

TOWN AREA PLAN WORK GROUP
Meeting of July 21, 2023, at 4:00 pm by Zoom
DRAFT MINUTES FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Attending: Marsha Fader, Alison King, Mary Longacre, Lee Saperstein, and Henry Terry.

Absent: Mary Anne Easley, Regen Horchow, and Mickey Rowland

Attendance was verified by a roll call; there was a quorum at all times. The meeting was recorded and can be viewed at the following

address: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V2yrsgILh3U&list=PL49sKqpy7VAhF3WZ8xvh3sdHgJEvCabR6&index=27>.

1. Call to Order.

Chair Henry Terry called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. Mary Longacre reviewed the rules on remote-attendance meetings and said also that this meeting would be recorded. Henry Terry called the roll, live, and confirmed the reported attendance.

2. Agenda Approval.

Henry Terry asked for approval of the agenda; Mary Longacre moved approval, Marsha Fader seconded, and it was approved unanimously.

3. Minutes Approval.

Mary Longacre moved acceptance of the minutes, which was seconded by Alison King, and the motion passed unanimously.

4. Public and Member Comments.

There were no members of the public present, hence no public comments.

5. Discussion of Area Plan.

Henry Terry asked Alison King to present the draft of the report on Economic Development Plan and she replied by opening up her shared screen to show the draft report, which is also attached. She began by reviewing the first paragraph in her draft plan, which suggested that proximity to the Downtown District has a substantial impact on the Town Area. The draft plan on Circulation, which will include comments on parking, will need to be compiled in concert with the plan on economic development.

She then went on to high-light key elements of the economic development plan, which center around elements of housing. She noted that there are two, related questions in the survey that have to do with increasing the number of people who live in the Town Area. The first is what can be done to increase

year-round habitation in the Town Area and the second was how to provide more rental housing for the essential work force that supports life on Nantucket. Many respondents said, in so many words, that the Town's Housing Office needs to provide financial and legal assistance for homeowners who would like to rent a portion of their home. Permitting for apartments, auxiliary dwellings, and second residences can be onerous and help is needed. Equally, construction costs for creating additional housing can be substantial. The web site for the Housing Office lists a number of helpful programs that might be advertised better to home owners. The second issue, of making the Town more livable, led to a large list of desirables including subsidies for utility costs.

She then moved to issues of support for local businesses in the Town Area, including craft workshops and workshops for economically small builders who work out of their homes. To support this part of the plan she has embarked on a creation of a catalog of businesses in the Town Area derived from the spread sheet of businesses in the WPI Project on Businesses. The attached spread sheet from WPI has over 1170 lines of businesses on Nantucket Island. The Word version of the draft has an active link to the Excel spread sheet. The PDF version will not open. She will continue to ask the Artists Association of Nantucket to identify those of its members that live in the Town and trade from their homes. Her report includes a number of work force desirables including more seasonal housing and support for professionals who wish to work remotely from their Nantucket homes and could use better Wi-Fi, more consistent travel links, and office support. She felt that the Work Group should support the development of small businesses in the Town Area and, also, support the continued development of year-round businesses.

Lee Saperstein noted that contrary to the history of the Town Area where any number of small retail shops once thrived, the Zoning Use chart does not permit retail businesses in the residential zones. Those that are here, such as "Flock," have pre-existing, non-conforming permission to operate. An open question is whether or not the Work Group should recommend mixed-use zoning for the Town Area. Sort of that move, should pop-up and weekend sales be allowed?

Expanding on the notion of further deliberation, Alison King asks that Work Group members look at her list of questions on the top of page 3 of her report and respond to her directly. She asks about increased aid from the Town's Housing office to help create extra housing or to help people to become year-round residents. Also asked, are questions about employee housing. To avoid Open-Meeting Law abuses, please reply to her only and do not use "reply all." She will assemble responses into the next draft of her report.

At this time, Marsha Fader moved adjournment, Mary Longacre seconded, and approval was unanimous.

6. Adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:58 pm

The next scheduled meeting is Tuesday, August 1, 2023, at 3:00 pm. This meeting will be by Zoom. The Zoom link for Tuesday meetings is different from Friday's link.

For reference: Subcommittee composition.

2. Land Use: Liz Almodobar and Mary Anne Easley
3. Housing: Marsha Fader and Mickey Rowland
4. Economic Development: Alison King and Mary Longacre
5. Natural and Cultural Resources: Liz Almodobar and Marsha Fader
6. Open Space and Recreation Plan: Mary Anne Easley and Henry Terry
7. Services and Facilities: Regen Horchow and Mickey Rowland
8. Circulation; Mary Longacre and Lee Saperstein

Lee W. Saperstein, Secretary, saperste@mst.edu

Economic Development Plan (DRAFT)

Related topics for presentation/discussion at TAP Work Group July 21, 2023 meeting

Vision

- To identify policies and strategies for the expansion or stabilization of the local economic base and the promotion of employment opportunities.
- To review how this area connects and integrates with the commercial uses along the edges of the In-Town Area, including the Commercial Downtown District, Commercial Mid-Island (Mid-Island Area Plan), and Commercial Neighborhood (Brant Point Area Plan).
- To consider commercial uses within the area, such as inn and guest houses, restaurants, and shops and whether areas where those are allowed should be expanded or if alterations to those uses should be applied.

Proximity to Downtown

Despite the fact that our Town Area Plan does not include the downtown core, we are adjacent to and surround the area. Our home-based businesses, inns, restaurants, and retail stores are impacted by issues and concerns that we share with the downtown core, such as traffic and parking. See [Parking] and [Traffic].

Housing

The economic development of the Town Area is reliant on increasing the density of residents in the area throughout the year. Therefore, this Committee surveyed the area residents to ask about ways in which to increase rental housing opportunities and to identify which factors would support or encourage the number of homeowners in the area to become year-round residents.

- Homeowners supported the creation of resources from the town to support the creation of rental space in homes in the Town Area, including provide legal and tax help and possible financial assistance in the creation of the permissible rental space to potential landlords.
- Seasonal residents would be more willing to consider year-round residence and current year-round resident would continue to live here if there was robust and reliable wi-fi, more restaurants were open year-round, comprehensive health care (consistent and accessible cardiology and geriatric care), more commercial flights available during the winter months, high quality education and day care available for children, consistent and quick responses to address quality of life issues like road repair, more parking enforcement, bike paths and affordable housing (for themselves and for employees). One respondent requested that the Town of Nantucket reduce or subsidize utility rates: electricity, gas and oil, and water and sewer.

Some of the survey responses are not possible – a list of “acceptable renters” will never fly and

changing the squatting rules in MA is outside of our scope. We know the parking issue that concerns many cannot be addressed because of the nature of our homes and streets. Lee's email to the police Captain is a perfect example. How do we address those issues in our report?

Support for Local Business in our Area

The area subject to this Town Plan is home to many kinds of businesses. There are many inns, restaurants, retail shops (including home-based businesses¹), and an art gallery. It is also home to other businesses that are not open to the public. Since the building trades comprise a significant portion of the year-round workforce, many small-scale workshops are scattered throughout the area as "cottage industry" type businesses. Artists and other makers also do their work in the area and people have home offices in which they conduct businesses that operate on Nantucket and elsewhere. We surveyed residents and homeowners to identify what assistance they need to support or expand an in-home business or a commercial establishment in the Town Area. The themes of parking and housing continued, and many responses were similar to the responses regarding living on the island year-round.

- Seasonal staff housing, allowing signage that is more visible to foot traffic, connect the bike-paths, increase available parking, cheaper and faster internet, more reasonable prices restaurants in the downtown and town area, and tax breaks for businesses that stay open year-round.

We are not in support of some of the suggested responses, such as signage on the road or visible from a distance. I think the reliable, better and less expensive internet is key, as well as tax-breaks for the year-round businesses, affordable housing, safer and connected bike paths and more parking. Do we write this section in the affirmative to facilitate conversation to come to an agreement as a group?

Transportation to and From our Area

If we want to encourage economic development in our Area, we need people to be able to access the area without necessarily increasing the traffic. Many survey respondents and this committee see a need for safer bike routes and more bike storage in Town.

We received lots of requests for electric buses due to impacts from noise and fumes. We would also like to suggest that the bus routes be analyzed to create a smoother flow of people from and to different parts of town. For instance, currently, there isn't a direct bus route between Washington Street and the Stop-n-Shop in mid-island. The routes seem to be more circular and less efficient that a hub and spoke approach might be.

Questions for the group: We could attempt to create a catalog of businesses in our area. We have the WPI survey response from their project a few years ago. Please see the notes to understand the weakness is this approach. I am continuing to remove address that do not fall within our Town Area. I am hoping to have that completed soon. I asked AAN to please let us know how many makers there are in our area, but they have not been able to complete that request yet. Our committee also identified various businesses that work within our area but are not domiciled here. Landscapers, constructions crews, caretakers for homes, dog groomers, cleaning crews, sanitation companies,

¹ Home-based businesses are identified in the Nantucket Zoning Bylaw as "home occupations," are frequently found on Nantucket and are allowed in all zoning districts.

utilities, and other home and lawn care businesses. Ghost tours and other walking tours are a business activity in a residential area. Ice Cream truck's visit residential neighborhoods. It would not be possible to catalog all of those businesses.

Would either additional accommodations for construction/maintenance workers or additional restrictions for construction/maintenance workers be helpful?

i.e., gas leaf blower restrictions, parking enforcement, noise & trash problems.

Would pop-up shops or weekend installations be welcome? Would they be worth it for the business owner? Sconset has a Bartletts Farm Truck.

What about some kind of help to encourage businesses to be open year-round?

What is the Town already doing? *i.e.*, limits on seasonal alcohol licenses and requiring restaurants to be open year-round. Ask Amy Baxter at the Police Dept

Can we pull out some individual comments to illustrate our recommendations or current conditions? (These are from Q16)

"Positively affect by proximity to grocery, pharmacy, bars, restaurants, coffee, insurance, post office, and the steamship and hyaline. The whole reason for living in a small town is to live in a small town. The point is to be able to walk everywhere."

"Ability to walk to town. It was better when stores like Hardy's and Nantucket Dry Goods were an easy walk because one could get everything needed with a manageable walk. Efforts to reduce noise and light pollution are much appreciated; however, I like the active downtown scene where one can be entertained "watching the pass" almost anytime of day."

Our subcommittee will be reviewing the responses to determine year-round v. summer residents: Here are some points we got from other questions when looking at the year-round vs seasonal split: 139 (35%) year-round residents answered the survey, the remaining 261 responses fell into any of the four other categories.

16 of the 17 responses from renters were from year-round residents. 4 of the 8 responses that said they stay with family or friends were also year-round renters.

Year-round resident respondents skewed younger than seasonal resident respondents.

Year-round residents tended to have fewer people in their household in July, with 56% reporting 1-2 people, and only 6% reporting 6 or more people, vs 28% of seasonal residents reporting 1-2 people, and 20% reporting more than 6 people.

In January, year-round residents reported 76% of households had 1-2 people living there, vs 24% of seasonal residents. All but four of the 199 respondents who said their households had no-one living there in January were seasonal residents. Interestingly, 24% of seasonal residents said there were 1-2 people in their household in January, possibly indicating that they are renting the house out in the

winter.

DRAFT

WPI Survey of Business in Nantucket

Only if the entity had a business name listed on one of the sources would it be on the first column. Those that are *individual proprietors* running a small business out of their house or another location may have a DBA listing to allow for a separate bank account usage, but not an official business name listed. The students were very precise in how they imported data. There are others that are individual props doing business under their own name/SSN but have a license of some sort in which case they might be just an address and classification.

Original report:



WPI name naics
address.xlsx