

Natick 360
Honoring Our Past. Planning Our Future.



Strategic Planning Oversight Committee
Minutes * December 13, 2006

Present

Terri Evans, at-large member
Matthew Gardner, designated by the Conservation Commission
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
Harlee Strauss, at-large member
Fred Witte, at-large member

Absent

Rosemary Driscoll, designated by School Committee

Consultants Present

Phillip Blackerby, Blackerby Associates
Elizabeth Reuthe, Blackerby Associates

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. EST by Co-Chair Mr. Ross in the Ed Dlott Meeting Room, 2nd Floor Town Hall, Natick, MA 01760.

Item 1. Minutes of November 29, 2006: Mr. Parish asked to strike the last sentence in item 9, related to the photography exhibit. Ms. Evans noted a typographical correction on Item 7, first line. Mr. Heerwagen moved to approve the minutes as amended by Mr. Parish and Ms. Evans; and Ms. Evans seconded the motion. The Committee voted 7-0-1 to approve the minutes as amended.

Item 2. Coordination with Sponsoring Boards. Mr. Ross noted that meetings have not yet been scheduled with the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission for February, March and September. Mr. Gardner said to schedule the Conservation Commission Thursday, February 15, at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Gardner will be out of the country in March, but will appoint a Vice-Chair to serve in his place. He will also pencil in a Conservation Commission meeting for Monday, March 26 at 7:00 p.m. for . Ms. Evans will discuss the dates with the Planning Board Chair.

Item 3. Fundraising. Mr. Richards contacted two entities; one (at the Mall) said it would go through a committee and he would get back to him, and indicated likely support. The other contact was a business owner, who said some small support would likely be forthcoming. In addition, Mr. Richards will approach some smaller businesses for smaller contributions. Mr. Ross reported interest from a local auto dealer, requiring more follow-up. An additional potential donor will consider the request after the first of the year. A total of about \$30,000 is sought. Mr. Heerwagen indicated an interest in approaching one of the larger employers in the town. Mr. Parish reported approaching another major employer, but Natick 360 did not meet their “project”-based contribution criteria.

Item 4. Phase 1 Report Review and Actions. Mr. Ross added information about the Business Forum, as a separate section, and corresponding changes in the Table of Contents. Mr. Parish moved to accept the report, and Mr. Richards seconded the motion. The Committee voted 8-0-0 to approve the motion.

Mr. Ross discussed the Executive Summary and Overview, a separate 17-page document. He noted that this document will satisfy many people, and lead many others to read the full report. Ms. Strauss suggested a briefer document with bullets summarizing the major headings, and editing the first two pages to one. Mr. Parish noted that the challenge of this summary is to include some major facts and to give a sense of the texture and depth of the report. Mr. Heerwagen noted that it is eminently readable, and suggested focusing on summarizing the report, rather than summarizing Natick 360. Mr. Gardner noted that it is a stand-alone document that can be separately marketed, and is not necessarily intended to lead people to the larger document. *Action item:* (a) Ms. Evans volunteered to take an editing pass at the document. Mr. Richards noted that: 7 pages on government and finance is a bit long; the graphic on p. 13 is not easily read; and the chart on page 14 may not be necessary. He agreed with Ms. Evans that the 2½ override section is very important. Ms. Evans suggested cutting figure 4; she noted that figure 3 is valuable, but may be simplified, and that page 10 has a good pie chart on where the money comes from. Ms. Strauss suggested changes for page 6, to reduce redundancy. Mr. Parish noted that some depth on municipal finance is valuable, as it is a major issue facing the Town. Mr. Ross reviewed the key edits to be made, and members indicated their comfort with the substance of the document. Mr. Gardner moved to accept the report as amended; Mr. Heerwagen seconded the motion; the Committee voted 8-0-0 to approve the motion.

Mr. Richards moved, and Ms. Evans seconded, to pay the \$30,000 invoice from MAPC; the Committee voted 8-0-0 to approve the motion.

Item 5. Phase II Update. Mr. Blackerby and Ms. Reuthe reported on the meetings to date with the sponsoring Boards and Committees. The committee discussed the pros and cons of simplifying the values and vision statements in the version 2 draft.

Item 6. Meeting Schedule for 2007. Mr. Ross reported that SPOC Meetings have been posted for the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month, starting January 3, 2007 (to be in the School Committee Room; other meetings will be in the Dlott Meeting Room), through May. Meetings on the 5th Wednesday have also been posted, but may be cancelled if they are not needed. The Committee discussed delaying the start to 7:00 p.m., but decided to stay with the 6:30 starting time.

Item 7. Other Business. Mr. Parish distributed copies of a column in MetroWest News by Rick Holms on civic participation, mentioning Natick 360 in favorable light.

Mr. Parish told of a conference he attended regarding competitive advantage among regional towns.

Mr. Parish moved to adjourn; Ms. Evans seconded the motion; the Committee voted 8-0-0 to adjourn. Mr. Ross adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Summary of Action Items noted above:

- (a) Ms. Evans volunteered to take an editing pass at the Executive Summary and Overview document.