



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW LONDON MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, January 30, 2018

12:30 PM

PRESENT: Paul Gorman, Bill Dietrich, Janet Kidder

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeremy Bonin, Tim Paradis

OTHERS PRESENT:

Adam Ricker-Planner, Cary Lagace-LU & Assessing Coordinator, Kim Hallquist-Town Administrator, Wendy Johnson-Finance Officer, Scott Blewitt-Recreation Director, Jay Lyon-Fire Chief, Nicole Gage-Zoning Administrator, Sandra Licks-Library Director, Richard Lee-Public Works Director, Ed Andersen-Police Chief, Linda Nicklos-Town Clerk/Tax Collector, John McKinnon & Ken Jacques of the Springfield/New London Water Precinct

- 1. Call to Order: William Dietrich called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm.**
- 2. Discussion of Master Plan Process:**

The Master Plan Committee was joined by the Town of New London Department Heads to discuss the future needs of each Department.

William Dietrich explained that the Master Plan Committee is working on the review and update of the Master Plan and is reaching out to groups and institutions for their thoughts regarding any possible issues, needs or changes in the future. The MP Committee wanted to focus the discussion on these three questions; How are your current needs being met regarding staff, facility and infrastructure; What planning related concerns do you have regarding your position with the Town; and Do you see any current ordinances or regulations as hindering your position and if so, how could they be amended to better serve you and the community. Adam noted that the master plan is a guiding tool for the Planning and Zoning Boards and in writing regulations. Paul added that the committee has already met with the Hospital and College and plan to meet with the Chamber and other small organizations in the future as well as conducting a survey/questionnaire and holding a Charet later in the year.

Chief Andersen began with staffing, noting that with the support for an additional officer, it helps the department to begin to be proactive instead of just reactive. Currently daytime patrol is handled by himself and his Lieutenant. The addition of the 9th officer will put the department right where it needs to be. He noted that with the proposed business expansions and off campus housing, the evenings are becoming a challenge. As far as facility needs; he would be interested in a study to determine if the current building can work long term or if another option needs to be considered

before putting funds into a building that may not work for the department in the long run. The last four years have been good for computer and equipment updates, with one more tower to be completed, there is small things left. Bill noted that the CIP identified the Police Department as a long term need for the community.

Public Works Director Richard Lee explained that his staffing at the highway garage, wastewater and transfer stations is adequate at this time however with the expansions in the community and further development there may be a need for additional staffing to keep up with the demands those expansions would have on all areas of his department. The highway and wastewater facilities themselves are in good shape, with the transfer station needing to be updated or rebuilt. He feels the best option is to update/rebuild on the current site. As far as infrastructure he feels that as long as the current funding is continued the maintenance of the roads is in good shape and will continue to be. There are a couple large projects that additional funding will be need for; the Brookside Drive culvert and the Goosehole bridge. He doesn't feel that Planning is impacting his departments however parking is an issue in the community and with different plans being approved there are already businesses requesting certain upgrades for their streets. There was further discussion regarding the impact that subdivisions have on the town roads as well as the water precinct. The impact may not be immediate but it's just a matter of time. There was a brief discussion regarding parking with little options being available at this time. Linda Nicklos asked about the expansion of beaches and beach parking and Richard indicated that the likelihood of any of that is pretty slim with the tight DES regulations regarding the waterfront.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector Linda Nicklos expressed that her staffing needs have already been discussed as well as if there is a need to expand her office the utilization of the TA office may be an option. It was noted that community growth impacts all departments to some degree.

Ken Jacques of the Water Precinct noted that there was a build out that was done that is about 15 years old. It was discussed that in 1994 the Colby Point project was done to get a handle on where the Towns needs where going to be in 20 years; with the loss of the Middle school and other areas that have seen loss the demand on the water system dropped significantly which has an impact on the wells. The growth since 1995 is only about 10% which is not really much at all. At this point they aren't looking at the future aggressively because of how difficult it is to predict. They are looking positively at the proposed hospital expansion as the added draw on the water system is good. There was discussion that lower draw on the wells allows for silt to build up which can plug the veins of the well. It was discussed that the water precinct projects are mostly capital type projects and are spread out over the entire tax base as the entire tax base benefits from the majority of their projects. All agreed that the water quality in the community is great and Colby Point was a great gift to the community.

Recreation Director Scott Blewitt his department focuses on quality of life and he believes things that could promote that in this community would be a community center, gymnasium, classroom space for all ages from preschool to senior citizens. A preschool playground, mountain bike and snowmobile trials as well as disc golf, athletic fields and a dog park are visions that he has for the community and they provide great opportunities for socializing. He feels that his seasonal programs are adequately staffed but would like the addition of administrative support that would be available in the office all the time. He feels the current facilities are in good shape.

Nicole Gage, Zoning Administrator indicated that she will look to improve the zoning ordinance and bring that to the Planning Board. She would like to see the encouragement of workforce housing for the community as well as a storm water management plan. She would like to see an ordinance update regarding enforcing building codes as the community continues to grow it would be nice to have local building code enforcement. The community has many nonconforming

sites and the shore land tear down and rebuilds are challenging. Additionally she would like to see the utilization of outside professional review for certain planning Board cases. She feels the sign ordinance needs to be numbered which she believes the Planning Board can do at a regular meeting. As well the temporary sign ordinance needs updating.

Finance Officer Wendy Johnson expressed that she has no facility needs but down the road will likely need an assistant as the regulations are changing all the time and it is already a big job. Additionally she noted that the storage in the Town Office building is very limited. There was a brief discussion regarding different uses for space within the Town Hall.

Fire Chief Lyon noted that his staffing is made up of 2 fulltime employees including himself and volunteer call part time employees which is working ok right now. He added that there is a live in student program they participate in that provides the station with additional help 2 days a week. They had 870 calls last year with 142 being general alarms that all staff responds to and the rest are handled by day time staff. He noted that there is a generational change happening and the volunteerism is going away. He feels he has a great facility and the central location is very important and the current building could be expanded if needed. He believes the proposed solar ordinance is needed and will be beneficial. Building inspection will be hugely important and levels the playing field for everyone in the community as basic building codes aren't currently being done. Janet Kidder inquired if they foresee the hospital project putting burden on MES, transfer station, etc. Jay commented that people and weather are what produce calls and an aging population produce more calls. Richard commented that he didn't see a significant impact to the transfer station or the wastewater.

Police Chief Andersen noted that although people think there may not be increased demand on his department from elderly facilities, there actually are a lot of calls for service generated from theft, driving concerns, check the welfare and unwanted family members just to name a few.

Library Director Sandra Licks expressed that she is satisfied with the 3 fulltime and 9 part time employees as well they benefit from many volunteers. As far as their facility, a lot of renovation has been done over the past 11 years and she feels the building is in pretty good shape. They will continue to do the regular maintenance as long as the capital reserve account is funded. She added that parking is an issue with only 3 designated spaces. A lot of people won't park in the municipal lot as well during the summer it is usually full. She noted that her technology and computer needs are being met as this area continues to be an important part of the service they provide. Additionally there is not good storage available at the library.

3. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting is scheduled for February 20,2018 at 8:30 am.
4. **Adjourn:** William Dietrich, motioned to adjourn, Paul Gorman seconded. Meeting adjourned at 1:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cary Lagace
Land Use & Assessing Coordinator
Town of New London