NP&EDC

NANTUCKET PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

NP & EDC - SEPTEMBER 23, 2024 @ 5:00PM APPROVED MINUTES

***Hybrid* - Meeting Trailor, Room A, 131 Pleasant Street and**
Remote Participation via Zoom Webinar

Commissioners: Chair Barry Rector, Vice-Chair Nat Lowell, Brook Mohr, Bert Johnson, Abby De Molina, Joseph Topham, Dave Iverson, John Kitchener, Wendy Hudson, Kristina Jelleme, and Michael Misurelli

Staff: Leslie Snell, Director of Planning, Megan Trudel, Senior Planner, Michael Burns, Transportation Program Manager, and Catherine Ancero, Administrative Specialist

I. Call to Order:

Chair Rector called the meeting to order at 5:02pm. Chair Rector welcomed two new members Mike Misurelli from ConCom and Brook Mohr from Select Board.

II. Establishment of Quorum:

In Attendance:

Vote taken by Roll Call:
Wendy Hudson - *Present (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina - *Present (remote participation)*
Brook Mohr - *Present (remote participation)*
John Kitchener - *Present*
Dave Iverson - *Present*
Vice-Chair Nat Lowell - *Present*
Kristina Jelleme - *Present*
Joseph Topham - *Present*
Bert Johnson - *Present (remote participation)*
Barry Rector - *Present*

Staff:
Leslie Snell, Director of Planning - *Present*
Megan Trudel, Senior Planner - *Present*

III. Approval of Agenda:

Motion/Vote: Vice- Chair Mr. Lowell made a motion to approve the agenda and the motion was duly seconded by Mr. Iverson and the motion was carried unanimously.

Vote taken by Roll Call:
Wendy Hudson - *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina – *Aye (remote participation)*
Brook Mohr – *Aye (remote participation)*
John Kitchener – *Aye*

Dave Iverson - *Aye*
Vice-Chair Nat Lowell - *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme - *Aye*
Joseph Topham - *Aye*
Barry Rector – *Aye*

IV. Public Comment for items not included on the agenda:

None

V. Minutes

- **August 26, 2024**

Motion/Vote: Mr. Iverson made a motion to approve the set of minutes as drafted and the motion was duly seconded by Vice-Chair Lowell and the motion was carried unanimously.

Vote taken by Roll Call:
Wendy Hudson - *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina – *Aye (remote participation)*
Brook Mohr – *Aye* (*remote participation*)
John Kitchener - *Aye*
Dave Iverson - *Aye*
Vice-Chair Nat Lowell - *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme - *Aye*
Joseph Topham - *Aye*
Barry Rector – *Aye*

VI. Transportation Action/Discussion Items:

A. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), FY2024 Reallocation Request

Discussion: There was a brief discussion about a request for a reallocation in the Unified Panning Work Program (UPWP) budget for FY 2024. Mike, the Transportation Planner who isn't present is asking for the reallocation. Mrs. Snell explains that even though the tasks within the UPWP have changed the overall budget remains the same and that they need to adjust how hours are distributed across tasks. The Commissioners had no questions or concerns.

Motion/Vote: Mr. Lowell made a motion to approve the FY2024 reallocation. The motion was duly seconded by Ms. Hudson and the motion was carried unanimously.

Vote taken by Roll Call:
Wendy Hudson - *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina – *Aye (remote participation)*
Brook Mohr – *Aye* (*remote participation*)
John Kitchener - *Aye*
Dave Iverson - *Aye*
Vice-Chair Nat Lowell - *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme - *Aye*
Joseph Topham – *Aye*
Barry Rector – *Aye*

B. Update on Registry of Motor Vehicle Registration of Kei-class Mini Trucks and Vans

Discussion: Updates on the mini truck registration with the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV). A letter was sent to the State about concerns that mini trucks might no longer be registered in Massachusetts. The State responded confirming that both currently owned and newly purchased mini trucks can continue to be registered. There was a question about whether these trucks will be issued LS plates or remain classified under passenger or commercial vehicle plates. Mrs. Snell stated that it seems that they will continue with passenger or commercial plates for now. Mr. Lowell is relieved that mini trucks will still be allowed on the road and that the state is working on more issues related to this matter.

VII. Other Action/Discussion Items:

A. Appointments

- **Contract Review Committee of Human Services**
  Discussion: This committee reviews applications from local nonprofits and Human Services groups for grants under a $650,000 budget. Members read applications, meet applicants, and sometimes do site visits. Afterwards the Committee deliberate on how to allocate funds and make recommendations to the Select Board. After the review period the Committee periodically review grant recipients progress and reimbursement requests.
- **Harbor Plan Update Committee**
  Discussion: This Committee continuously updates the Harbor Plan and meets regularly, even if there are gaps between updates. It's a long-standing group that works on the ongoing development of the harbor. Both Committees are requesting members from the Commissioners, however no one volunteered immediately therefore the topic will be revisited next month.

B. Update, Town Area Plan
Discussion: The Town Area Plan is nearly complete however still needs some refinement. Mrs. Snell stated that no one was invited to present the plan at this meeting and that it would be a good time for the Commission members to review it and provide feedback to staff. Commission members are encouraged to share any suggestions or ideas with Mrs. Snell or Mrs. Trudel directly instead of emailing everyone especially if the issues need more detailed discussion. No action is required now, however at the next meeting someone from the Planning team will likely attend to discuss the plan in more detail. Commissioners are reminded to carefully review the plan from their different perspective before the next meeting.

C. Update, Deputy Director of Planning
Discussion: Mrs. Snell stated that the update on the Deputy Director of Planning position is that they are planning to advertise and post the job soon, either this week or next, coordinating with HR. The funding is available and aim to fill the position quickly. There were previous delays, but now they are ready to move forward, and no further delays are expected from HR. Mr. Kitchener requested to provide the job description for them to look at.

Note: Bert Johnson joined the meeting a bit later due to some technical difficulties but was able to participate once the issues were resolved.

D. Nantucket Special Town Meeting Recap
Discussion: Mrs. Snell gave a quick recap on the Nantucket 2024 Special Town Meeting. Most short-term rental articles did not pass, except for a technical amendment (Article 5). The sewer and zoning articles also failed. Article 16 passed narrowly in May 2023 however gained significant support this time with 286 votes in favor and 114 opposed. Mr. Kitchener stated that any lessons to be learned from Article 16 which received a much stronger voter support this time compared to last year, when it passed by only 3 votes. This suggests a significant shift in how voters feel about the same issues. Mr. Iverson stressed the need to act quickly on finalizing and submitting the enabling legislation for their Commission. There is a sense of urgency as public frustration seems to have grown over the past year. Mr. Iverson expressed the importance of community engagement, suggesting a well-publicized meeting to discuss proposed changes before submitting the final document to the State. Chair Rector hesitated to bring up a topic because the focus was on Enabling Legislation however offered to address it now for reassurance. Chair Rector wanted to respect the flow of the meeting and suggested waiting until the end if needed. Chair Rector encouraged his commissioners to speak when ready, wanted to make sure that everyone got to speak and that they would soon be focusing on the Enabling Legislation discussion. Ms. De Molina agreed with moving forward quickly however raised a

concern that Town Meetings may not represent the entire community. Ms. De Molina suggested that when presenting the legislation, they should make sure it reaches as many people as possible to make it accessible and understandable. Ms. De Molina pointed out that while there were more votes this time, the turnout still represented only 3% of the population, therefore community engagement is important. Ms. Mohr questioned the approval process for changes going through home rule versus directly from the planning agency. Chair Rector clarified that while bringing it before a Town Meeting is a courtesy, it's not required, since the agency is a regional planning body. The Planning Commission can draft legislation and have it submitted by a legislator or the governor without needing to go through the Town Meeting. However, the legislation would still need to be approved by the state legislature. Ms. Jelleme echoed previous comments made by Mr. Kitchener and agreeing with Ms. De Molina's point about representation. Ms. Jelleme stressed the confusion among the public about what the Planning Commission does. The lack of public understanding about responsibilities and processes is an issue, and education is the key. Ms. Jelleme stated that there's a perception that the Commission doesn't listen to the public and stressed the need for better transparency, communication, and public outreach. Mr. Topham agreed with Ms. Jelleme and expressed his frustration over not having enough time to present his full speech at the Town Meeting. He expressed the importance of having everyone involved in the process and being well prepared before finalizing decisions. He also stressed the need for public outreach to build trust. Mr. Topham feels the lack of public engagement is a challenge. Ms. Mohr stated that they moved into the next agenda item however it's important to continue working on the project. Ms. Mohr suggested that they should do an outreach before Town Meeting, where the sponsor gets five minutes to present, also suggesting presenting the proposal at a Select Board meeting, as more people tend to watch those, and the recordings are easy access. Ms. Hudson expressed the need to be more responsive to the public's desires. While they've received help in the past, Ms. Hudson expressed embarrassment that they didn't have their own proposal ready for the Special Town Meeting. Ms. Hudson expressed the need to move faster and get the Master Plan going. Ms. Hudson stated that people are expecting more action and knows that the Master Plan is progressing, however the public doesn't see that. Ms. Hudson felt that presenting the Master Plan at the Select Board meeting would help keep the public informed. Mrs. Snell stated that she is preparing to give an update to the Select Board in their October meeting regarding the Master Plan. Mrs. Snell recently spoke with the Town Manager and plans to invite the consultant to the meeting. She is also exploring budget options to increase community outreach for the plan and is actively working on it. Ms. De Molina pointed out that the Master Plan was discussed at a previous meeting with a presentation by Judy Barrett, but few people attended. She urged expanding outreach to make sure more people are aware of the progress and understand it's not being kept secret. Mr. Lowell stressed the complexities of urban planning, the importance of community involvement and addressing growth while preserving the Town's character and infrastructure. Ms. Jelleme expressed the importance of clarity regarding the roles of different Boards to prevent public confusion. Chairman Rector expressed his disappointment and confusion over recurring issues, repeated misunderstanding regarding the Master Plan without resolution. Chair Rector expressed his frustration with the town's handling of issues like affordable housing and long-term planning. Chair Rector stated that people often support ideas like affordable housing but resist when it's proposed in their neighborhood, leading to a lack of progress. He also pointed out that misinformation and repeated, unfounded objections hinder decision-making. Chair Rector stated that the Town has been working on long-term planning with enabling legislation meant to guide future development, and that it has been carefully thought through. Chair Rector stressed the importance of public engagement and transparency and that the meetings are televised and open to everyone. However, Chair Rector is baffled by claims that the process isn't open or inclusive and is frustrated that despite the efforts, there's a perception that they don't listen to the public. Chair Rector stated that the Commission has made efforts to involve more voices, such as the Cultural Council and Chamber of Commerce to make sure broader representation in the planning process. Mr. Kitchener suggested learning from a successful public outreach method used in a different work group where webinars were held, allowing for large participation and discussion. This approach generated useful feedback and ideas. Chair Rector opened the floor to the public. Meghan Perry stating that the people do pay attention however may not feel welcome to participate. Ms. Perry suggested better explaining the implications of zoning changes, as many people may not fully understand them during meetings, leading to later confusion or regret. Ms. Perry felt that clearer communication could improve the public's understanding and involvement.

E. Enabling Legislation Discussion

Discussion: The Commissioners focused on finalizing the enabling legislation. Chair Rector stated that they are close to finishing the document, apologizing for delays partly due to personal health issues. Chair Rector asked the Commission members to review the final draft and provide feedback before the next meeting. Mr. Iverson stated that the document does not need a complete rewrite however there should be a final meeting where members can sit together and review it section by section to resolve any remaining issues before moving forward. Mr. Topham and Ms. Jelleme both agreed that there is a need for a history lesson to help newer members understand how the Commission arrived at the current draft, which might clear up concerns. Mr. Kitchener brought up the 17 objectives listed in the document, suggesting they should prioritize and add specific details to make the objectives more actionable and understandable for the community. Ms. Mohr is worried that the current structure requires individuals who are already committing significant time to take on even more responsibilities. Ms. Mohr feels that this could limit community participation instead of encouraging it as it draws from a small pool of candidates. Ms. Mohr stressed the need for a serious conversation about how people are appointed to commissions before finalizing the membership and appointment process. The Commission members discussed on reforming the structure, possibly eliminating unnecessary committees and making sure that the restructured commission plays a more active role. The goal is to resolve these issues and finalize the document in the coming month. A motion is proposed to hold a sub-meeting specifically to finalize discussions including the history and main issues. Mrs. Snell stated that a few key concerns remain, housing representation on the Board, with a suggestion to broaden the pool of candidates to include those from the Affordable Housing Trust, not just the Housing Authority. There were other suggestions include inviting input from other regional planning agencies to gain perspective on their experience and responsibilities.

Motion/Vote: Ms. Jelleme made a motion to schedule a Special meeting within the next two weeks.
Discussion: The meeting's purpose would be to go over details point by point, starting with a history of the issues provided by staff. This will help explain why certain decisions were made. After that meeting the commission members will finalize a draft for a vote, even if some commission members might not agree on every point. It was clarified that the final draft won't be ready at the special meeting however at the next regular meeting**.** The Commission members were encouraged to share their concerns with staff via email.

Motion /Vote: The motion was duly seconded by Mr. Topham and the motion was carried unanimously.

<u>Vote taken by Roll Call:</u>
Wendy Hudson - *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina – *Aye (remote participation)*
Brook Mohr – *Aye* (*remote participation*)
John Kitchener - *Aye*
Dave Iverson - *Aye*
Vice-Chair Nat Lowell – *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme – *Aye*
Joseph Topham – *Aye*
Barry Rector – *Aye*

F. Committee Reports

- **Rural Policy Advisory Committee**
  Wendy Hudson – The Rural Policy Advisory Committee met last week however comments on topics like accessory dwelling units and the farm plan will be saved for the next meeting for more detail. Linda Dunley

Linda Dunley from Franklin County has worked with them before, and there's an interest in inviting her again based on the current discussion.

- **Capital Program Committee**
  Joseph Topham – Submitted revisions for Articles/Chapter 57 and 98 to Brook Mohr for review.
- **Affordable Housing Trust**
  Abby De Molina - Gave an update and have a few things in progress however will share more details at a future meeting once they are ready to present publicly. Some discussions have been held in executive session. Apologized for keeping it brief but wanted to be mindful of time.
- **Contract Review Committee of Human Services**
  No updates
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee**
  No updates
- **Harbor Plan Update Committee**
  No updates
- **Madaket Area Plan Workgroup**
  No updates
- **Town Area Plan Workgroup**
  No updates
- **Others**
  None

VII. Other Business

None

IX. Adjournment

Ms. Mohr made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 pm. The motion was duly seconded by Vice-Chair Lowell and the motion was carried unanimously.

Vote taken by Roll Call:

Wendy Hudson - *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina – *Aye (remote participation)*
Brook Mohr – *Aye* (*remote participation*)
John Kitchener - *Aye*
Dave Iverson - *Aye*
Vice-Chair Nat Lowell - *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme – *Aye*
Joseph Topham – *Aye*
Barry Rector – *Aye*

Submitted By: *Catherine Ancero*

List of Documents used at the meeting 09-23-2024:

File with associated plans, photos and required documentation

Link to the NP&EDC packet for 09-23-2024:
https://www.nantucket-ma.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/_09232024-14311?html=true