

Walpole Planning Board
July 9, 2024
Town Hall
7 pm

Roll Call: Present Board Members: Chair Jeff Miller, Vice-Chair Dennis Marcom, Clerk Jason Perron, Jeff Harrington, Joanna Andros, Trevor MacLachlan, Select Board Representative Steve Dalessio and alternates Bill Carmody and Travis Adams.

Call to Order: Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 7 pm. A full board was present so no alternates were needed to fill in.

Review of Minutes of June 2024: Mr. Marcom made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Harrington seconded the motion and the motion carried.

New Business:

Public Hearing for three sections of the updated Master Plan: Implementation Plan, Land Use Analysis and Population and Housing.

Mr. Miller explained that the Land Use Analysis was a statistical look at the town and categorizes the different types of uses of the land in Walpole from farmland to residential to commercial. The first sentence of this document says “an analysis of the present land use pattern in a town is one of the first steps in the formulation of a Land Use Plan.” The population and housing sections goes into home values and types of buildings and compares Walpole to neighboring town regarding education levels, growth trends, age and income. And the Implementation plan states the goals and objective for each of the sections of the Master Plan and then has action plans for the goals to be implemented.

Mr. Marcom and Mr. Perron started looking at some of the numbers and trying to understand them. For example, on page 6 in the Land Use Analysis section it shows that there were 14 parcels used for farmland, 277.71 acres and the taxable value was only \$66,300. They went back and forth about the numbers and wondered if the numbers were correct. One of them mentioned that the amount for land in current use was higher than farmland. They finally realized that the calculations given for some of the information in this section came from the census of 2010.

Wendy Grossman noted that the population of Walpole was down. She wondered why the board didn't use the information from the census of 2020. Mr. Miller said updating of the Master Plan started several years ago and the Land Use Analysis was one of the first sections that the board began to look at. Actually the board began updating the Master Plan in 2019. It was before Covid and Covid put a stop to the fourth Tuesday workshop meetings for updating the Master Plan for quite a long time.

Mr. Miller closed the public hearing at 7:20 pm He said he would go back to the Southwest Region Planning Commission and talk to the executive director Todd Horner to see if some of the numbers and information could be changed and updated to reflect the numbers of the 2020 census.

Andrew Dey said he tried to take a look at these sections of the Master Plan on the town web site but that none of the Master Plan was on the web site. Ms. Pauline Barnes said she too tried to find the information on line. Mr. Perron said that's because the Master Plan has just been and still is in “draft” form. That's one of the reason why the Planning Board is having these hearings. The Planning Board

has no responsibility for putting information on the web site and supposedly a new format for the web site is in the works.

Perhaps, Mr. Perron said, after the Planning Board has reviewed all the sections of the Master Plan at tonight's and future public hearings, the results or any changes made to any section will be incorporated and the Master Plan will be available online.

However, copies of the three sections of the Master Plan, the ones being discussed this evening, were available at the Town Offices for the public to look at. A public notice of this meeting was posted in two places in town - in the Town Offices and on the bulletin board at the Post Office, and residents who wanted to attend the meeting were notified via that public notice that the Master Plan sections were available at the Town Offices.

Mr. Perron made a motion to approve these three sections of the Master Plan and said there would be an effort to update some information. Mr. Harrington seconded the motion and the motion passed.

The next meeting in August will also be a public hearing and will consider some of the remaining sections of the Master Plan. Some of those sections include Transportation, Natural Features, Economic Development and Historic and Recreational Resources.

Mr. Miller reminded the board of the upcoming joint board meeting with the Zoning Board and Southwest Region Planning Commission on the fourth Tuesday of this month regarding Planner Carole Ogilvie's suggestions for the zoning ordinances and site plan.

Mr. Perron made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Harrington seconded the motion and the motion passed.

These minutes are unapproved but will be reviewed at the August meeting for corrections.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilou Blaine
Secretary

cc: WPB, ZBA, Town Offices, The Walpolean.

Posted: In the Town Offices, on the bulletin board outside the Post Office.