

**MINUTES  
TOWN OF STOW  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE**

3rd Floor, Stow Town Building

November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Members Present:** Laurie Burnett, Lori Clark, Hector Constantzos, Cortni Frecha, Charles Hartford

**Members Absent:** Marcia Rising

**Also Present:** Valerie Oorthuys, Michael Slagle, JM Goldson

**Meeting called to order** by Charles Hartford at 6:31 pm.

**Approval of 10/16/23 Minutes:** Hector Constantzos moved to accept the minutes of October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023 as written. Cortni Frecha seconded. **Roll Call Vote:** Lori Clark- Yea, Hector Constantzos- Yea, Cortni Frecha- Yea, Charles Hartford- Yea, Laurie Burnett-Yea

**Recorded Meeting Policy:** The committee discussed the pros and cons of the new recorded meetings policy. The pros discussed included transparency and the importance of the public being able to observe discussions and decision-making around public issues that committee members have been elected or appointed to make. This policy was discussed in depth at Select Board meetings, with the Select Board voting to recommend all appointed and elected boards record their meetings and post them on YouTube. Cons discussed included the videos being on YouTube in perpetuity, recording preventing minoritized voices from participation, and the impact recording can have on committees potentially not taking on difficult and sensitive topics and exploring all angles and perspectives. It was agreed the committee wanted to consider this further. Until that time, the committee agreed to continue recording our meetings on Zoom and making them available until the minutes of the posted meeting are accepted. The committee will revisit this discussion at their January meeting. Lori Clark moved that the committee will record meetings via zoom and post the Zoom link on the stow-ma.gov website, until the minutes are accepted. Cortni Frecha seconded the motion. The committee voted their approval unanimously.

**Activity: Discussion of Concerns/ Opportunities Related to Plan Elements: Housing, Land Use, Transportation, Economic Development, Open Space & Recreation, Municipal Facilities and Services**

*Present:*

Jennifer Goldson, JM Goldson

Noah Harper, JM Goldson

- a. Jennifer Goldson, AICP, Project Manager and Noah Harper, MCRP, Community Planner II introduced themselves and shared their background in and passions for planning. They then provided updates on their activities thus far which included receiving a tour of the town of Stow by the planning department. They both walked and drove to get a sense of the community.
- b. Shared a summary of the October meeting portion that was led by JM Goldson.
- c. They provided a timeline for the project and outlined the work they were currently doing around developing a community engagement plan. This will be available to the committee and the public soon. They will identify a public engagement goal. It was discussed that currently, there are several community engagement projects happening in Stow. JM Goldson will look into the timelines of those projects and adapt their timeline as needed.
- d. JM Goldson led the committee in the activity. The first portion of the activity had each member complete a worksheet identifying key challenges in the arenas of:
  - i. Economic development
  - ii. Historic and Cultural Resources
  - iii. Housing

- iv. Open Space, Natural Resources, and Recreation
- v. Public Facilities and Services
- vi. Sustainability and Resilience
- vii. Transportation
- e. After individually identifying key challenges, the committee then shared out in a round robin fashion and came to consensus on 3 to 4 key challenges in each arena.
- f. The following are the notes recorded by JM Goldson:
  - i. Economic Development
    - 1. Water infrastructure
    - 2. Desirable and economically feasible businesses
    - 3. Regulatory barriers
    - 4. Vibrant local business
      - a. Community spaces and events
  - ii. Historic and Cultural Resources
    - 1. Reuse and funding to preserve key town buildings
    - 2. Preservation, celebration, and reckoning with the past, present and future cultural diversity of Stow
    - 3. Preservation of private historic resources
  - iii. Housing
    - 1. Expanding housing diversity where appropriate
    - 2. Improving the conditions of privately owned homes
    - 3. Particularly for seniors
    - 4. Fiscally responsible growth
  - iv. Open Space, Natural Resources, and Recreation
    - 1. Conserve private land for conservation, sustainability, and agriculture
    - 2. Active and accessible open space
    - 3. ADA-accessible trail connections
    - 4. Maintain and enhance town-owned spaces
    - 5. Water resource/availability
  - v. Public Facilities and Services
    - 1. Town facilities/public buildings
    - 2. School/population growth, population as a whole—as population grows
    - 3. Water and wastewater infrastructure
    - 4. Improvements to Town services
  - vi. Sustainability and Resilience
    - 1. Sustainable development pattern
    - 2. Sustainable development, and conversions
    - 3. Habitat conservation
      - a. Wildlife corridors
      - b. Tree canopy, carbon sequestration
  - vii. Transportation
    - 1. Supporting low impact, low emission forms of transportation
    - 2. E.V. charging
    - 3. Balance between vehicular needs and safety of multimodal travelers
    - 4. Scalable transportation solutions

**Adjournment:**

Hector moves to adjourn, Lori Clark seconds. Unanimous approval. Meeting adjourned at 9:12

Respectfully Submitted,  
Laurie Burnett