

Imagine Nashua Citywide Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting #2

Meeting Agenda

- Project Overview & Framing
 - Where we are in the Process
 - Project Schedule
- Community Engagement & Outreach
 - Survey Results
 - Video Campaign
- Public Meeting #2
 - Review Format
 - Discuss Committee Role
- Next Steps

Meeting Date, Time, and Location

- December 22nd, 2020
- Convened: 5:00 pm
- Adjourned: 6:30 pm
- Zoom web conference

Actions

- No voting occurred at this meeting

Attendance

The following Imagine Nashua team including City staff, consultants and steering committee members were present at the start of the meeting:

- Sarah Marchant, Community Development Director
- Julie Chizmas, Transportation Planner
- Matthew Sullivan, Planning Manager
- Will Cohen, Project Manager, Utile
- Taskina Tareen, Utile
- Amber Logue, Chair of Masterplan Committee
- Adam Varley, Planning Board Member
- Gene Porter, Ward 3 Resident
- Scott Leclair, Planning Board Chair
- Raymond Guarino, Nashua School Board Member
- Kate Luczko, Nashua COC President
- Paul Shea, GAD Executive Director
- John Jurczyk, President of St. Joseph Hospital
- Rabbi Jon Spira-Savett, Ward 1 Resident
- Marjorie Bollinger Hogan, Ward 2 Resident

- Peter Schaefer, Ward 7 Resident
- Homa Jaferey, Ward 9 Resident
- Jay Minkarah, Executive Director, NRPC
- Daniel Richardson
- Deb Chisholm
- Jennifer Mc Cormack
- Komba Lamina

Project Overview & Framing

Utile gave an overview of where the Master Plan process is in the timeline:

- Noting that the next public meeting and virtual visioning and goals workshop is planned for January 6th.
- Reiterating the purpose and role of the master plan as an inclusive document that acts as a guide for long term planning in the city.
- Going over the overall framework of the master plan process including visioning and core values, plan elements or topic areas and goals and actions.
- Briefly sharing the existing conditions report that the consultants are currently completing.

Community Engagement and Outreach

Next an overview and summary of the Polis survey results this far was shared:

- There were over 400 total votes in the survey process and in general, there was mostly consensus on how the majority of respondents agreed or disagreed with statements.
- Two opinion groups or groups that voted similarly to statements emerged from the process - Group A had 73 participants while Group B had 262
- There was general consensus across groups and voters on topic areas such as increasing access to green space or leveraging arts and culture in the city

- New development and development decisions around conservation areas, climate change impacting Nashua and parking were issues of debate or disagreement.

Video and Photo Campaign

- Utile briefly shared the success of the Imagine Nashua video campaign and encouraged committee members to continue to publicize and have others participate in this exercise.

Public Meeting #2

Utile shared a draft agenda for the virtual public workshop on vision and goals coming up on January 6th. The workshop is conceived in three parts: Imagine Nashua - Where are we in the Process?, Visioning and Goals Breakout Session, and Regroup and Next Steps.

Next, a more thorough explanation was provided for what each element in the master plan process entails: Vision Statement, Core Values, Plan Elements, Goals, and Actions. As the public workshop will mainly focus on developing goals for the plan, Utile also provided a definition of what goals mean to this master plan.

Committee members' roles as leaders, promoters and collaborators of the master plan were reiterated and then more specific roles and responsibilities were discussed for the public workshop itself:

- spreading the word/promoting the public workshop
- Reviewing and familiarizing with draft plan goals
- participating as a facilitator or note-taker for one of the planned public workshop breakout sessions discussing goals with the public
- Remind and encourage the public to take part in the next Imagine Nashua survey that involves a digital mapping platform where the community can voice how and where in the city they would like to see improvement or change.

Next Steps

Utile ended the meeting with an overview of what the consultant team is continuing to work on including:

- Existing Conditions Report
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- Public Meeting #2 preparation
- Launching Survey #2 - Social Pinpoint/Digital Mapping Platform

Comment/Questions & Answers

- 400 survey takers is not a good engagement response rate, how will this inform goals? (Jon Spira-Savet)
 - *We agree that the survey results and response rate could have been more robust, but acknowledge it has partly to do with the remote pandemic environment that inherently makes engagement and outreach difficult and also generally, people usually have a harder time relating to more broad topic concerns rather than individual concerns. The next survey will provide the opportunity for community members to hone in more specific aspirations for the City.*
- I have been studying income data within the city and surrounding communities. The city has various areas of different incomes. South Nashua appears to have the highest income. A number of communities around us have higher incomes than Nashua but those communities are more bedroom types of communities. Nice to live but not much to do. I believe that Nashua has the critical mass to provide things such as art, entertainment restaurants etc. I think we should view the future of Nashua as a destination for such things. I just don't know how this fits into our stated goals. (Peter Schaefer)
- I also see Nashua as a hub of connections within and with surrounding communities. In this fits bus, bike, walk etc (Peter Schaefer)
- One of the five listed goals is to focus on "Open Space and Natural Resources. One quoted output of the poll was the need for "Increased Access to GreenSpaces. The Conservation Commission Identified four priority natural resource corridors: Nashua River, Salmon Brook, Merrimack River and Pennichuck pond/brook complex. Access to the Merrimack and Nashua River corridors is already in train by the City, Salmon Brook is a focus of the ConCom to improve trails and water access. The Pennichuck corridor should be the next major green space that needs to be opened up for public access as its importance for supplying drinking water declines (Gene Porter)

- Does the online survey officially close? Should we continue to invite people to take the survey? Do we have a timeframe for this master plan processing? 400 from 89,000 isn't representative. Are we looking at historical data? (Bob J)
 - *We would like to close the survey by end of the year but if it makes sense to keep it live for more responses, we should. We will use the bulk of the responses so far in public meeting #2. The Master Plan process is planned to be one year. While we understand that this isn't the best public participation, we also know that this is only one first part of the engagement process and there will be more opportunities for outreach and public feedback.*
- I think one approach to the high-level goals would be for a few of us to write some pieces that speak to the high level issues and give examples of how that might flow down. Maybe the Telegraph would publish a page made up of five of these, for instance? (Jon Spira-Savet)
- Do you want us to have comments on changing goals or just familiarize? Moving forward will there be more specific tasks for the committee meeting (Adam Varley)
 - *For now don't wordsmith because draft goals are subject to change but if something is obviously missing or off mark, definitely share with us.*
- Should we have chat sessions on specific topics? I'm a Ward 7 resident - new apartment complexes feel like gated communities - how do we get through this? During Covid, How do we reach people? Can we put something in the Union Leader? (Peter Schaefer)
- Also Nashua Patch (Homa Jaferey)
- We have also had responses from several churches that they will post in their weekly newsletters about the upcoming public meeting. (Amber Logue)
- Depending on budget - go on facebook -and figure out who is involved in what/use social media more effectively - facebook ads (Dan O'Donnell)
- Amazon at hudson wants to buy a golf course - what struck me is, i dont golf and that place is gorgeous and it's on the river - why isn't hudson instead building a linear park connecting to Nashua? (Peter Schaefer)
- How about a celebration of Nashua community holiday extravaganza on zoom- we might be able to plan something like that and have school children singing Christmas carols, and in between each different program - like maybe have musicians -

playing their music instruments - and then in between different topic chats going on chats where people can ask questions and answer questions- have certain guest visitors like artists talking about their visions (Homa Jaferey)

This memorandum represents our understanding of the events which transpired and the actions which were taken. If they do not conform to a recipient's understanding, prompt written notice must be communicated to the writer. If no corrections or objections are made, this memorandum will be relied upon as a factual interpretation of this meeting.