

# Natick 360

Honoring Our Past. Planning Our Future.



## Strategic Planning Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes • October 18, 2006

### **Present:**

Rosemary Driscoll, designated by School Committee  
Terri Evans, at-large member  
John Heerwagen, at-large member  
David Parish, Co-Chair, designated by the Board of Selectmen  
George Richards, designated by the Planning Board  
Craig Ross, Co-Chair, designated by the Finance Committee  
Fred Witte, at-large member

### **Absent:**

Matthew Gardner, designated by the Conservation Commission.  
Harlee Strauss, at-large member

### **Consultants:**

Phillip Blackerby, Blackerby Associates (by telephone);

Meeting was called to order 6:33 p.m. EDT by Mr. Ross.

Mr. Ross announced purpose of the SPOC and Natick 360 Strategic Planning Process. He referred to the Vision for the Future Weekend October 27-29; keynote by Anthony Flint of Lincoln Institute discussing development pressures. Also Metropolitan Area Planning Council will report on Town demographics, employment, traffic, trends, etc. Then Saturday and Sunday six workshops 2 hours; opportunity for citizens to tell what is important for the Town of Natick. Reference [www.Natick360.org](http://www.Natick360.org).

### **Item 1 Minutes:**

Motion to accept meeting minutes of October 4, 2006, dated October 8, 2006, made by Mr. Parish, seconded by Mr. Witte. Voted 5-0-1 to approve. A question regarding Item 6, related to the project plan, was deferred for discussion later (see below).

### **Item 2 Coordination of Sponsoring Boards:**

Mr. Richards noted that scheduling is on the agenda for the Planning Board for next Wednesday, Oct. 25.

Members were encouraged to ensure members of sponsoring boards and committees are registered for the October 27-29 Vision for the Future Weekend, and to recruit neighbors to participate as well.

Members sent the list of dates to Chairs of the School Committee and Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Ross reported he submitted a letter to Board of Selectmen to put banner across Main St., approved and now hanging there for 2 weeks.

### **Item 3. Project Finances:**

- a. Review of income and charges against donation account: Received donation of previous pledge from Natick Federal Savings Bank, first \$2,500 of \$5,000 pledged. Middlesex Savings Bank gave \$5,000 toward pledge of \$10,000. Eastern Bank check was received; will give to Town in next week or so. Goal is \$50,000; Pledges received to date total \$21,000; cash is now coming through. Frugal spending focuses on publicity: fliers and banner. Spent \$1,280 or so for supplies and printing.
- b. Review of charges against Town Meeting appropriation: First invoice from Blackerby Associates for ½ month work through end of September, \$4,275. Mr. Richards moved and Ms. Driscoll seconded approval of invoice 06-013. Vote 7-0-0 to approve.
- c. Original budget was \$150,000 for consultant resources, plus \$50,000 for publicity (\$25,000) and survey (\$25,000). Most expenses are fixed by contract (MAPC and Blackerby); remainder are just for publicity and supplies. Mr. Richards moved and Mr. Witte seconded, to authorize Mr. Ross and Mr. Parish to review and approve expenditures for expenses not to exceed \$1,000, without formal Committee vote, providing a regular report of expenses to the full Committee;; vote 7-0-0 to approve.

### **Item 4. Visioning Weekend Update:**

- a. Mr. Blackerby reported that registrations total 93, with 56% sign up for Friday night. Mr. Ross reviewed the registration strategy; newspaper columns; letters to organizers; banner; tell-a-friend notes, etc.
- b. Mr. Ross noted the Youth Summit for children, a separate focus group on Saturday, 1:00-3:00 p.m., facilitated by a professional. Reach out to Youth Advisory Board to help with registrations, as well as other organizations.
- c. Ms. Evans offered to help Senior community to register; met at Senior Center last week. Fliers are on bulletin board. Addressing transportation issues.
- d. Natick Service Council expects response of 25-50 to mailing going out tomorrow.
- e. Publicity Campaign: Some people plan to come, but register later. Incentive to pre-register: 2 tickets to benefit concert Nov. 18 Paula Poundstone, including backstage reception after; value \$150 each. Pre-registrations entered into Friday night raffle.
- f. Banner across Main St.
- g. Two more articles in Natick *Bulletin & Tab*, including one this Friday.
- h. Anthony Flint will also have article on October 27<sup>th</sup> in Natick *Bulletin & Tab*.
- i. Volunteer needs: SPOC members and public needed to hand out fliers at weekend events (book sale at Library, soccer tourney, Middlesex Savings Bank, farmers market, etc.) Want to cover commuter trains West Natick and Central station, 6:30 to 8:30 a.m. Mr. Parish volunteered.
- j. Send fliers home with middle school and elementary school kids on Wednesday. \$350 printing cost; packs of 25 fliers. For high schoolers, participation in Youth Summit is targeted, not broadcast, working with Youth Advisory Committee. Handouts will be distributed in history

classes. Andrea Geller (NHS) will announce in morning announcements. Students then reach out to other students through their own media to get more participation.

- k. Business community and retail stores downtown have asked to put flier on their door, etc. Tuesday ask Rotary members to post flier at their place of business. Emphasize that it's open to people with businesses here, not just residents. Mr. Heerwagon proposed a one-page memo announcement, encouraging participation by business folks, and sponsorship opportunity, with registration form; 3 channels: Rotary, Chamber of Commerce and Natick Center Associates; also to focus group, for a total 250+ business community representatives. Handed out memo and registration to 30 at meeting yesterday. Received gift certificates from H. Brandt Jewelers, and framed mirror and photograph of downtown from Frame Shop, with some unframed pieces. Place on web site lists volunteer opportunities: distribute fliers at key events; phone-a-thon for Monday night targeting Town board members (10 volunteers needed); Thursday night 26<sup>th</sup> to assemble registration packets and goodie bags; ushering and registration during weekend.
- l. Raffle items: how to use them; as phone-a-thon script tickler, on web site, on fliers, e-newsletter.
- m. T mailings so far: 380 to organization members; then to about 40 folks who have volunteered.
- n. Ms. Driscoll reported on logistical issues: contact with Wilson site; need to confirm time requirements; Mr. Ross and Mr. Blackerby will meet with Principal Ruth Evans Monday, 8:30 a.m., to tour facilities, and work out issues. Refreshments: how to handle; get donations? Keep it simple: coffee, juice, pastries or donuts Saturday morning, cookies, drinks and water Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Ms. Driscoll will make a list and lead the effort; Mr. Ross will draft a letter of request; others will visit vendors to ask for support. Mr. Heerwagen has secured folder for up to 50 pages, pad, pen, coupons, branded for Natick 360; will have them Wednesday or Thursday; provided by Middlesex Savings Bank. Also need coolers, tub, ice, etc.
- o. Update on sponsorships/business outreach: reaching out to a number of organizations; one new one is close to agreement; some businesses have filled out surveys on-line; others we need to approach, including the Hospital and other large employers, such as Boston Scientific, Army Laboratory, etc. Send electronic flier for distribution through the companies, as well as sponsorship opportunities.

## **Item 5. Review of Phase II-IV Project Schedule:**

See scheduling documents on Blackerby Associates web site ([www.BlackerbyAssoc.com/Natick/](http://www.BlackerbyAssoc.com/Natick/)):

- a. Finance Committee submitted to Chairman; he is reviewing it for dates, no firm commitments yet for this 15 member committee. Need formal vote of full Finance Committee at completion of each phase as acceptance of work for that phase. As we build up to that vote, a subcommittee will work on details. Recommend work with Chair to find subcommittee to prepare materials for full committee.
- b. Ms. Driscoll and Mr. Parish sent notes to members of Schools Committee and Selectmen; no word back yet. Suggested subcommittee – Carol Gloff as point person as first level of review for Selectmen; Chairman Charlie Hughes handed out schedule to Board on Monday; asked to review and get back to them; first date, November 15, already has a full schedule. Ms. Driscoll suggested we use Thursday, November 16<sup>th</sup> of that week; School Comm. could take Monday 13<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Blackerby will meet with Selectmen, School Committee. and Finance Committee chairs. Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>, as well as with Patrick Refflett of the Planning Department and Matt Gardner of the Conservation Commission the same week. He will explain how Natick 360 fits into larger scheme. The SPOC needs to clarify to all Boards that we require incremental meetings, not just another item on the regular schedule. Get designated liaisons for each sponsoring committee;

meetings are study sessions or work sessions, not for voting; must be posted, in case a quorum shows up; documents for vote decisions will come up later as regular agenda items.

- c. Mr. Parish is organizing Key Informants meeting; suggested week of December 11-14 for that meeting.
- d. Invitation to other communities' leaders to join in participating; Town Administrator Phil Lemnios went to a meeting of town administrators, talking about long range planning; suggested they attend Natick process. Also New England Smart Growth Forum notes that Natick is model for other communities to get citizen input.

### **Item 6. Review of Project Report Template:**

Got approval of Town Clerk to use Natick seal for this project. Design works well, but Town Seal is not the right one; has teepee instead of long house.

### **Item 7. Phase I Report Update:**

Got new draft from MAPC, complete, with data and analysis, not yet final; need another round of fleshing out; get back to them Friday, and have something for SPOC review early next week. Some outstanding issues remain. Not ready for sponsoring committee review and acceptance vote. Most recent MCAS data have been added to report, but won't add grade 8 data when it comes out; data has now been frozen.

### **Item 8. Other Business:**

- a. Post Thursday night as a meeting to assemble registration packets; Mr. Ross will set a location;.
- b. Other community planning processes in parallel. Wrap them all together to get people to participate:
  - Natick Cares funded by MetroWest Health Care Foundation focusing on youth health issues; amazing and thorough report; distribute in the packets, and post on web site under "other planning efforts" (not Natick 360) to integrate and consider others' findings as we move forward and consider strategic options. Make it an annotated link to document download.
  - Natick Center Associates is conducting planning charettes, to build on a planning process started in 2002; announce the schedule of these charettes on the web site. We encourage groups to look narrowly and deeply into specific areas of concern; they are producing results.
  - Library is updating a plan.

Natick360 can serve as an umbrella for other planning organizations. Do a couple at the same time, so no one believes we are singling out any specific efforts.

Next meeting Wednesday, Nov. 1, at School Committee Meeting room (directly above), 6:30 p.m. Also we will post meeting for Thursday, Oct. 26.

Moved by Ms. Driscoll, and seconded by Ms. Evans, vote 7-0-0 for adjournment at 8:29 p.m.