


Town of Ayer  
**Master Plan Committee Meeting Minutes For**  
**Tuesday, June 28, 2016, 6pm**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Floor Meeting Room, Ayer Town Hall**

2016 AUG 30 PM 2: 02 

**Attendance:** Carolyn McCreary, Jane Morriss, Ruth Rhomenus, Harry Zane, Ed Kelley, John Ellis, Geoff Tillotson

**Absent:** Jannice Livingston, Dan Graham, Susan Tordella Williams, Susan Copeland, Dan Gleason

**Also in Attendance:** Courtney Starling, COG Consultant  
Robert Pontbriand, Town Administrator  
Carly Antonellis, Assistant to the Town Administrator  
Mark Wetzel, DPW Superintendent  
Alan Manoian, Director of Community and Economic Development

**Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 6:02pm by Jane Morriss.

**Approval of the April 26, 2016 meeting minutes:**

**MOTION:** A motion was made by G. Tillotson to accept the minutes of the April 26, 2016, meeting pending the correction of a typographical error on the second page. The motion was seconded by C. McCreary, and passed unanimously.

**Project Overview/Next Steps—Courtney Starling, Consultant:**

C. Starling outlined the Master Plan project, breaking the study into three broad waves or phases of focus with each wave or phase considering baseline measures, formative issues, and implementation strategies:

1. Housing and economic development; IT and Communications
2. Natural and cultural resources; transportation and circulation; municipal services, utilities and facilities (which includes energy sustainability, hazard mitigation, and climate resiliency).
3. Open space & recreation; land use and Devens

H. Zane said he wanted to make sure that the Master Plan included:

- an analysis of the two-tier tax rate,
- strategies to protect local businesses from “big-box” competition,
- smart utilization and implementation of technology, and
- an exploration of alternative energy sources. He also stressed the importance of getting the plan implemented once it was completed.
- remediation of areas of hazardous waste

C. Starling assured him that these issues were all included in the overall process of the study, and that COG, together with Green International Affiliates (their engineering partner in this project) have more than ample resources to evaluate and advise the Committee on these issues. M. Wetzel also reminded him that the Town also has in-house resources that can also be utilized.

As for implementing the plan, C. Starling said it was a top priority with both her and COG.

There also seemed to be broad agreement that the published plan should be presented in both paper and digital formats that are highly readable and graphically engaging, providing web-links to more in-depth technical material.

A. Manoian also mentioned that Leominster has secured a grant to evaluate the economic impact Devens is having on the area and that the MPC can take advantage of this study.

R. Pontbriand wanted to know what MPC's next step should be. C. Starling said that at the next meeting the committee should begin working on a vision and value statement, continue working on the logo, start putting together various working and focus groups, and begin strategizing public outreach. Prior to the meeting, key members should identify important players. For example, R. Pontbriand and C. Antonellis should develop a list of government and political groups and parties; A. Manoian should make a list of industry and business partners, R. Rhomenus a list of historical sites and people involved in the society, and the like.

Also the MPC members should begin identifying various groups who make up the town such as the various faith communities, low-income groups, non-English speaking groups, train enthusiasts, garden club members, bicyclers, etc.

**Brief Logo Update:**

J. Morriss said that she has been in contact with Nathan Mehrag at Nashoba Tech and that she has asked the design team to develop a logo using a hot air balloon. She will ask for a draft to be shown at the next meeting.

**The Ponds Study, a brief summary**

The Ayer Ponds Study has been released and J. Morriss urged members of the MPC to access it on the town's website.

**New Business:**

M. Wetzel reported that Ayer has just received a Green Communities Grant.

A. Manoian said he was going to begin doing a series of walking tours which could be used to help drum up interest in the Committee's work. He also said that he has been researching the old Firehouse on Washington Street and has discovered that it was designed by George Ernest Robinson, a black architect who is known as the Father of Modern Fire Station Architecture. Armed with this information, the town will be planning strategies to get it on the National Historical Register and to begin the process for mixed-use development.

C. Starling said she would write up a detailed synopsis of her project phase-in presentation and send it to J. Morriss by the end of next week.

**Schedule Next Meeting:**

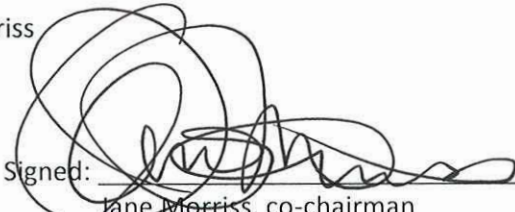
The Committee stated that the next Committee Meeting would be on July 26.

**Adjournment:**

**MOTION:** A motion was made by C. McCreary and seconded by G. Tillotson to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Co-Chair Jane Morriss

Minutes Approved On: July 26, 2016

Signed:   
Jane Morriss, co-chairman