

Town of Chelmsford  
Master Plan Update Committee  
50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford, Ma 01824  
Regular Meeting  
MINUTES  
February 11, 2021  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom  
Approved February 25, 2021

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

**Not Present:**

**Others Present:** Evan Belansky-Community Development Director, Jay Donovan NMCOG, Beverly Woods-NMCOG, Justin Howard-NMCOG, Fred Brousseau -Age Friendly Initiative

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 February 11, 2021, at 7:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 7:03PM by Mr. Zaharoolis.

**1. 7:00- 7:15 Open Session**

No one came forward at this time.

**2. Vision Statement - Discussion**

Discussion was tabled.

**3. Transportation - NMCOG**

Asst. Town Engineer Steve Jahnle added his comments to the document.

Mr. Belansky, Mr. Zaharoolis, and Mr. Brousseau's comments were also added into the document.

Mr. Howard reviewed and showed all of the changes.

Ms. Woods referred to the Vinal Square Master Plan discussion and recommendation regarding a commuter rail stop and impacts to traffic in that area. Mr. Zaharoolis noted a conflict for this area between the existing recreation uses, flood plain, a potential sewer treatment plant, and a potential commuter rail stop as well as a traffic concern for the neighborhood. Mr. Belansky summarized efforts by

the Vinal Square Committee with other committees regarding a commuter rail stop, issues with permitting a treatment plant, and Ms. Araway noted Wotton St. is a very steep street. There was general agreement to continue to monitor these situations.

A new Issues and Opportunities section as well as Recommendations will be presented by NMCOG at the next meeting.

Recommendations for Key Intersections were read into the record, as were updates on the recommendations since 2010. DPW can be asked whether there are any additional intersections that should be added to this list. Ms. Woods suggested leaving this topic open ended due to reduced traffic because of the pandemic. Traffic impacts are unknown, and it is uncertain what will happen once the pandemic is over.

Mr. Brousseau's comments will be forwarded to Mr. Howard. Mr. Brousseau will forward the final Age Friendly Action Plan to Mr. Belansky to forward to the Committee.

A revised document will be sent to the Committee for further review at the next meeting. Additional comments should be sent to Mr. Belansky and Ms. Woods.

A revised document will be reviewed at the meeting on March 11, 2021

#### **4. Housing - NMCOG**

Mr. Donovan reviewed and summarized the current draft document. Committee members were asked to forward any comments and proposed changes to Mr. Belansky to be forwarded to NMCOG. Input from the Age Friendly Action Plan still needs to be added to the document.

There has been an increase in one-person households over the past few years. Therefore, even though the population has remained stable, demand for housing has increased, as grown children move out on their own. Much of the vacant units are presumed to have been created by evictions during the COVID pandemic. There is also a demand for senior housing, from people who want to downsize from a single family home. Ms. Araway noted that many seniors cannot afford to move into a more expensive luxury condominium, which is what some developers are building. She also noted that the current demand for senior housing could fall off in 10-15 years, as the population ages out. Mr. Ready felt the vacancy rate was not alarming.

Ms. Araway requested that unit value data be added to the table showing multifamily Apartment Building data, in an attempt to make the information more relevant. Mr. Donovan will look into this.

Rental stock has decreased, either because the units were converted to condominiums, or the dwellings were demolished.

Overall, society is more mobile than it used to be, and housing turnover has increased. People are moving more frequently.

Some data in several of the tables presented will be updated for the next review. Additional data on regional values will be added for several tables.

**5. Age Friendly Committee - follow up**

Mr. Brousseau reported that the Age Friendly Action Plan was approved by the Select Board, and it has been forwarded for approval by AARP.

**6. Public input sessions – discussion**

Discussion was tabled at this time

**7. Agenda items for next meeting**

Housing and Transportation will be reviewed again at the March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Historic, Open Space and Recreation will be reviewed at the meeting of February 25.

**8. Approval of minutes**

There were no meeting minutes to approve at this time

**9. Adjourn**

**Motion:** by Mr. Lefebvre to adjourn the meeting at 9:00PM. Seconded by Mr. Ready.

**Roll Call:**

Ms. Araway: Aye

Mr. Rummel: Aye

Mr. Lefebvre: Aye

Mr. Ready: Aye

Mr. Raisbeck: Aye

Mr. Murphy: Aye

Mr. Zaharoolis: Aye

**Motion carries, unanimous.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Vivian W. Merrill,  
Recording Secretary

Supporting Documents:

-Draft Update of the Transportation Section

-Draft Update of the Housing Section