

Planning Board Work Session

Location: Strafford Town Hall Conference Room

Date & Time: October 20, 2022 6:00PM

Voting Members Present:

Charlie Moreno – Chairman
Phil Auger – Vice Chairman
Terry Hyland
Tim Reed
Lynn Sweet – Selectman Representative

Non-Voting Members Present:

Don Clifford – Alternate

Others Present:

James Burdin, Strafford Regional Planning Commission, Senior Regional Planner
Autumn Scott, Strafford Regional Planning Commission, Regional Planner
Robert Fletcher, Minutes Recorder

The Chairman, Charlie Moreno, called the Work Session to order at 6:03PM and recognized Board members Phil Auger, Terry Hyland, Tim Reed, Lynn Sweet and Don Clifford as present. He also recognized as present James Burdin, Autumn Scott and Robert Fletcher.

Town Master Plan Update

The Chairman asked James Burdin of the Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) to provide an update.

Community Survey

Mr. Burdin indicated that 370 surveys were completed by the survey closing date of September 30th. This is an excellent response considering the town population, and the survey results are posted on the Master Plan landing site of the Town website. He provided a comprehensive overview of the survey results. The following are highlights of the results:

- 88% of respondents (328) indicated they were full-time Strafford residents.
- A wide age distribution of respondents with three under age 18 and 77% age 35-74.
- Most respondents indicated quiet and rural character, small town atmosphere, school system, the importance of Bow Lake to the community, and good place to raise a family as reasons to reside in Strafford.
- Topics for vision of Strafford in 15 years that respondents felt were important included water quality, natural resources, rural character, sense of community, and ability to raise a family. Topics they felt were less important were housing availability and commercial or light industrial development.
- Respondents indicated access to typical commercial or professional services took place outside Strafford and indicated a desire for restaurants in Strafford.
- Overall respondents were not in favor of future non-residential development.

- Over 70% of respondents preferred single family detached housing in Strafford for future housing needs.
- Over 75% of respondents indicated housing in Strafford was either somewhat affordable or not very affordable.
- Response to concentrate or spread-out additional housing was mixed; 18% concentrated, 23% spread-out, and 38% a combination of both.
- Response for residential development options was limited but favored subdivision clusters on smaller lots in exchange for conserving more open space and allowing more development in existing village centers.
- Respondents who were raised or are raising a child in Strafford indicated that schooling was an important concern.
- Respondents indicated they would strongly support improving and maintaining water quality in lakes and ponds, conserving land in its natural state, promoting local farms and farm-based business, and maintaining quality of existing town services and facilities.

Community Forum Planning

School facility - Lynn Sweet indicated the school agreed to use of the facility beginning at 7:30AM, which will allow for the forum to start at 8:00AM. She reserved the school cafeteria, gym, and five rooms. School personnel would like to meet with Planning Board personnel at the school on Friday afternoon, November 4th, between 2:45PM and 3:00PM, to discuss IT and communication needs, specific rooms to use, and childcare location.

Event Structure and timing

1. Setup – 7:30AM to 8:00AM.
2. Sign-in and pre-forum exercise – 8:00AM to 8:30AM. The exercise will allow participants to indicate their preference for town resource allocation to address a variety of topics, such as:
 - a. Schools.
 - b. Recreation/Programming.
 - c. Bow Lake (quality and access).
 - d. Incentivizing small business/restaurants.
 - e. Promoting farms and farm-based business.
 - f. Land conservation.
 - g. Town services.
 - h. Community center/Town gathering space.
 - i. No resource allocation.
3. Introduction and data presentation – 8:30AM to 9:00AM. Welcome participants, explain reason for the forum, and provide a brief presentation of survey results.
4. Three concurrent 45-minute breakout sessions – 9:00AM to 11:30AM. Participants will attend three sessions of their choice to discuss the following themes:
 - a. Housing. Discussion to identify type of housing desired, housing density, and development locations.
 - b. Natural resources. Discussion to identify goals for preservation and protection or use and improvement of natural resources.
 - c. Community services and infrastructure. Discussion to identify adequacy of or need to improve current services, and the need for additional services.

- d. Community character and land use. Discussion to identify visual preference for economic/commercial development/location and use of land with respect to conservation versus residential or commercial development.
5. Large group wrap up – 11:30AM to 12:00PM. Presentation of breakout session activity and overview of next steps in the Master Plan process.
6. Participant exit activity. Allow participants to comment on the forum value and process.

Event logistics

1. Childcare. Terri Marsh has four volunteers to assist with childcare, and she has identified activities for the children. Participants will be asked to identify need for childcare when pre-registering.
2. Pre-registration. Pre-registration will allow participant to identify three breakout sessions of interest. “Survey monkey” would be used to capture pre-registration information. Social media post would provide a link to pre-registration on the Town website. The Board identified the need to possibly modify breakout sessions to accommodate participants who do not pre-register.
3. Awareness video. Terry Hyland agreed to provide a brief video by September 26th or 27th to highlight the upcoming forum and identify the pre-registration link.
4. Food and coffee. The Board will provide refreshments.

Additional Work Session and Post-Forum Work Session

The Board agreed that an additional Work Session was not needed. Any additional follow-up or training will be addressed, if needed, at 6:00PM prior to the 7:00PM November 3, 2022 Meeting. A post-forum Work Session would be conducted in January 2023 with a date to be determined at a later date.

Other Business

The Board reviewed for acceptance the following Meeting and Work Session minutes:

- August 4, 2022 Meeting minutes. Phil Auger made a motion to accept the minutes as written, which was seconded by Terry Hyland, and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by Board members in attendance at the August 4th Meeting.
- August 4, 2022 Work Session minutes. Phil Auger made a motion to accept the minutes as written, which was seconded by Terry Hyland, and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by Board members in attendance at the August 4th Work Session.
- September 1, 2022 Meeting minutes. Phil Auger made a motion to accept the minutes as written, which was seconded by Tim Reed, and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by Board members in attendance at the September 1st Meeting.
- September 1, 2022 Work Session minutes. Phil Auger made a motion to accept the minutes as written, which was seconded by Tim Reed, and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by Board members in attendance at the September 1st Work Session.
- October 6, 2022 Meeting minutes. Don Clifford made a motion to accept the minutes as written, which was seconded by Phil Auger, and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by Board members in attendance at the October 6th Meeting.

There being no further business before the Board, Phil Auger made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Charlie Moreno. The Board voted unanimously in favor, and the meeting adjourned at 8:33PM.