



Williamsburg Planning Board

141 Main Street, P.O. Box 447

Haydenville, Massachusetts 01039-0447

Phone: (413) 268-8400

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Minutes for meeting on **May 2, 2022**

Member	Present	Not Present	Member	Present	Not Present
Tariq Abu-Jaber	X		Jean O'Neil	X	
Amy Bisbee	X		Eric Schmitt		X
Chris Flory	X		Steve Smith	X	
Holly Hendricks	X				
Other attendees:					

At 7:06 pm Chair Smith called the meeting to order.

1. Review of prior meeting minutes, and vote to accept

Meeting Date	Comments	Motion to Accept	Motion to Accept as Amended	Second	Vote Yea - Nay
04/4/2022	Meeting minutes	O'Neil		Flory	6-0
4/11/2022	Meeting minutes		Flory	Hendricks	6-0
4/25/2022	Public hearing minutes		Flory	O'Neil	5-0-1 (abstention)
4/25/2022	Meeting minutes		O'Neil	Bisbee	5-0-1 (abstention)

H. Hendricks abstained from the 4/25/22 minutes votes as she was absent that day.

2. Committee Liaison Reports
 - a. Amy Bisbee reported that she joined the Zoning Board of Appeals, but had nothing to report. No special permits are being requested at present.



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- b. Holly Hendricks reported that the Open Space Committee meeting is scheduled for May 10 and she will attend. She was asked about their progress in approving their draft plan, but she was not aware of any additional details.
 - c. Jean O'Neil reported that she joined the Economic Development Self-Assessment meeting. They have collected a great deal of info on the town and discussed the questionnaire that they would like to create and circulate. The next meeting is on May 20 where the draft questionnaire will be discussed. O'Neil and Abu-Jaber worked together to provide feedback and input. The Donahue Institute consultant demonstrated experience and know-how in administering such surveys and was well organized.
 - d. Holly Hendricks and Chris Flory joined the PVPC meeting. Housing shortage and housing equity were discussed. Mainly relevant for urban environments (Springfield, Holyoke, etc.), but also applicable in some ways to a rural town like Williamsburg. Also discussed east-west rail in Mass., possibly using federal stimulus funds and existing tracks, though most existing infrastructure is inadequate at present and could take much time and money to improve.
3. Review and Comments on Open Space Plan
- a. General agreement that it is a highly detailed and well researched document, and much can be learned from it, although there is a lot of preamble before broaching the actual open space plan.
 - b. Housing was discussed.
 - c. Appreciated focus on goals and a 7-year plan to achieve them, but it was unclear how the goals were created based on community input.
 - d. Jean O'Neil has drafted a letter of response from the Planning Committee
 - e. Upon review of the draft 7-year plan, H. Hendricks noted the many places where Planning Board was listed as a Responsible Party. In general, Board members agreed that we had a role in the tasks where we were listed, including regulating development in flood zones.
 - f. A vote was held on using Jean's draft Letter Of Support for the Open Space Plan. Bisbee so moved, Flory seconded, unanimous approval followed.
4. Master Planning
- a. O'Neil asked that the minutes reflect the fact that we have five potential initial sources of input to the master plan: 1) Open space report of 2021, 2) economic assessment report, 3) municipal vulnerability preparedness report, 4) PVPC reports and input and 5) various older reports such as the senior center listening sessions, safe streets reports, etc.



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- b. General conversation about what should be included in our Master Plan and how to gather public input ensued. We also need to start gathering questions to include in any survey we generate.
 - c. Issues such as maintaining the rural character vs development, tax levels based on development levels, sidewalks and other ways to make it more walkable, etc.
 - d. O'Neil noted the desire to make our recommendations highly realistic and actionable so it doesn't sit on a shelf and gather dust. All agreed.
 - e. Do people want redevelopment in their area, such as sidewalks? Should we design "target" zones, such as the village centers? Safe routes to schools could be a prime driver.
 - f. The audience for our Master Plan is both for current and future planners, so they can refer to our goals as they take actions.
 - g. Next steps: use the many sources of input data (some noted above) to begin to populate the Master Plan outline already crafted. To start: take one section, work together to create a high level outline, then separately review source info and come together again to compare our thoughts and agree on what should go into our Plan, what info we already have, what may be gaps, etc. Bisbee suggested using the Circulation/Transportation element to get started on May 16 and there was general agreement. The Hatfield Master Plan and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission report represent good examples and will be circulated prior to the May 16 meeting for our review.
 - h. O'Neil suggested that Smith should write the Introduction section, explaining our purpose and goals. He agreed to do so.
5. Other Old Business — none
6. New Business — none

At 8:51 pm the meeting adjourned. The next scheduled meeting is May 16. This will be our last meeting prior to Town Meeting. We will need to use some of that time to decide what and how we will present our info at Town Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



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Tariq Abu-Jaber

Eric Schmitt