

NORTHFIELD PLANNING BOARD
MAY 9, 2011
MINUTES

Members present: Wayne Crowley, Dick Maher, Doug Read, Glen Brown and Kim Robichaud. Members absent: Fran LaBranche, Geoff Ziminski and Mike Murphy.

Wayne Crowley suggested that the purpose of this meeting is to develop a road map for working on the update for the Master Plan to determine what needs to be done, how to get it done and who will be doing the work. The current Master Plan meets the minimum requirements of “Vision” and “Land Use” plus chapters on “Community Characteristics”, “Transportation” and “Community Facilities.

The purpose of the Master Plan is to guide the Planning Board in development of regulations and planning. Wayne asked if members feel confident doing the review and updating themselves or if LRPC should be involved. There was no decision, but the consensus seemed to be that the Planning Board can tweak the chapters as needed while seeking data input from LRPC. Members reviewed the methods used to gather information for the current Plan with public forums and the survey.

Dick Maher suggested that the Planning Board should consider the “village” concept with walking and transportation needs considered. The Master Plan could address this issue, particularly with the high fuel costs that have risen since the last plan was developed. Dick also suggested there should be a section on commercial development. Wayne Crowley responded that the Planning Board can plan where commercial development can be built, but cannot plan any development. Doug Read added that the Master Plan can encourage commercial development within the plan and in fact the current plan calls for commercial development south along Rte 132 next to I93. The Planning Board has not followed through with proposing zoning changes to reflect the Master Plan. Since much thought went into the Master Plan, the zoning changes should be considered as a follow up.

Before work is done on updating the Master Plan, the Planning Board should conduct a new survey, hold public forums and solicit information from Department heads. As the original survey was prepared by LRPC and was probably fairly impartial it would be good to find those questions.

Doug Read commented that Northfield has never developed an “official road map” which can be used to plan locations for future roads. It gives the Planning Board the ability to set land aside for future roads in a manner that roads can connect logically. Such a map can be used as a guideline when properties are subdivided.

The date for the next meeting will be decided at the regular June 6 Planning Board meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Eliza Conde, Secretary

Minutes approved 06-06-2011