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**Planning Board**

**Michael A. Podolski, Esq., Chair**

**John R. Bethoney, Vice Chair**

**Robert D. Aldous, Clerk**

**Ralph I. Steeves**

**James E. O’Brien IV**

**Planning Director**

**Richard J. McCarthy Jr.**

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**TOWN OF DEDHAM**

**PLANNING BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**April 13, 2017, 7 p.m., Lower Conference Room**

**Present:** Michael A. Podolski, Esq., Chair

John R. Bethoney, Vice Chair

Robert D. Aldous, Clerk

Ralph I. Steeves

James E. O’Brien IV

Richard J. McCarthy, Jr., Planning Director

Call to order 7:02 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Plans, documents, studies, etc., referred to are incorporated as part of the public records and are on file in the Planning and Zoning office. The Public Hearing for Article 1 for Town Meeting is on a separate set of minutes, as is the reconsideration of Article 24. These minutes are for the regular Planning Board meeting. Mr. Podolski congratulated Mr. Aldous on his re-election as a Planning Board member.

**Master Plan Implementation Committee Five-Year Update**

W. Shaw McDermott gave a history of the preparation of the Master Plan. The Town passed a bylaw requiring the preparation of a Master Plan every ten years, and an update every five years. The Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen originally appointed the members, but this has recently been reconfigured. The idea is to catalogue as things happen, and then propose to the Planning Board the process by which the MPIC would begin the required ten-year Master Plan. He anticipates that this will occur in 2020. It would take advantage of the United States census material; the last plan did not have the advantage of the census. The objective for the actual presentation would be at Town Meeting at the end of 2020.

With regard to the update, the committee has recognized that much of the plan that was recommended has been accomplished. Mr. McDermott thanked Mr. McCarthy for his hard work with the committee, as well as his extensive knowledge. In Chapter 8 of the Master Plan, the Planning Board, for the first time, approved a planned development on West Street. The Planning Board also commissioned the Bluestone report, which was prepared by Northeastern University. The Board has also approved mixed use developments throughout Town. This chapter needs a little work because these things have occurred but were not noted. Housing has also been a topic but never got much attention in an organized way. The MPIC is trying to determine the changing demographics and what they reveal. There is an aging population that would like to stay in Dedham, but wants to do it in a setting that requires less work and is maybe not so expensive. There is also a younger population is coming into Town, which is very encouraging. They are looking at lower cost housing altogether in the metropolitan area, including Dedham. This will be amended to Chapter 8. Mr. McDermott requested that the Planning Board allow the Master Plan Implementation Committee to spend the next two weeks or so in continuing to work on this. The Planning Board can provide comments that hopefully they can be put in the document.

Mr. McDermott then discussed the Community Preservation Act (CPA); this has not been adopted. The Master Plan update noted that certain things can be financed through CPA funds; this will not be changed in the update. The Master Plan Implementation Committee is in favor of adopting this. There has been a beneficial effect based on the Robin Reyes fund, which was a product of a recommendation that he found in the Master Plan. There was a lot of debate on this, with people wanting to concentrate taxation, evaluation, and tax rate to determine what to do. Many, if not all, people in town feel that taxation is a huge issue.

Mr. Podolski brought up the abandonment of the Police Station and the Capen School, saying that policies are needed before that happens. He would like specifics on buildings that the Master Plan Implementation Committee thinks should be on the Planning Board’s radar. He said that his generation has been criticized over the years for disposing of the Ames School, the Quincy School, and Memorial Hall, and this still happens today. He does not like the fact that people continue to criticize the Planning Board as not knowing what it was doing despite it being many years ago. If the Town is going to tear down the Police Station, this needs to be publicized. Mr. O’Brien noted that some of Section 8.4 has been done, particularly with regard to the Norfolk prison and Norfolk Inn.

Mr. Podolski said the Master Plan Implementation Committee has made an incredible effort. He said that there needs to be an historic inventory. Mr. McDermott said there is no funding for this. Mr. Podolski was amazed that the Town does not have that inventory, and wondered if the Historical Society had some type of roll of historic buildings. Kevin Hampe, Esq., said they do not have the funding, which is obtained by a grant, to do the study necessary to identify those buildings. Mr. Podolski suggested that someone could drive around town to find historic buildings. Mr. O’Brien said he has a book at home that points out unique buildings and architectural styles. Mr. McDermott said that at their last meeting, there was a discussion regarding the previous sequencing of events. A consultant was hired under a contract through appropriation at Town Meeting. They are thinking about starting the process in November 2017 and getting something in the warrant. Mr. Podolski asked if the process had been funded to get the National Historical designation for Mother Brook. Mr. McCarthy did not know. They need to hire an expert to do the paperwork.

Mr. McDermott said the expenditure for the Master Plan last time, which was $100,000, has paid off and has helped the Town a lot. He and Mr. McCarthy discussed doing an informal scope. Judy Barrett did the last Master Plan, and did a fantastic job. Mr. McDermott said the five-year update was done without funding to save the Town money, and to put some money aside for the next effort. Mr. McCarthy explained how the five-year update was done. There were students from Framingham State, an intern from Northeastern University, and a lot of writing from the committee members. These were all volunteers.

The last time the Master Plan was done, they were determined, once funding was received, that the Master Plan Implementation Committee would get a plan on the table in 18 months. He felt that the committee could do better, and said there could be an interesting town-wide dialogue about critical issues. He said the target date for the new Master Plan would be 2020 or 2021, but he would like it to be called Dedham 2020. He said they would be happy to return on April 27, 2017, before Town Meeting.

Mr. Aldous said that the summary goes up to 11.8, but the articles go up to 12.8, so ten articles were missed. Mr. McDermott clarified this. Mr. Aldous said that two articles, 5.8 and 12.1, were purely advertising for political reasons. He said the CPA was voted down three times before this; it has now been turned down four times. Mr. McDermott said that the original Master Plan did advocate for the CPA. Section 5.8 is just a description of what happened in the past. He said the committee did advocate for the CPA in this report. With regard to 12.1, this is about cycling and pedestrian infrastructure to encourage alternative forms of transportation. This applies to the initiatives from the State Department of Transportation to study how people get around the Town (roadways, pedestrian walkways, cycling opportunities). The funding would be through Complete Streets, which the Board of Selectmen just adopted. Mr. Aldous again said they seem like political ads, and they were written incorrectly. He asked Mr. McDermott to think about this. He did not think the Master Plan should say that this should be passed or adopted; it should only be recommended. Mr. McDermott heard Mr. Aldous’ point, and will take it back to the committee. He said they are not trying to make a political statement, just talk about planning tools. Mr. McDermott will be put on the agenda for April 27, 2018.