

## **Holliston Planning Board Meeting Minutes of September 14, 2015**

**In Attendance:** Chairman Geoffrey Zeamer, Warren Chamberlain, Nikki Borman, Taro Matsuno and David Thorn. Also present were Selectman Jay Leary and Mary Greendale of 57 Roy Avenue.

**Call to Order:** The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Room 014 of the Town Hall, 703 Washington Street.

### **General Business:**

#### **Work Session: Defining the Proposed Downtown Planning Effort**

##### ***What to call it: Downtown Master plan? Corridor plan? Strategic plan?***

The members reviewed several documents utilizing charrette approaches, including Simsbury, CT (2010) and East Dedham Village Strategic Action Plan, MA (2013). The Chairman noted the similarities between Simsbury and Holliston regarding the rail-to-trail and "Main St" corridors and connections as well as scale of "downtown". Other local and regional planning efforts will continue to be collected. MAPC has been requested to provide assistance in this area "RFPs, contracts, and studies/plans."

##### ***Process Steps (to date):***

###### **1. Define the project area.**

The Chairman reviewed the proposed study area utilizing Assessor's Maps as follows: from the Highland and Washington Street intersection east along Washington Street to the Woodland Street traffic signal, southwest along Woodland Street to Central Street and Blair Square, to the Winthrop Canal along Water Street. The area is wholly inclusive of the existing Village Center Commercial and Village Residential Districts, the Water Street and Woodland Street Industrial zones, the Commercial zone in East Holliston (along Washington Street to Concord Street and inside Curve Street) the residential neighborhood known as "Mudville", the public schools complex on Linden and Woodland Street, Cole Court (Holliston Housing Authority), police and fire stations, Town Hall, and public library, as well as several churches.

###### **2. Undertake a survey of existing conditions in specific project areas.**

##### **Recent Planning Efforts**

Review resources (e.g. mapping) and recommendations in the following:

- Road Safety Audit (Howard/Stein-Hudson for MassDOT, 2012)
- Downtown Parking Analysis (MAPC, 2014) recommendations
- Washington Street Corridor Improvements (McMahon Transportation Engineers and Planners, 2014)

##### **Historic Planning Efforts**

Materials from the 1999 Master Plan and 1997 Economic Development Strategy will be re-distributed. These include an analysis of potential changes to by-laws and regulations, including a suggested new Transitional Business District and Commercial Service District with the study area.

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### Parcels.

Ms. Sherman has begun to assemble individual Assessor's property records cards and GIS maps of identified parcels within the project area. A summary of area, uses, and values will follow as well as a summary of public and non-profit properties and facilities. Additional mapping services will likely need to be scoped out to include corridor-wide mapping and could be completed utilizing FY16 Planning Board Professional Services budget line item (\$5000).

### **3. Identify problems and opportunities.**

Note: General discussion from July 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> and September 3<sup>rd</sup> meetings have been added to the following list. Note: Issues identified from the 2104 Downtown Visioning process will be cross-checked for inclusion in the near future.

#### *Problems and Opportunities:*

##### Places

- The Square (Washington and Central)
  - Tax Title Parcels at 799 Washington and 9 Green Street
- Village Center Commercial district boundaries on Washington Street
  - Hollis and Washington Streets
  - East of 854 and 859
- Andrews School Re-Use at Spring and School Streets
- Central Street corridor (Washington to Blair Square)
- Upper Charles Trail and Blair Square\*
- Fire Station at 59 Central Street
- Askin Property (former State Lumber) at 132 Central Street (VC)
- Businesses between 300 and 360 Woodland Street (I)
- Boston University Property at 248 Woodland Street
- Residences between 193 and 233 Woodland Street (AR-2)
- Industrial facility at 163 Woodland (Highland Labs) on Factory Pond
- 8-Arch Bridge
- Flagg School at 100 Linden Street
- Linden Pond and Dam

##### Issues

- Regulatory Changes
  - Planning Board Regulation (e.g. similar to amendments in 2014/15).
  - Zoning By-Law Amendments.
  - Zoning Map Amendments.
- Streetscape Improvements
- Wayfinding and signage
- Agricultural community links (e.g. farm-to-table, farmer's market)
- Fostering public, civic and private partnerships
- Infrastructure/Public Facilities
  - Downtown pedestrian & traffic safety improvements

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- Planned Mudville road improvements (2016/17 Ch. 90): Exchange, Union, Pleasant, Spring, School, Mechanic and Arch ó drainage, sidewalks, curbing, roadway
- Community sewer/WWTP needs/potentials
- Fire Station relocation

Board Liaison Updates

Mr. Matsuno -

The Blair Square Development Committee (from minutes) has developed five core objectives: access, education, space to meet and gather, transportation corridor enhancement and safety, and enhancement of local business environment.

Mr. Thorn -

Expects to be appointed to the Economic Development Committee by the Town Administrator and confirmed by the Selectmen shortly. The first fall meeting of the Metrowest Collaborative is scheduled for 9/17.

Mr. Chamberlain ó

The Housing Trust is meeting on 9/16 with the Board of Selectmen to discuss the Andrews School status and disposition.

No updates on the Downtown Committee approved by the 2015 Annual Town Meeting.

Article for Special Town Meeting

On a motion by Mr. Chamberlain, seconded by Mr. Thorn, the members voted to rescind their placeholder article to provide funding for additional planning for òdowntownö.

**Further discussion of scope, phasing and resources for this work will continue as a regular agenda item.**

**Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m. on a motion made and duly seconded. The next meetings were scheduled for September 17 and October 8, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen L. Sherman, Town Planner