

LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

**Tuesday, June 7, 2022
10:00 a.m. – Rye Town Hall**

***Present:* Chair Rob Wright, Kathryn Garcia, Ad-Hoc Member Patricia Losik (acting as alternate), Kathryn Garcia, Planning Administrator Kim Reed and Julie LaBranche, JVL Planning Consultant**

I. Call to Order

Chair Wright called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and led the pledge of allegiance.

Note: *Patricia Losik sat as a full member of the Committee for the meeting.*

II. Approval of Minutes

Moved to end of meeting

a. Julie LaBranche Services

Chair Wright noted that when the Committee last met with Julie LaBranche, they had agreed to contract support to have her get them through the solicitation of requests for proposals (RFP) for the rewrite of the master plan. He also noted that they need a number for the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) by next month.

Planning Administrator Reed explained that the CIP process starts in June and July, but the budget process doesn't start until September or October. A placeholder number is needed for the CIP and they can work out numbers as they move further through the process. A placeholder number is needed by the end of July.

Member Losik asked to have the number by July 12th, as that's the meeting date for the Planning Board and the information could be discussed at that meeting.

Chair Wright clarified the refinement of that number will come through when actual proposals are received. He asked if it would be inappropriate to ask these firms for a budgetary number up front.

Ms. LaBranche commented that she feels uncomfortable sending the RFP out to a select group of consultants to ask their opinion about it. That's not what the RFP process is all about.

Chair Wright asked if the RFP process is open and unrestricted.

Ms. LaBranche confirmed. She commented that she had some questions about the timeline. She doesn't know the timeline for actually releasing the RFP. There was an email that said something about having the draft RFP by July, which might be unrealistic.

Chair Wright replied that he thinks they were looking for a number by July for the CIP.

Member Losik pointed out that the CIP number is different than the budget numbers. The Committee was talking about having a budget package together. The Planning Board meets September 12th and the next opportunity is October 11th. Those are the times that were discussed to have a budget, so Administrator Reed will be fully prepared.

Ms. LaBranche replied that's fine. She asked if the RFP would actually be released before getting the funding or if it's only a draft.

Member Losik replied draft. She noted that the budget process is going to be an intensive process.

Administrator Reed pointed out that this will have to go on the warrant.

Ms. LaBranche explained that she is going to put together a compilation of regional master plans that have happened and how much they cost.

Chair Wright stated that for the CIP, that's fine. They want to get it into a class of what it's likely to incur and get that into the budgeting process. Part B is when they get to the point of where they actually have responses.

Administrator Reed noted that's the question. The RFP has not been released yet, so there's the missing link. She asked when they should release the RFP to start getting responses back. Numbers for the budget would be needed somewhere between September 12th and October 11th. She asked if the RFP should be released before then to start getting responses.

Member Losik commented that she thinks they have to. Referring to an April email from Ms. LaBranche regarding the task list, she noted that #4 says; *"draft an RFP to support the dollar amount being requested and define the scope of project which will go a long way toward gaining the Budget Committee's support."* She continued that the Committee needs to have that information for that process, as best as they can.

Ms. LaBranche asked if when they say "release" the RFP are they saying to release it internally for review so they know what the scope of the project is to justify the budget? In terms of releasing the RFP to consultants, she doubts that they would be inclined to reply without knowing the funds are secured yet. Her suggestion would be to keep it as an internal draft to be circulated for justification and support of the budget being proposed. The day after town vote happens, if approval is received, the RFP can then be released.

Chair Wright pointed out that a number is still needed for the CIP and the budget. He asked how they will have any idea what the actual proposals are going to come in at if the RFP has not been released.

Ms. LaBranche explained that the RFP typically goes out with a budget number. The preliminary status is for her to prepare a list of communities that have done master plan updates. Some will be theme-based and some will be chapter based, which has significantly different budgets associated with those two approaches. She will create a list so the Committee can review the product for that amount of money. She pointed out that the Committee will choose a number.

Administrator Reed explained that when this starts going through the Select Board and the Budget Committee, they will be looking at the scope of services. They may add or subtract items which could change the numbers. That number would be put in a warrant article based on the services that they are looking for from the consulting firms for a master plan. The internal draft of the RFP becomes a working document, so at the end of the budgeting process, it will then be written into the warrant article for the March vote. She further explained that the warrant has to be submitted the end of December/beginning of January. She would like to have the RFP number by the September 12th planning board meeting. Since the Planning Board is the ultimate board that governs the master plan, she would like to see them weigh-in before it goes to the Select Board or Budget Committee.

Ms. LaBranche pointed out that the RFP will in some ways dictate the budget for the project. It will depend on how much they want to spend and the different elements they want to spend on. She noted that a number of regional master plans have happened. She will only pull from towns that are of similar size to Rye. A lot of the master plans happened pre-Covid. The Committee will have to factor inflation into the final estimated budget. She suggested that the Committee think about what kind of master plan they want to have. They can then figure out the scope of work.

Member Garcia asked how much time is given to the firms to submit their proposals, once the RFP goes out.

Ms. LaBranche replied that it's usually sixty days. It won't take more than thirty days to review the proposals and then consultants will be brought in for interviews.

Chair Wright summarized that it will be going before the Town in March for a vote. The RFP will go out and proposals will be reviewed in June with interviews being conducted in July.

Ms. LaBranche commented that the selection will be made in July with a potential August contract date. Typically, it's an eighteen-month contract period for the project; however, this depends on the scope of the project.

Chair Wright stated that it seems the things that were brought forward by members of the community are big things; such as, water quality and build-out plan. It's more the heavy lifting stuff that's top of mind.

Administrator Reed commented that process should not be shortened, so 18 months would be appropriate if they want the heavy lifting with an adequate end result.

Chair Wright pointed out that they would be likely be looking at early 2025 to have a new master plan to be approved by the Planning Board.

Ms. LaBranche recommended having the consultant take the process through the public comment period. The Master Plan would be released with a public hearing being held. Any changes or tweaks will then be made. The consultant would be responsible for collecting the public input and creating a final draft.

The Committee reviewed the tasks to be performed and the contract, prepared by Julie LaBranche, JVL Planning Consultant, for preparation of the Master Plan RFP and budget. It was agreed the completion date for the draft RFP should be September 1st in order for the Planning Board to weigh-in at their meeting on the 12th. It was also agreed that Ms. LaBranche should attend a Budget Committee meeting and a Select Board meeting. An additional meeting will be added to the list of tasks to be performed by Ms. LaBranche.

Ms. LaBranche reviewed a 2-page document addressing the elements of an RFP. She noted that the “guts” of the RFP will be the scope of services and tasks; areas the consultant should focus on. The “nuts and bolts” of the RFP list what should be included in the responses to the RFP; such as, who they are, project budget, timeline and references. The section in regards to “submissions and deliverables” speaks to the expectations for the final product. It also lists contract requirements.

Referring to scope of services and tasks, Ms. LaBranche stated that when she applies to proposals, she will actually put the percentage of the budget that will be spent on each element. This may include community outreach, goals and visioning, working groups, data collection and analysis, and draft plan. She pointed out that in the draft plan section, it could be added that the consultant takes the project to final draft, including public comment period and taking it to the Planning Board for adoption.

Chair Wright noted that coming from all this expense and activity, it seems there ought to be an action plan for solving the short comings that are identified in the Master Plan.

Member Losik clarified an implementation plan.

It was agreed that they would definitely want an implementation chapter.

Ms. LaBranche pointed out this would be added under scope of services. She commented that the RFP can be as detailed as they want and the consultant will figure it out. The draft plan phase is working with the Planning Board and the LRP Committee to come up with an approach. The proposal the consultant would submit would list all the elements that the draft plan needs to include and give a description of what they would do. She suggested asking for a detailed plan for each task under scope of services.

Chair Wright stated that at the end, he wants to be sure they have a very concrete implementation plan. He really feels it’s important to add some money to pay for assistance in figuring out how

to do the implementation. If there are gaps in the town government, it's in implementing and enforcing things.

Administrator Reed commented this might be a separate issue. Once there's a master plan and it's adopted, they can work on how that will be implemented. She noted that she did a draft CIP. They may want an entirely separate dollar amount for after the master plan, probably in 2026, for the implementation.

Ms. LaBranche noted that the implementation plan will set forth action items. It may be structured over a period of 5 years. Things to consider with the implementation plan would be whether action items are constrained by regulations or budgetary needs. In order to do this, there would need to be some money to actually implement these things. She continued that the implementation plan would outline the tasks and action items the town wants to accomplish over a certain number of years. It would include any constraints involved in implementing that action item and it would include budgetary funding. Each action item would probably have a plan unto itself, which would morph into future planning.

Member Losik stated that what they have heard from the community is that they really want a top-notch master plan; a good master plan for the community with a format that can go forward for another 10 to 20 years. One of the other pieces that she is concerned about is whether resources are available going through this process, because Administrator Reed is a department of one. There is going to be additional work through the process. She has concern about where those resources exist. She thinks this is something they need to be aware of. It's two parts; the resources that exist in the near term and what exists for resource for implementation.

Chair Wright commented there are resources that go beyond planning board resources. It gets into building. It gets into the Select Board. If the Town says this is a top priority, how do they make that happen?

Member Losik noted that Exeter's planner writes a report each year of where the town stands and who's doing what.

Member Garcia stated that if they don't have an implementation plan, it's useless to do a master plan and spend all that money, if the Town doesn't have the resources.

Chair Wright stated that if they are going to put a number in for the CIP and before the whole town, that number ought to include some number for implementation

Administrator Reed passed out a copy of a draft CIP form, which is filled out by department heads and submitted to the CIP Committee. She noted they would submit a number for the Master Plan. They could also add a number for implementation. She pointed out that as they work out the tasks for the RFP, the numbers for the CIP could change. She noted that this is what the Committee needs to work on for the next month.

Member Losik suggested adding resources for project support.

Ms. LaBranche stated that they may not have a budget for an implementation plan before they get a draft of the Master Plan and implementation plan done.

Chair Wright commented that he would like to get a “ballpark” number in the CIP. He would like to see something that says here’s a rough guess as to what it’s going to take to implement this. If it involves something external to the plan and resources that don’t exist within the Town’s framework of government, then that should be known.

Referring to the CIP process, Administrator Reed explained that right now, they are looking at the length of time from 2022 to 2028. All department heads are asked about their plans for the next seven years. In addition, they are asked to give a status report of what they have done. In the status report, it will say whether the project cost was more money than originally anticipated. If the Committee throws out a number for the Master Plan, it will be a placeholder, but there will also be a status report down the road to say how much it will actually cost. It may be more or it may be less, but that can be explained in the status report.

Member Losik commented that when the Committee looks at the other communities, they should pay attention to their planning and zoning resources. That informs as well. She pointed out that they are looking at other communities as to what they are doing for a master plan. It was acknowledged that there cannot be a plan with no implementation resources. Rye may need more resources to get to the completed plan.

Ms. LaBranche agreed the town summary should have the level of staff resources and the community’s consulting approach.

There was some discussion about the type of master plan that Rye’s should be.

Ms. LaBranche noted that some towns have said they definitely want a theme-based approach plan. Some towns have said that they want the consultant to propose what they think is the best approach. She continued that some towns have a hybrid approach to their master plan. In looking at Exeter, Stratham and Plaistow, they threw everything else out and just have a theme-based master plan. Some of the hybrid approaches have been to focus on the theme-based approach for the Vision Chapter and include it in the visioning outreach. The existing and future land use chapters would be included, as those are required under statute. Then they would go back and tweak some of the older chapters with those being put in as an appendix. The main document would be a vision chapter, existing and future land use, and an executive summary, which would be a very portable document. The hybrid approach could also include a vision chapter, goals and objectives, an implementation plan, existing and future land use, and an executive summary.

III. Website

Administrator Reed noted that she organized the survey information that is posted on the Town’s website, so the information is easier to read and more user friendly.

Member Losik noted that the 52 pages of the community survey is on the website, along with the municipal survey. She also noted that some personal information is included on those pages.

It was agreed that the municipal and community survey data should be taken off the website until the Committee has a discussion.

- **April 5, 2022**

The following corrections were noted:

- **Page 1, last sentence should read: Planning Administrator Reed explained that the chair of the Planning Board could break a tie vote if the two members do not agree when voting**
- **Page 2, 3rd paragraph, 2nd sentence should read: The duties of every planning board, established under RSA 673:1, is to “*prepare and amend from time to time a master plan to guide the development of the municipality*”.**
- **Page 2, 4th paragraph, 1st sentence should read: Chair Wright stated that the last incarnation of this committee wrapped up its work on the visioning framework on February 1st.**

Motion by Pat Losik to approve the April 5, 2022 minutes as amended. Seconded by Rob Wright. All in favor.

- **May 03, 2022**

It should be noted that: The Planning and Zoning Administrator agreed to pay Julie LaBranche, Consultant, for additional services when rendered from the consulting budget.

Motion by Pat Losik to approve the minutes of May 3, 2022 as amended. Seconded by Rob Wright. All in favor.

IV. Next Steps

Homework for the Committee: (mark ups on the draft to be sent to Julie)

- Look at scope of services and tasks
 - Think about where the consultant should be spending their time, producing deliverables and doing work
 - If list not complete enough; add items and flush out the descriptions
- Review the response section of the RFP
 - Description of firm and project team
- Think about the type of master plan; theme-based, chapter based or hybrid

Adjournment

Motion by Pat Losik to adjourn at 11:35 a.m. Seconded by Rob Wright. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted, Dyana F. Ledger