Planning Lunches at Noon (PLAN)
Monthly Webinar Services

Welcome to the PLAN Monthly Webinar Series!
The webinar will begin shortly. Please mute and turn off camera.

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• Slides and recording of all completed webinars in the PLAN series
• Schedule for upcoming webinars
• A short, anonymous online survey to gather feedback and topics for future webinars

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Putting Your Master Plan To Work

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TARA BAMFORD HAS BEEN WORKING WITH NEW HAMPSHIRE PLANNING BOARDS SINCE 1988, FIRST AT UPPER VALLEY LAKE SUNAPEE RPC INCLUDING SEVERAL YEARS AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THEN AS LEAD PLANNER AT NORTH COUNTRY COUNCIL FOR TEN YEARS, AND IN RECENT YEARS AS AN INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT.

THIS PRESENTATION FOCUSED ON TARA’S SUGGESTIONS FOR BEST PRACTICES TO DEVELOP A MASTER PLAN THAT SEES A HIGH LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION, AND ALSO INCLUDED SOME EXAMPLES OF TOOLS AVAILABLE TO COMMUNITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION.
Develop a Plan That is Meant to be Used

- Make implementation the focus of content
- Develop a realistic action plan with lead IDs
- Engage the community
- Harness existing momentum
- Learn from others
- Make it attractive and readable

THE PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN IS TO ARTICULATE THE COMMUNITY’S VISION FOR THE FUTURE AND RECOMMEND STEPS TO GUIDE FUTURE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THAT DIRECTION, SO THAT THE BIG DECISIONS ARE MADE PROACTIVELY RATHER THAN REACTIVELY.

TO DO THIS, RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE TO BE REALISTIC, BUT EVEN MORE IMPORTANT, THEY NEED TO BE SUPPORTED BY THE COMMUNITY. THIS MEANS YOU NEED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR DIRECTION AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PROCESS AND FOR FEEDBACK ALONG THE WAY. THE PUBLIC NEEDS TO SEE A CONNECTION BETWEEN THE INPUT THEY GAVE, THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE PLAN, AND LATER ON, THE TOWN MEETING ITEMS THEY ARE ASKED TO VOTE ON.

IF YOU BUILD ON A SPARK THAT IS ALREADY THERE, SOMETHING GREAT THAT IS ALREADY GOING ON, YOU HAVE MUCH MORE CHANCE OF SUCCESS.

LOOK AROUND TO SEE WHAT HAS WORKED IN OTHER COMMUNITIES. IF YOU DON’T HAVE A PROFESSIONAL PLANNER, SOME GOOD SOURCES ARE THE NH OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT, YOUR REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION, AND OTHER COMMUNITIES.

AND FINALLY, IF YOU WANT PEOPLE TO IMPLEMENT YOUR PLAN YOU HAVE TO MAKE IT READABLE, FOCUSED AND ATTRACTIVE.
PART OF HAVING A PLAN READABLE IS HOW IT’S ORGANIZED.
THIS IS HOW THE ENABLING STATUTE TALKS ABOUT THE SECTIONS OF THE PLAN.
IT DOESN’T MEAN YOU SHOULD ORGANIZE THE DOCUMENT LIKE THIS.

ALTHOUGH ONLY VISION AND LAND USE SECTIONS ARE REQUIRED, AN IMPLEMENTATION
SECTION IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART!!!
YOUR MASTER PLAN NEEDS TO TELL THE STORY FOR PEOPLE.
WHAT ARE THE COMMUNITY’S VISION AND GOALS?
WHAT DOES THE COMMUNITY HAVE TO WORK WITH?
THIS MEANS BOTH SOCIOECONOMICS AND LAND,
WHO LIVES IN THE TOWN?
WHAT’S GOING ON ECONOMICALLY, WITH FAMILIES, WITH THE TAX BASE, WITH JOBS?
WHAT DO YOU HAVE FOR HOUSING?
WHAT IMPORTANT RESOURCE LANDS ARE OF MORE VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY
PROTECTED RATHER THAN DEVELOPED?
WHAT AREAS ARE NOT SUITABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT?
WHAT’S GOING ON WITH EXISTING LAND USE, AND WHAT ARE THE TRENDS?
THEN EXPLORE OPTIONS
AND DEVELOP A FUTURE LAND USE PLAN.
FINALLY, THINK ABOUT WHAT THE TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNITY FACILITY NEEDS
ASSOCIATED WITH THAT PLAN WILL BE.

AND THEN OF COURSE DEVELOP THE ACTION PLAN IDENTIFYING WHO NEEDS TO DO
WHAT TO MAKE ALL THIS HAPPEN.
But it’s just a plan

But we don’t have enough data

TWO EXTREMES: “IT WILL NEVER HAPPEN, BUT LET’S PUT IT IN ANYWAY, WHO CARES, IT’S JUST A PLAN”

VS.

“How can we include that, we don’t have enough data” or “but our survey wasn’t scientifically significant”

ACTION ITEM STEPS NEED TO BE REALISTIC, RIGHT-SIZED FOR YOUR COMMUNITY, AND SUPPORTED IN THE TEXT BY RESULTS OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND/OR DATA, BUT DON’T BE ANXIOUS ABOUT THE VOLUME OR QUALITY OF DATA YOU HAVE. THE CONNECTION JUST NEEDS TO BE REASONABLE.

RECOMMENDING FURTHER STUDY ISN’T A COP OUT EITHER. SOMETIMES IT’S THE NEXT LOGICAL STEP IN A PROCESS, AND HAVING THAT THE RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER STUDY IN YOUR MASTER PLAN CAN OFTEN HELP YOU OBTAIN FUNDING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR IT LATER.
SOMETIMES IT MAKES SENSE TO DIG DEEPER INTO AN ISSUE DURING THE PROCESS TO MAKE SURE IMPLEMENTATION WILL HAPPEN.

DURING WORK ON THE 2015 CARROL NH MASTER PLAN IT BECAME APPARENT THAT ONE OF THE BIGGEST ISSUES IN TOWN WAS WHETHER TO REPLACE OR REHABILITATE THE TOWN HALL.
TO CITIZENS OF THE TOWN OF CARROLL

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND A PUBLIC DISCUSSION FACILITATED BY NORTH COUNTRY COUNCIL REGARDING THE FUTURE OF THE TOWN HALL

THE TOWN HALL WAS AN ICON FOR THE TOWN CENTER AND THE FOCAL POINT FOR TOWN ACTIVITY. BUT IT WAS VERY EXPENSIVE TO HEAT, POORLY CONFIGURED, AND MANY SPACES WERE NOT ACCESSIBLE. NORTH COUNTRY COUNCIL FACILITATED A PUBLIC WORKSHOP TO FOCUS ON THE QUESTION OF THE ROLE OF THE TOWN HALL, I.E., WHAT FUNCTIONS IT PERFORMED FOR THE COMMUNITY.
5 YEARS LATER, THE TOWN HALL HAD BEEN REPLACED BY A NEW TOWN OFFICE.

A NEW PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING HAS ALSO BEEN CONSTRUCTED ON THE SITE TO REPLACE A FIRE STATION THE TOWN HAD GROWN OUT OF AND AN INADEQUATE RENTED POLICE DEPARTMENT SPACE.

(Photo credit: Union Leader, April 7, 2020)
IF YOU WANT YOUR PLAN TO BE IMPLEMENTED, ENGAGE THE OPINION LEADERS IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THE PLAN AND BE A GOOD LISTENER.

WHILE WORKING ON THEIR 2010 MASTER PLAN, THE EASTON NH PLANNING BOARD MADE THE DECISION TO HOLD A FACILITATED PUBLIC MEETING TO DIG DEEPER INTO POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ZONING AMENDMENTS. THE PLANNING BOARD WAS CONSIDERING SEVERAL LAND USE TOOLS ENABLED BY THE INNOVATIVE ZONING STATUTE (RSA 674:21) BUT WERE CONCERNED THAT SOME RESIDENTS MIGHT OPPOSE THE ZONING AMENDMENTS AT TOWN MEETING TIME DUE TO LACK OF FAMILIARITY WITH THE TOOLS. THE PUBLIC MEETING WAS VERY CONSTRUCTIVE; THE YEAR AFTER THE PLAN WAS ADOPTED TOWN MEETING APPROVED ALL FOUR OF THE PROPOSED INNOVATIVE ZONING AMENDMENTS.
HARNESS EXISTING MOMENTUM!

SHORTLY BEFORE STARTING THE MASTER PLAN UPDATE, GORHAM NH BECAME JUST THE SECOND COMMUNITY IN NEW HAMPSHIRE TO BE DESIGNATED BY THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY AS AN APPALACHIAN TRAIL COMMUNITY.

THE ATV INDUSTRY HAS BEEN A REAL BOOST TO CERTAIN LOCAL BUSINESSES AND TO REAL ESTATE SALES IN GORHAM AS WELL.
A GUIDING THEME CAN REALLY HELP WITH IMPLEMENTATION BY GENERATING ENTHUSIASM AND HELPING EVERYONE SEE THEY ARE WORKING TOWARD A COMMON GOAL.

THE GORHAM PLANNING BOARD RECOGNIZED THAT TRAILS ARE AN ECONOMIC DRIVER AND A BIG DRAW FOR QUALITY OF LIFE FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG INDIVIDUALS. THIS NEW ENERGY AROUND TRAILS PROVIDED SOME FORWARD MOMENTUM TO BUILD ON, SO TRAILS BECAME THE “THEME” OF THE PLAN, THE COMMON THREAD TYING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION AND OTHER TOPICS TOGETHER.
A LOT HAS HAPPENED IN GORHAM ALREADY!

- ONE OF ONLY 10 COMMUNITIES NATIONWIDE TO BE AWARDED EPA RECREATION ECONOMY FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
- NPS RECREATION TRAILS & CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TA
- COMMUNITY ACTION PAN FOR BOOSTING RECREATION ECONOMY
- NEW LOGO
- DESIGN FOR WAYFINDING SIGNS
- GRANT APPLICATION FOR SIDEWALKS, BIKE LANES, TRAFFIC CALMING > HIGHEST RATED PROJECT IN REGION FOR TEN YEAR PLAN AND NOW IN THE GOVERNOR’S PROPOSAL
THIS IS WHAT “TELLING THE STORY” MIGHT LOOK LIKE AS AN OUTLINE FOR THE MASTER PLAN DOCUMENT.

YOU MIGHT WANT TO ALSO WANT TO BREAK OUT A CERTAIN TOPIC ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT TO THE TOWN INTO A SEPARATE CHAPTER AND PROVIDE A MORE DETAILED ACTION PLAN FOR THIS.

KEEP IN MIND TELLING THE STORY IN AS CONCISE AND READABLE WAY AS POSSIBLE GOES A LONG WAY TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION.

DON’T INCLUDE 25 PAGES ON SOMETHING JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN.

IT’S A BIT OF AN ITERATIVE PROCESS; YOU NEED TO LOOK AT THE PUBLIC INPUT AND DATA TO KNOW WHAT THE FOCUS OF THE PLAN SHOULD BE, THEN TAILOR THE LEVEL OF DETAIL TO THOSE ISSUES, WITH LESS DETAIL ON LESS IMPORTANT ISSUES.

MORE PEOPLE WILL AT LEAST LOOK OVER YOUR DRAFT MASTER PLAN IF IT IS CONCISE, ATTRACTIVE AND READABLE. FEW PEOPLE OUTSIDE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ARE EVER GOING TO LOOK AT THAT DOCUMENT AGAIN AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARING, BUT THE MAIN THEMES WILL STICK WITH THEM WHEN THEY ARE ASKED TO VOTE ON IMPLEMENTATION STEPS LATER ON
**Recommendation Timeframe Priority Lead**

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<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Lead</th>
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<td>Short/Medium/Long</td>
<td>Low/Medium/High</td>
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**DON’T WASTE TIME MAKING YOUR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN THIS DETAILED.**

**IT’S NOT GOING TO GET IMPLEMENTED ACCORDING TO THE TIMEFRAME AND PRIORITIES YOU PUT IN THE PLAN ANYWAY. OTHER FACTORS ARE GOING TO DRIVE IMPLEMENTATION.**
### ACTION PLAN

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<tr>
<th>Recommendation or Policy</th>
<th>LEAD, Others</th>
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**KEEP IT SIMPLE:** WHAT IS THE ACTION ITEM, WHO NEEDS TO TAKE THE LEAD TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN, AND WHO ELSE ALSO HAS A ROLE TO PLAY.
Some Tools for Implementation - Natural Resources

- Land Acquisition
- Conservation Easements
- Partnerships
- Public Education
- Environmental Overlay Zoning
- Lot Size Averaging/Clustering/Conservation Subdivision
- Current Use Program
- Enforcement
- Greenways, Corridor Plans, Watershed Plans
- Household Hazardous Waste Collections

ADDITIONAL TOOLS MENTIONED BY PARTICIPANTS:
- CITIZEN MONITORING PROGRAMS
- HERITAGE COMMISSIONS
- WATER RESOURCE PROTECTION COMMITTEES
- COST OF COMMUNITY SERVICES STUDIES
- NHDES INNOVATIVE LAND USE PLANNING TECHNIQUES: A HANDBOOK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, OCTOBER 2008
### Some Tools for Implementation - Scenic & Historic

- Acquisition
- Easements (Conservation, Scenic, or Preservation)
- Partnerships
- Scenic Byways Program
- Scenic Roads Ordinance
- Historic Districts
- Barns Program – Tax Credits
- Ridgeline Zoning, Clustering
- Current Use Program
- National and State Registers
- Certified Local Government Program

**FOR MORE INFO ON SEVERAL OF THESE TOOLS, SEE NHDES INNOVATIVE LAND USE PLANNING TECHNIQUES: A HANDBOOK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, OCTOBER 2008**
Some Tools for Implementation-Land Use

- Zoning Amendments
- Changes to Subdivision and Site Plan Regulations
- Implementation of Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Inclusionary Zoning, Housing Commissions
- TIF Districts
- Collaboration
- Excavation Regulations
- 41:11 c Business Regulations
- Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
- Transportation Improvements, Flexible Parking, Ped-Friendly

For more info on several of these tools, see NHDES Innovative Land Use Planning Techniques: A Handbook for Sustainable Development, October 2008
Some Tools for Implementation – Transportation

- Ten Year Plan
- Road Standards
- Road Inventory and Needs Assessment
- Driveway Regulations
- Traffic Calming
- Access Management
- CIP
- Pedestrian/Bicycle Infrastructure
- Outreach on Services for Nondrivers
- Community Driver Volunteer Programs
Tools for Implementation – Community Facilities

- Capital Improvements Program (CIP)
- Land Acquisition
- Partnerships
- Changes to Water & Sewer Rate Structure
- Changes to Land Use Regulations
- Feasibility Studies
- Studies to Prioritize Water or Sewer Line Replacements

NOTE THAT A CIP NEEDS TO BE AUTHORIZED BY TOWN MEETING (RSA 674:5) AND CAN BE ASSIGNED TO EITHER THE PLANNING BOARD OR TO A SELECTBOARD-APPOINTED COMMITTEE IN THAT WARRANT ARTICLE.
EVERYBODY SHOULD LEAVE THE ANNUAL GATHERING WITH THEIR GAME PLAN FOR THE COMING YEAR.

SOME COMMUNITIES (E.G., WOLFEBORO) HAVE THEIR MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE BE A STANDING COMMITTEE, OR SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE PLANNING BOARD, AND THEN THIS COMMITTEE IS CHARGED WITH KEEPING THE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE RADAR OF KEY DECISION-MAKERS SUCH AS THE SELECTBOARD AND PLANNING BOARD.

IN THE DISCUSSION PORTION OF THE SESSION WE LEARNED:

• THE ALTON PLANNING BOARD’S MASTER PLAN UPDATE SUBCOMMITTEE WILL BE RECOMMENDING THAT THIS BECOME A STANDING SUBCOMMITTEE TO COORDINATE WITH THE SELECTBOARD, PLANNING BOARD, CIP COMMITTEE AND ZONING AMENDMENTS COMMITTEE ON IMPLEMENTATION.
• LACONIA’S MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE BOTH WORKS ON UPDATES AND TRACKS AND PROMOTES IMPLEMENTATION.
• TEMPLE HAS A MASTER PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE THAT ENGAGES THE PUBLIC IN WORKING TOWARD MASTER PLAN GOALS.
BE PATIENT!
SOMETIMES CHANGE COMES VERY SLOWLY,
EITHER B/C IT REQUIRES SO MUCH INVESTMENT
OR NEEDS JUST THE RIGHT INGREDIENTS
OR THE TIMING NEEDS TO BE JUST RIGHT.
A NEW PROGRAM OR FUNDING SOURCE CAN FIRE THINGS UP,
LIKE THE NEW FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE MONEY,
BUT IF YOU DON’T PLAN FOR THE CHANGE YOU WANT, YOU CAN’T EVER GET THERE.
JUST HAVE TO PUT ONE FOOT IN FRONT OF THE OTHER.

Primary objective was to revitalize the downtown and mill district by encouraging mixed use.

- Cooperation among businesses
- Cooperation between business and city
- Promotion/marketing
- Appearance
- Infrastructure
- Inventory spaces
- Implement traffic flow improvements re pedestrian-friendly

Claremont NH 1991 Master Plan

Claremont is one example of the long view paying off. The 1991 Claremont NH Master Plan focused on redeveloping the city’s large historic mill district and a downtown with mixed use redevelopment rather than the traditional commercial downtown zoning and industrially zoned mill district.
HOWEVER NOT TOO MUCH HAPPENED FOR THE NEXT TEN YEARS. UNTIL A NEW CITY MANAGER, GUY SANATAGE, CAME ON THE SCENE WITH A NEW APPROACH, LEADERSHIP AND THE ABILITY TO SEE THE POSSIBILITIES.

“AT THE TIME HE ARRIVED, CITY OFFICIALS HAD APPROVED AND WERE IN THE PROCESS OF DEMOLISHING THREE DEFUNCT MILL BUILDINGS. SANTAGATE CONVINCED THEM NOT TOO.”
(MELANIE PLENDIA, “ONCE DOWNTRODDEN, CLAREMONT IS ON THE UPSWING,” NEW HAMPSHIRE BUSINESS REVIEW, JUNE 14, 2013)

(Source: Reproduced from an original postcard by an unknown publisher, Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=20253603)
HERE IS CLAREMONT’S MILL DISTRICT TODAY, WITH PEDESTRIAN LINKAGES TO DOWNTOWN SHOWN IN THE RIGHHAND PHOTO.

OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDED A PARKING GARAGE AND PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE.

CURRENTLY REHAB IS BEGINNING TO CONVERT ONE MILL TO AN 83-UNIT APARTMENT BUILDING.
Some Keys to Success

- Relationship Building / Partnerships
- Be Adaptable, Listen to What the Community is Saying
- Learn From Other Communities
- Communication / Celebration

MANY THINGS YOUR COMMUNITY DOES ARE MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION. POINT IT OUT! CELEBRATE THE SMALL STEPS!

READ MORE IN “LESSONS IN NEW RURALISM – FALL 2020” HERE: https://nne.planning.org/knowledge/new-ruralism/
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