

**Meeting Notes**  
**“Spotlighting the Master Plan Chapters”**  
***Cultural Resources***  
***Transportation***  
***Public Facilities & Services***  
6.11.14

The following notes represent the comments obtained during the open comment period of the meeting. A copy of the June 11<sup>th</sup> presentation may be found on the Master Plan website:

<http://www.cityofnewburyport.com/master-plan-steering-committee>

Questions/Comments related to Cultural Resources

- **Q:** The Archival Center is a great resource for the community. Will there be an action item relative to putting the information in the center online so that the public can access the documents more easily?  
**A:** This is definitely a priority and will be included in the Master Plan as an action item. The Planning Department is continually working to make all of its documents electronic so that sharing them with the public will be easier and more efficient.
- **Comment:** Typically, the Cultural Resources sections of Master Plans deal with the built environment. This plan seems to be dealing with more than the built environment and is incorporating events, media, programming, etc. It may be helpful to have two sections of the chapter – one dealing with the built environment (historic structures, landscapes, etc.) and one that focuses on the events, tourism, programs, etc.
- **Comment:** Cultural landscapes, like the Common Pasture, Bartlet Mall and the riverfront should be included in this chapter. These are also natural resources – how will their inclusion in the Cultural Resources chapter coexist with their inclusion in the Natural Resources, Open Space and Recreation Chapter?
- **Comment:** Newburyport will continue to be a great place and will be inundated by tourists. We need to plan for this in order to preserve the “soul of the City.” The waterfront should be memorialized and dedicated to our maritime community and the shipbuilding history.
- **Q:** How will the cultural resource collaboration, mentioned during the presentation, be funded? Will collaboration increase opportunity for grants? How will grant funding be divided among the community’s cultural resources?  
**A:** Collaboration will allow for the sharing of resources, which will allow for more programming and events due to efficient use of limited funds. By creating a fully-funded, full time Office of Arts, Tourism and Cultural Affairs, there will be a centralized

place for all of the community's cultural resources to come together and collaborate. The Office will be able to apply for grant funding on behalf of the organizations rather than each one competing for the funds separately.

It is also important to note that big budgets aren't always necessary to create dynamic community events and programs. Currently, a lot of events are born out of casual discussions among the organizations, their members and the community. Sometimes events only need volunteer power to happen and it is important to recognize that large project/event budgets are not always needed. We need to capitalize on the efficiency of our community volunteers.

- **Comment:** Artist live/work space is a good idea and should be considered when examining the reuse of both the Brown and the Kelley schools.  
**Response:** This is a concept that will be examined through the Brown School feasibility study. We hope to have professional architects look at potential live/work space in the Brown in addition to determining its appropriateness with the idea of shared space with Youth Services.

#### Questions/Comments related to Transportation

- **Q:** Has there been any discussion relative to evacuation procedures for the community in the event of a massive storm, hurricane, storm surge, etc.?  
**A:** There hasn't yet been a specific topic of discussion regarding how to evacuate the community in the event of a major hurricane. However, this idea could be explored in the Transportation chapter in terms of having the infrastructure in place to safely and efficiently allow the movement of the community. It may also be explored in the Public Services & Facilities chapter.
- **Comment:** There is a lot of focus on parking, creating it and maintaining it. This plan is looking toward the next ten years. It is feasible that the prices of fuel will increase to the point that we may be looking for alternate modes of transportation because personal vehicles may be too costly to use/operate. The City should be looking to increase public transit options, shuttle services and infrastructure that will allow for safe travel for non-vehicular movement (walking, biking).

#### Questions/Comments related to Public Facilities & Services

- **Q:** Has the subcommittee discussed potential locations for the installation of fiber optic cables?  
**A:** The group has only identified the need to explore the feasibility of installing the system and has not suggested potential locations. The Land Use & Development subcommittee has divided the City into "nodes" and "corridors" – basically grouping the city into identifiable areas and major travel ways. This way of sectioning off the City may be helpful in determining priority areas where a fiber optic system could be installed, if feasible.

### Questions/Comments related to Master Plan, Generally

- **Comment:** Concerned that the document, once completed, will sit on a shelf. In order to make it a working document, the chapters need to include ways to measure our progress on the different actions. There should be timelines that state when we want to accomplish the goals and a way to determine if the goal has been fully realized.

**Response:** We have reached out to the subcommittees and have asked them to begin thinking about how to measure progress on each of their goals. As the groups are refining their actions and objectives, including metrics and timelines will be the next logical step in their work plan. The Master Plan will include a provision that yearly reporting is necessary. However, this may be modified to allow for reporting when significant progress is made on a goal/item so that the Plan continues to be a “living,” working document.

In order to keep our Cultural District designation we must collect data and report out to the state. Data collection and reporting to the state is also a requirement of our Housing Production Plan. The city is already required to collect and report on progress for these two areas, which we can expand as part of the Master Plan for these two sections and include ways to collect data for the other chapters.

- **Comment:** Many of the groups are using the term “sustainability.” It is a buzz word that should not be confused with “maintenance”. Real sustainability is using our natural resources in a responsible way so as not to deny future generations the ability to use them. We will need to modify how we use our resources to be truly sustainable.

### Next Steps

- The Planning Office is compiling questions for a community survey, which will be available in the next month. We hope to blast the survey out to individuals, groups and organizations that are not able to attend the community meetings, but would like to offer input on the plan and its contents.
- The Planning Office will be working on the front end of the document (Introduction, Vision Statement, Guiding Principles, etc.) as well as collecting data to illustrate various aspects of the community (population characteristics, housing data, economic data, workforce/employment numbers, etc.)
- The Steering Committee will examine the chapters’ goals, objectives, and actions and determine how to address the overlapping of information among the sections and how to integrate the individual chapters into one comprehensive plan.
- Fall 2014 – Our goal is to have a complete draft of the plan to present to the community. We will have public meetings to discuss the draft as well as an open comment period.
- Winter 2014-2015 – Upon the close of the public comment period and editing of the draft, the Planning Office will bring the draft of the Plan to the Planning Board and the City Council for local adoption and finally submission to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for state adoption.