

# **MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, August 1, 2023**

**1:00 PM – Rye Town Hall**

***Present:* Chair Rob Wright, Patricia Losik, Kathryn Garcia, Howie Lazerowich, Ann Fox, Land Use Assistant Kara Campbell, RPC Consultant Jenn Rowden, and Resilience Consultant Steve Whitman**

### **I. Call to Order**

Chair Wright called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **2. Discussion of Existing Conditions Topics:**

- **Demographics**
- **Housing**

RPC Consultant Jenn Rowden presented Rye Housing Existing Conditions Overview. A complete Housing Needs Assessment will be presented in the fall. The needs assessment considers existing conditions and projected needs. This information will be included in the Master Plan. The presentation includes meeting with the Planning Board in August and conducting a public input event to discuss the housing survey results.

Chair Wright asked if there were any updates on the funding for Phase II of the HOP grant. Ms. Rowden informed the group that the request was submitted on time and is awaiting funds. She informed the group that the delay is due to an uncertainty of which administration is going to administer it – the Office of Planning and Development or the NH Housing Finance Authority.

Ms. Rowden informed the group that the regulatory audit will not start until the funds are awarded, probably at the end of September.

The housing data shows that the regional population is increasing, as well as aging. In addition, less homes are being built, and prices are increasing while incoming is lagging. RPC's regional population has increased 11.7% in the past 10 years. Rye is less than the average at 6.5%. 245 people have been added to the population since 2010. Household size is decreasing.

There were 3,026 housing units in 2020. 170 units have been added since 2010. This low number is due to zoning constraints and geographical constraints. Ms. Rowden stated that the large lots of Rye are not unique.

The average age of Rye is 55.6 years old. New Castle is older, at 56 years old.

The average price of a home sold in Rye for \$947,000 in 2023 in Rye.

In 2020, New Hampshire was the #4 highest state that people were moving to. Most people were coming from somewhere else in NH, MA, NJ, CA, and other New England states.

Ms. Rowden informed the group that communities should have a 6-month availability of houses for sale at any time to be considered sufficient. In 2023, there was only about a week's stock available. There should be a 5% vacancy rate for rentals.

Of the about 3,000 housing units in Rye, 2002 are owner-occupied, 302 are rented, 83 are short term rentals (this number fluctuates and is based off of Air DNA – an Air B and B type of software data tool), and 616 are seasonal. Hotels and assisting living facilities are not included.

In the RPC region, 12,656 housing units were added between 2000 and 2010. Between 2020-2040, 14,563 more units are needed to meet current projections. 476 more units are needed in Rye by 2040, 151 of which are affordable and 326 at market rate. Of the 476 needed units, 29% should be rentals and 71% should be owned units.

There was discussion on how to get to these numbers and the conservation developments and multi-family developments were mentioned. These are cluster developments that can achieve higher densities while still preserving critical natural resources.

The State of NH hired a consultant to estimate these projections. They used population data, existing housing data, and employment trends/labor market.

Another statistic that was revealed is an 11% handicapped percentage in the town, mostly attributed to older age.

Ms. Rowden also presented the map that was part of the survey questioning where people think more development should occur, and where it should not occur. Generally, most people favored development inland near Route 1 rather than near the coast due to flooding issues and a desire to remain private and secluded.

The outreach event is scheduled for September 27<sup>th</sup> and will spark many conversations and ideas of what Rye can do about its current and projected housing statistics. Ms. Reed is working on reserving the school for this event.

Ms. Fox mentioned how personal stories really achieve results.

Everything pertinent to the housing work and the master plan will frequently be updated so it will remain on the home page of the website. Material will also be included in the town newsletter. It was already submitted to the Stroll newsletter.

The platform Ms. Rowden is currently using is [publicinput.com/RyeFuture](https://publicinput.com/RyeFuture), and it will be transitioned to the master plan work. There are image and video upload links on the website.

The group decided to choose the title, "Rye 2035: Planning Today for Tomorrow's Future". Mr. Whitman stated they will be creating a banner and posters with a QR Code for the tabling event on August 19<sup>th</sup>, Rye Day.

Chair Wright requested a summary of upcoming dates:

8/7 is the Long Range Planning Meeting where the housing survey results will be discussed with Ms. Rowden.

8/15 is the Planning Board Meeting where Ms. Rowden will be presenting.

8/19 is Rye Day, the tabling event.

9/5 is a Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting.

9/19 is another Planning Board Meeting.

9/27 is the Outreach Event.

Ms. Rowden and Mr. Whitman informed the group that the Town of Hampton recently created an Implementation Committee to produce actual results from their Master Plan.

Chair Wright expressed his interest in hoping that the results of this work will produce suggestions such as a sewer treatment plant is essential, etc.

Architectural Design Standards were also briefly discussed at the end.

### **3. Other**

None.

Motion to adjourn Ms. Losik, seconded by Ms. Garcia.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara Campbell

Land Use Assistant