raisbeck: Aye
Mr. Murphy: Aye
Mr. Zaharoolis: Aye

Motion carries, unanimous, 6-0.

December 3, 2020

Motion: by Mr. Raisbeck to approve the meeting minutes of December 3, 2020, as amended.
Seconded by Ms. Araway.

Roll Call:

Ms. Araway: Aye
Mr. Rummel: Abstained
Mr. Lefebvre: Abstained
Mr. Raisbeck: Aye
Mr. Murphy: Aye
Mr. Zaharoolis: Aye

Motion carries, 4-2-0.

10. Adjourn

Motion: by Mr. Raisbeck to adjourn the meeting at 9:20PM. Seconded by Mr. Lefebvre.

Roll Call:

Ms. Araway: Aye
Mr. Rummel: Aye
Mr. Lefebvre: Aye
Mr. Raisbeck: Aye
Mr. Murphy: Aye
Mr. Zaharoolis: Aye

Motion carries, unanimous, 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Vivian W. Merrill,
Recording Secretary

Supporting Documents:

- Draft Update of the Land Use/Zoning & Economic Development Section
- Draft Update of the Transportation Section
- Draft Minutes