Town of Shutesbury Massachusetts

Master Plan Working Group

August 3, 2016

Minutes taken by RL Groves

Meeting Begins at 6:45 PM

Members present:

Meryl Mandell, Bob Groves, David Kittredge, Al Hanson, Jeff Lacy, Mike Vinskey, Mary Anne Antonellis, Dale Houle

Nan Dill participated by telephone

Town Administrator Becky Torres is guest.

Minutes of July 18, 2016 approved.

Agenda item: Interviews of The Cecil Group and Beals and Thomas

Discussion of questions to interviewees.

Mike suggests those that submitted questions should ask them.

Some clarification of who asks what.

Jeff thinks that answers should be concise.

**The Cecil Group**

Allison Leflore and Howard Schneider are present.

Steve Cecil on vacation.

Allison is urban planner. Howard is landscape architect.

Alison gives brief description of CG’s method.

Sign-in card, ground rules: share opinions, listen, visioning exercises, questions

CG conducts exercise.

Group fills-out forms what is good about Shutesbury, what is done better in other Towns

Bob asks if method is biased towards “doing something” vs conservation.

Al asks how we can find out what residents “don’t want or like”

Mary Anne asks how opposing views can be accommodated in visioning.

Alison: Visioning can create sense of “ownership” of ideas.

Meryl quizzes Alison about schedule and process.

Howard says that Vision Statement is product.

Nan: We are town with internet-savvy residents and not-internet-savvy residents. How do we conduct outreach to all?

Allison: Team will use internet, paper and other ways to achieve maximum participation.

Nan: How do you deal with those that talk too much or not at all?

Alison: Facilitators run session like classroom.

Youtube?

Possible Youtube channel could be created. Next-door another resource. Alison said the cost of videotaping and posting to Youtube would be included in the bid price.

CG done.

**8:06 Beals & Thomas (B&T)**

Introductions: John Gelcich (Planner), Richard Kosian (Engineer)

Exercise:

Set-up three groups

Each group gets three Towns and lists likes, dislikes

John develops a matrix to accumulate data about what participants most like/dislike to apportion weight to different features in surrounding Towns.

Method indicates strongest “like” for “Village Center”, “Library” scores 2nd highest.

Other issues: Quabbin proximity, nature, rural, aggressive police, traffic.

Nan: What about visioning vs planning? How to extract information from diverse population.

John: Worked for Chelsea on Hazmat remediation and had experience with diversity. He managed to get 30-60 residents to participate in Chelsea. He states that, unfortunately, it is hard to get residents to participate.

Nan: How to manage groups and keep participants under control.

John: Watch for domineering people and move them around. Same with shy people.

Jeff: B&T did plan in upstate NY. John not involved in visioning there.

Discussion of how to break-down barriers between opposing sides.

John: “Keep conversation moving”

B&T would use various media to canvass Town.

Dave: How do you assess the accuracy of data collected?

A: By getting a lot of data

Meryl: Proposal unclear about whether project will be completed for quoted price, since it was presented as a Time and Materials fee structure. Rich says he will guarantee completion of full scope for quoted price. Lump sum bid is acceptable.

Meryl: Staffing?

John: John lead, Stacy oversight, Mary Kate if needed.

Dave: Describe Charrette

John describes Charrette. Not applicable here.

Interview ends

Discussion after interviews

Jeff: How long has Alison been a planner?

Becky: 8 plus years

Mary Anne: First group more dynamic, engaging, prepared.

Al, Nan agree.

Mike liked 2nd groups’ exercise but agreed 1st group was more impressive.

Bob: Exercises were simplistic. Questions value of results.

Mary Anne: Exercises were “better than a lot” and Alison is skilled at conducting them.

Jeff prefers “SWAT” as a methodology. Would like to know if CG would use it.

Nan thinks so.

Committee votes to recommend CG pending reference-check and some questions about methodology.

Vote:

Yes: 8 (Unanimous)

No: 0

Meeting ends 9:25