

LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

**Thursday, July 15, 2021
1:30 p.m. – Rye Town Hall**

Members Present: Steve Carter, Katie Sherman, Rob Wright

Ad-Hoc Members: Kathryn Garcia, Dominique Winebaum and Patricia Losik

Others Present: Planning Administrator Kim Reed, and Julie LaBranche

I. Call to Order

Chair Carter called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

II. Update of Julie LaBranche as consultant and scope of work

The Committee reviewed a copy of the JVL contract from Julie LaBranche, who will be working with the LRP on developing the framework for a new visioning chapter for the Rye Master Plan. The Selectmen will be signing the contract once final details regarding insurance is confirmed. Ms. LaBranche will be honoring the agreed upon pricing for services with Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) in the amount of \$8,000; minus \$1,300 already paid to RPC. The Committee also reviewed the letter to RPC asking for a termination of the contract between the Town and RPC.

It was noted that the time line for completion of work, which was originally scheduled for December 30th, may need to be extended out to January or February. The extension should not create an issue, as revisions to the master plan are adopted by the Planning Board and do not need to go to the ballot for town vote in March.

Mrs. Reed noted that the PREPA Grant was going to pay for the rewrite of the visioning chapter; however, the Town was not awarded that grant. At this time, the Committee is just working on a framework for the chapter. The Town's budgeting process for 2022 has begun. Mrs. Reed will be adding money to the 2022 budget to cover the rewrite of the visioning chapter. Depending upon what happens with the visioning session with the entire town, a budget can then be created for an update of the entire master plan, which will most likely be a 2023 project as it can be very expensive.

The Committee discussed whether the cost of rewriting the entire master plan should be included in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Mrs. Reed noted that any expense greater than \$15,000 goes in the CIP. It is not anticipated that the visioning chapter is going to be more than \$15,000; therefore, it does not need to go in the CIP. Mrs. Reed also explained that facts and data will be needed for the full rewrite of the master plan in order to submit it to the CIP. This information

will not be known until after the visioning session. At this time, the work currently being done by LRP is to develop a framework for a visioning chapter. The Vision Chapter will be written in 2022 with the intent of rewriting the full master plan in 2023.

Ms. LaBranche explained the concept of a theme-based master plan versus a traditional master plan based on different topics. It was suggested that the board think about the approach they want to take, as it will be a key factor in determining a dollar amount to revamp the master plan.

Ms. LaBranche explained the current phase of the Committee's work:

- Develop a framework for a visioning chapter. The framework will be developed from the municipal survey and town-wide (public survey).
 - The municipal survey asks town staff and boards/commissions their department needs and objectives.
 - The public survey asks residents their thoughts on certain topics.
- Committee will condense the responses into questions and topics that could be discussed at a visioning session to be held late October or early November.
- After the visioning session, all information will be formatted into a framework for the main topics of a visioning chapter.
- Once that is done, the Committee will have an answer as to what direction to head in and a budget could be started for a final vision chapter. There may be the possibility of grants in 2022 to finalize the vision chapter, which would setup the best position for asking for a budget for a master plan rewrite.

It was explained by Planning Administrator Reed that in order for the full master plan rewrite to get on the 2023 ballot, everything has to be ready by the end of December 2022. The goal is for the Town to have a brand-new master plan by 2024.

It was agreed that a time line should be at the top of the public survey. The budgeting timeframe should also be part of the time line. It was also agreed to add a summary explaining why this information is being requested.

III. Surveys for the Town Staff, Boards, Committee and Commissions to go live

The Committee worked on the time line for the municipal survey:

- Once contract with JVL is signed, Ms. LaBranche can upload the survey online, which can be done within a couple of days.
- An initial email by July 26th to be sent from the Town Administrator asking boards and staff to fill out the survey with a date given for responses.
- Survey #1 (municipal) to be sent out by the end of July with responses being due by August 20th.
- The intent is to have the chairs of the boards and commissions add this to their August meeting agendas for discussion with the full board/commission. Responses will need to be uploaded into Survey Monkey online. The recommendation is that boards/commissions have one person entering the responses when they are discussing them during their meetings.

Ms. LaBranche suggested going through the municipal survey one more time and automating (check boxes). This will help to cut down on some of the data that will be received with a narrative format, which may not be helpful to the process. The Committee agreed.

IV. The surveys to go out to the public

The Committee worked on the time line for the town-wide (public) survey:

- Ms. LaBranche suggested a target date of the middle of August to get the public survey out, with it being open online until the middle of September. The idea is to not keep the survey open more than four weeks. The Committee agreed to the dates of August 17th to September 17th, as Labor Day is later this year and this will give people a chance to answer the survey after returning from vacation.
- Chair Carter noted that working on the questions for the public survey will be the focus of the Committee's next meeting. Before the meeting, a draft of questions will be sent to the members to review, so there will be an idea of what might be on that survey. Chair Carter suggested two meetings before August 15th to get the public survey ready. This will give time for Ms. LaBranche to upload it to Survey Monkey to go out on the 17th.

V. Revisit time line for the visioning session

The Committee reviewed the visioning session time line:

- Responses from public survey to be received by September 17th. That information can be consolidated by September 24th. The Committee should meet the following week to develop questions for the visioning session.
- The intended timeframe for the visioning session is late October or early November.
- Committee will work on chapter framework in November and December (Draft framework #1). December/January (draft framework #2).
- Present the framework document to the Planning Board in January with the intent to get a board approval in February.

VI. Other

The Committee agreed that they were fine with the questions for the municipal survey and that they should be modified to have more multiple choice. They also agreed that questions that may require more writing could be moved to the end of the survey. At the next meeting, the Committee will focus on the public survey.

Chair Carter reported that the Rye Civic League (RCL) has a survey on their website. It's a Rye survey but a lot of it is about the Rye Civic League. RCL has received some good information. About 1200 surveys were sent out and about 120 were returned. The information that was received was shared with the Planning Board. He thinks it would be good to mix in this information with what is received from the other surveys.

The Committee had a brief discussion on whether the surveys should be mailed out or sent electronically to residents. Ms. LaBranche talked about ways other towns have gotten their surveys out to the community; such as, having them available at the library and town hall with

drop-off boxes for survey returns. They also discussed ways to get the word out to residents about the survey; such as, Rye Magazine, Rye Newsletter and RCL. Ms. LaBranche will send out a memo to the Committee outlining some PR ideas to consider at the next meeting.

Planning Administrator Reed submitted copies of the word document, based off Hampstead's survey, which was created by Dominique Winebaum and Steve Carter.

Chair Carter asked the members to review the document and get their comments and suggested changes to Planning Administrator Reed before the next meeting. It was noted that the public survey will be the focus of the next meeting.

Ad-hoc Member Winebaum expressed her concerns in regards to the format of the May meeting minutes, as the May 5th were ten pages long and the May 25th were just a summary. After some discussion, it was agreed that the minutes should be just a summary of the meetings.

- **Next meeting scheduled for Monday, July 26th, 1:30 p.m., Town Hall**

Adjournment

Chair Carter adjourned the meeting at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dyana F. Ledger