

Natick 360
Honoring Our Past. Planning Our Future.



Strategic Planning Oversight Committee
Minutes * May 16, 2007

Present

Rosemary Driscoll, designated by School Committee (arrived at 7:20 p.m.)
Terri Evans, at-large member (arrived at 7:10 p.m.)
Matthew Gardner, designated by the Conservation Commission
John Heerwagen, at-large member
Bill Mayhew, at-large alternate member
David Parish Co-Chair, designated by the Board of Selectmen
George Richards, designated by the Planning Board
Craig Ross, Co-Chair, designated by the Finance Committee
Andres Rochwerger, at-large member
Harlee Strauss, at-large member

Absent

None

Staff Present

Chris Bradley, Procurement Officer

Consultants Present

Phillip Blackerby, Blackerby Associates (by telephone)

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. EDT by the Co-Chair, Mr. Ross, in the Ed Dlott Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, Town Hall, Natick, MA 01760. A quorum was present. Members present introduced themselves. Mr. Ross described the Natick 360 purpose, and announced the Strategic Choices weekend, June 8-10, and the raffle of four Boston Red Sox tickets for people who pre-register and attend on Friday evening, June 8; must be present to win.

Item 1. Community Survey RFP Responses

Two responses have been received in response to the Request for Proposals for a survey firm. Mr. Bradley described the procurement and evaluation processes. Members will review and evaluate the proposals, and discuss them at a special meeting next week, date and time to be announced. Budget for the project is \$24,500, which can be assumed when evaluating sample size to cost ratio. Both proposals describe a list of references and related projects. One Committee Member will be designated to conduct the reference checks as one of the considerations during the ranking process. Proposer include: Godbe Research, a west coast-based company with a Philadelphia office; and ETC Institute of Olathe, Kansas.

Item 2. Minutes

Minutes of March 7, 2007: Ms. Strauss moved to approve the minutes of March 7, 2007 as written, Mr. Parish seconded the motion, and the Committee voted 5-0-3 to approve the minutes as written.

Minutes of March 12, 2007: Mr. Heerwagen moved to approve the minutes of March 12, 2007 as written, Mr. Gardner seconded the motion, and the Committee voted 4-0-4 to approve the minutes as written.

Minutes of March 21, 2007: Mr. Heerwagen suggested a correction, and moved to approve the minutes of March 21, 2007 as amended, Mr. Richards seconded the motion, and the Committee voted 5-0-3 to approve the minutes as amended.

Minutes of April 18, 2007: Ms. Strauss moved to approve the minutes of April 18, 2007 as written, Mr. Rochwerger seconded the motion, and the Committee voted 6-0-2 to approve the minutes as written.

Minutes of May 2, 2007: Mr. Richards suggested some corrections, and moved to approve the minutes as amended, Ms. Strauss seconded the motion, and the Committee voted 8-0-0 to approve the minutes as amended.

Item 3. Coordination with Sponsoring Boards

a. Update on Phase 1 document:

Finance Committee on May 8 voted unanimously to accept the Phase 1 report, with a modification on the Town Government section to ensure consistency with and refer to the Town Meeting Handbook.

School Committee designated a subcommittee to consider both the Phase 1 and Phase 3 reports. The subcommittee met and addressed some macro changes: footnotes and explanations about projections in the Phase 1 report, and how stable those projections are. The SPOC will have to report to the other boards and committees on these changes.

b. Update on status of Phase 3 document:

Conservation Commission will consider the document tomorrow, May 17, and will then consider the second draft of the document May 24.

Planning Board approved the strategic options document unanimously May 9, and looks forward to considering the next draft on May 23.

Board of Selectmen approved the strategic options document unanimously on May 7, conditioned on the specification that all the options be costed, and that they be notified of any changes as they occur. Update emails have been provided to each board or committee chair.

Finance Committee considered the strategic options document May 8, and offered several suggestions to clarify language: they tabled the section on education pending a decision by the

School Committee; they look forward to the explanatory text and the introductory materials; delete item 4.b.3. as a close duplicate of 3.b.1. regarding public safety resources growing commensurate with population growth; section 5 included items outside the control of the Town, so clarify with explanatory text indicating the degree of public interest is needed; item 7.b., regarding balancing the budget by cutting services or increasing taxes, should be a stand-alone item; replace 7.b. with a new goal about improving the capital budgeting process.

School Committee designated a subcommittee to consider both the Phase 1 and Phase 3 reports. The subcommittee met and addressed some changes. Another subcommittee meeting will be Saturday afternoon, May 19, then the School Committee will re-consider the Phase 3 report on Monday, May 21. Expect the School Committee will want to wordsmith some of the report items at that time. The School Committee was very positive in its comments about the Phase 3 report, and the School Committee members were very engaged in the process.

Item 4. Strategic Choices Weekend June 8-10

- a. *Keynote Speaker:* Marc Draisen, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, and head of the MetroFutures project. Recently finalized a regional planning initiative involving about 140 jurisdictions, addressing many important issues affecting the region over the next 20 years. Will ask for an advance copy of his presentation.
- b. *Publicity:* Committee members have begun distributing yellow flyers around town, in school children's backpacks, at train station, Town Meeting, etc. Banner will be hung over Main Street. Committee members will address civic groups. Ms. Evans gave a status report on all the action items on the publicity plan. Need registration forms in addition to the flyers, particularly at the Senior Center, and other places where people may not have access to computers. Committee members are seeking donations of food for the workshops. Committee members are encouraged to register. People who attended in October should be asked to recruit their friends, relatives and neighbors to attend as well. Invitations went out yesterday to each of the 170 Town Meeting members. This week, invitations will go out to the October participants and survey responders. Participants in the Key Informant Meeting, members of the State Legislature, and other notable citizens will also be invited, particularly to the Friday evening event.
- c. *Volunteer Coordinator:* Two volunteer organizing activities need coordinators: (a) Materials assembly party on Wednesday, June 6, at 6:30 p.m. at the Morse Institute Library; complete the Contact form at the www.Natick360.org web site. (b) Registration coordination for the Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday registration processes. Several registration coordinators are needed, for 2-hour shifts. About 15-20 people volunteered last October: Mr. Rochwerger and Mr. Mayhew volunteered to call them back to ask them for additional volunteer help.
- d. *Sponsor Recognition:* Sponsors are invited to provide materials that can be added to the participant packages. Mr. Ross reviewed the list of business sponsors. Have received approximately \$35,000 in donations, and have a couple of grant requests pending. Food providers will also receive recognition.

Item 5. Other Business

- a. *Focus on Natick* photography exhibit is at TCAN; a preview is available at the TCAN web site, www.NatickArts.org. The gallery is open from noon to 6:00 weekdays. It is remarkable and very interesting. A reception will be held May 24 at 7:00 p.m. at TCAN. The Bakery on the Common has a satellite exhibit, emphasizing historical photos from the Natick Historical Society.
- b. Eliot Church in South Natick held an educational session on Natick 360 on Sunday, May 6. Members are encouraged to seek out other events at which to discuss Natick 360.

Ms. Driscoll moved to adjourn, Ms. Evans seconded the motion, and the Committee voted 8-0-0 to adjourn. The Committee adjourned at 8:12 p.m.