

LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

To: Sarah Marchant, Community Development Director
Matt Sullivan, Planning Manager

From: Carter Falk, Deputy Planning Manager/Zoning

Subj: March 2, 2021 Master Plan Meeting notes

Date: March 9, 2021

I was the note-taker in the March 2, 2021 Master Plan meeting for the Land Use group. The following are notes from the meeting:

First session:

Mary-Ann Melizza-Golja – is interested in the southern part of the City, as well as traffic, proposed development plans, and re-development of existing sites.

Ald. Patricia Klee – said her main concern is land use and how things are zoned, especially in Ward 3. Has seen a lot of change in the area, and the City is not a one-size fits all city, we need to look at each area of the City.

Scott LeClair – Wants to clarify what we want to do in our Land Use Code. The current Master Plan has run its course. Re-development will become most important moving forward.

Adam Varley – Very interested in Planning issues, as the Planning Board is a Quasi-Judicial Board. He said that they try to address concerns, but can't make policy decisions at the Planning Board level. He said that this is a great opportunity to think of different policies to bring into the Master Plan process, and a great first step in re-codifying the Land Use Code.

Mike Pederson – He said that lots of subdivisions of vacant land are changing everything. The current Master Plan, written in 2000, is obsolete.

Bruce Cohen – said he is very invested in the City. Wants to listen to what the people want in the City, as a State Rep, to address potential issues on State level. Wants to ensure we maintain quality of life in Nashua, and need economic vitality to not become a dying City, need to keep parks updated and keep an economic base that is growing.

Brad Westgate – appears before various land use Boards in NH, interested in progress of landowners and developers and how the process works. Interested in the business climate, and wants a notion of flexibility moving forward, and the new Master Plan should be one to allow flexibility.

Brian, Lisa Law – owns a 34-acre parcel between Charron Ave and behind Peters Auto, and have manufacturing tenants, the bowling alley, Grand Buffet, and wants the best use of this land. Wants the best use of land moving forward, also has 100,000 sq.ft of building space, and wants to attract employers and employees. Interested in their older children to move back to the City, Nashua should be a happening City where people want to move to.

John Panny – has concerns about the large multi-family project going in Maplewood, the new school, and the existing roads are not capable of handling all this new development. Lot of development over the last 20 years has been done haphazardly. The new Master Plan should not relax zoning laws, they should be tightened up. Need reasonable development, and Amherst Street is a big headache. City should be aware of past mistakes moving forward.

Nicole Gilliam – representing young families, is interested in how the City will attract young families.

Mike R. – is here to listen to other citizens opinions.

Matt Sullivan – Went over the Land Use and Development handout, explaining the existing conditions of land use acreage in the city, existing zoning conditions and how generally zoning districts follow existing land development, and mentioned the Draft Goals, and opened up the group for comment:

John Panny – access is an issue, and cross access getting around the City. Something should be done to alleviate traffic on Amherst Street. Does not think that the Country Tavern should be converted into a gas station/convenience store. Said that Amherst Street has developed too haphazardly, with no continuity, there is a mish-mash of housing and other uses, nothing done to meet any Master Plan.

Scott LeClair – the Planning Board gets a lot of rezoning requests, mostly on Amherst Street. The whole corridor needs an in-depth look at what is there. There is too much of a patchwork of zoning districts and there have been way too many variances on Amherst Street. The corridor needs more continuity.

Second session:

Amber Logue – Chair of Animal and Dog Park Committee as well as facilitating Master Plan.

Bill Schwartz – in attendance, is a transportation planner.

Kath Nelson – representing Nashua River Watershed and conservation issues.

Sherry Dutzy – State Rep and Chair of the Conservation Commission, and is interested in architecture and good planning practices.

James Vayo – former employee and now at SNHRPC. Here to observe.

Les Duncan – Need a balance of growth and maintaining the needs of the City.

Gene Porter – Interested in waterways, and development along the waterfront, and protecting water resources.

Gloria McCarthy – interested in land use, and wants the City to not overbuild, protect the environment and its natural resources.

Brad Westgate – said his practice is in land use law, and is interested in the entire land use process.

John Sullivan – Amherst Street used to be a one-lane road, and the City has grown too quickly, need a good Master Plan to allow smart growth to handle the changing demographics and economy.

Russ Morin – is with the Civil Air Patrol, and is interested in land use and development in and around the airport.

Manny Ramirez – Co-Founder of Positive Street Art. Is interested in land use, development, and arts and culture, and how they co-exist.

Susan Slane – Real estate professional, and works with the Board of Nashua River Watershed.

Barbara Bishop – Lives in north end, and is interested in older buildings.

Matt Sullivan – Reviewed the Land Use Existing conditions handout. Stated that the Zoning Code will soon be re-codified after the Master Plan is completed. Feedback-discussion of the Five Draft Goals:

Bill Schwartz – Need to look at revamping the parking requirements in the City, and possibly remove them.

James Vayo – said that parking numbers don't work a lot of times. The City should have more transit routes, where housing density can be increased.

HOUSING

Imagine Nashua 3/2/2021

Housing Breakout Group Notes

Facilitator: Sarah Marchant, Community Development Director

Notetaker: Mason Twombly, Nashua RPC

Session 1:

Participants

Laurie Wilshire, BOA Nashua native

Kyle Worth, Helps adult daycare program, 37 affordable housing units in Nashua.

Noah Telerski, works for Mayor, wants to move out of parent's home.

Jon Spira-Savett, Rabi at Beth Abraham, Interfaith Council

James Vayo, Southern NH RPC, interested in housing in Nashua.

Latha Mangipudi, Hillsborough-District 35 Representative, very interested in housing.

Notes

Marchant presented existing conditions on demographics and stated goals for housing.

Mangipudi brought up that there are several bills to increase affordable housing in the state, she is curious about how those can be applied in Nashua.

Wilshire discussed accessibility and developing the city in the future and trying to keep children here. Noted that there are thousands of people on affordable housing waitlists. Questioned whether other towns around Nashua need to be working for more affordable housing to pointing out that Nashua is already highly developed.

Worth mentioned his background in multifamily housing development. He noted that other communities have much less friendly attitudes toward multifamily. He mentioned that the city should reassess some of the zoning areas, and allow for creativity when it comes to density and number of units especially when working with affordable housing.

Mangipudi noted the proximity to Boston and other work centers. She noted we should focus on creating multigenerational, multi use areas.

Telerski shared he thought that distributing housing options across the city is very important. Noted that ADUs could be a big source of housing.

Mangipudi noted that the ADU and tiny home possibility could offer opportunities for multigenerational living and housing for college students and young people.

Spira-Savett shared that he has thought about ADU development on his property pointing out that Nashua North is close to him and business area around Broad St, employees in that area would be a good fit for tenants.

Vayo mentioned that a typical Low Income Tax Credit Unit costs \$256,000 on average and ADUs definitely provide opportunity.

Mangipudi noted it is important the city's zoning is perceived as friendly.

Spira-Savett mentioned that it would be interesting to model the different variations of housing that could be used to provide needed housing.

Mangipudi brought up the need to make diverse and inclusive communities.

Telerski brought up that there are people who have concerns about the ADUs popping up all over their neighborhoods. He noted that encouraging that the units don't stick out too much. "shape & form"

Mangipudi spoke about redevelopment and the links between carbon footprint.

Worth spoke about redevelopment and his experience in renovating several older structures in Nashua. Addressing the building code and seeing what barriers are there.

End of Session 1

Session 2

Participants

Patricia Klee, BOA & state rep, affordable housing

Ray Guarino, BOE, worked for NRPC, lives in ward 7

Emma Rearick, new homeowner, interested in affordable and quality housing, worked habitat for humanity.

Brian Law, Law Family Companies, own property and business, interested in retaining youth, Chair of Nashua Chamber

Lisa Law, former realtor, works helping peoples home's function, how does the community change while preserving the history

Cecilia Ulibarri, works in Mayor's office, 33 year Nashua resident

Donna Marceau, Nashua Soup Kitchen, Nashua resident.

Henry Harris, Southern NH Services

Notes

Marchant presented existing conditions on demographics and stated goals for housing.

Marceau shared that she felt the overreliance on the property tax is creating an even more expensive market and should be addressed by someone. She mentioned the possibility of offering property tax relief for developers creating rental units.

Klee mentioned that she thinks it is very important to spread the new development out across the city. No income group should be only in one area. She noted that big complexes should have a variety of incomes. Noted issues that keep the city "handcuffed" because of state policy.

Guarino noted that encouraging mixed land use that will include residential and commercial. Mentioning residences on top business on the bottom floors.

Klee questioned whether there were any parking requirement for ADUs. Marchant addressed that question.

Rearick expressed that she felt like the sustainability goal needed to address the tying in of public transportation or density.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MASTER PLAN BREAK OUT SESSION 2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

March 2, 2021

Master Plan members: Paul Shea
Mary Ann Melizzi Goljya
Scott Leclair
Cheryl Linder
Amy Deroche
Alderwomen Elizabeth Lu
Doria Brown
Tom Lanzara

Also Present: Will Cohen, Facilitator
Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director
Scott McPhie, Note Taker
Linda McGhee, Deputy Planning Manager

Mr. Cohen discussed the Nashua location quotient. He described how Nashua jobs are broken down into various categories including Information and Technology and retail.

He expressed the need to balance out the maps so they look the same. Doing so creates a more balanced economy. He indicated the median price for a home in Nashua is \$321,300.00 which is still cheaper than the suburbs closer to Boston.

We want to examine in 10-years where Nashua's strengths will be.

Mr. Cohen then opened up the group discussion on goals.

Draft Goals:

- Economic Mobility
- Access & Opportunity's
- Job Creation
- Employment Diversity
- Common Districts

Economic Group Discussion 1:

Mr. LeClair expressed the need to draw in a younger work force. We will need a younger workforce to diversify employment needs in the future.

Mr. Shea indicated talent is talent no matter the age. New Hampshire is an aging State. Younger workers provide an opportunity for businesses. We see older relatives being drawn back to the workforce as consultants to fill the business needs.

Median rent and median income need to be placed on a bell graph. Doing so will provide what housing mismatches exist.

Alderwomen Lu expressed she did not see the correlation between median income and housing costs. Rule of thumb 30% of your income will allow you to buy at that level.

Mr. Shea felt the 1.2 % factor for retail seemed relatively low.

MASTER PLAN BREAK OUT SESSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

March 2, 2021

Master Plan members: Hollis McGuire
Shawn Nelson
Amy DeRoche
Josh Nehiley
Donna Marceau
John Sullivan
Alderman O'Brian
Amber Logue

Also Present: Will Cohen, Facilitator
Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director
Scott McPhie, Note Taker
Linda McGhee, Deputy Planning Manager

Mr. Cohen presented the economic Development power point Presentation. He discussed how Nashua is looked at by some as a conglomeration of Automobile dealers and Grocery Stores. He indicated Nashua is more than that.

- Wide range of commuters traveling North and South
- Mixing and matching of threat costs
- What area do we see new jobs for Nashua
- Creating new jobs during a global Pandemic

Draft Goals:

- Economic Mobility
- Access & Opportunity's
- Job Creation
- Employment Diversity
- Common Districts
- Location & Regional Position-Not just a sleepy suburb. Nashua is far enough away to be independent to itself but close enough to be connected to the Broad Region.

ECONOMIC

March 2, 2020

Page 2

Economic Group Discussion 1:

Mr. Sullivan would like to see a prediction of what the regional job picture looks like in 2029. If manufacturing is going to grow in the northeast. Where are the current trends and future opportunities?

Mr. Nehiley said he is a Boston commuter and wondered why retail was not as high on the list of Nashua Jobs. The south end is looked at as a retail center. Good retail opportunities in the South End.

Mr. Cohen expressed Nashua has many stores but the retail corridors are not as large as those in Manchester or even the seacoast region.

Alderman O'Brian added with Amazon changing people's shopping habits will retail be as strong in 10-years.

Mr. Sullivan expressed perhaps retail will be different. Malls turning into mixed uses like apartments with smaller retail therefore creating affordable housing directly on a commuter rail link.

Ms. Logue added Amazon also supports many small business's (wholesale trade) therefore leveraging larger market places. A goal of Job Creation and retention and more diversity of jobs over time. How about test Kitchens. Diversity in housing to appeal to all incomes.

Mr. Cummings asked what type of housing would you like to see? Live, Work, and Play.

Mr. McGuire said Manchester N.H. is encouraging artists to move into studio apartments. He is concerned with Nashua having housing mismatches. Need to address the gap between earnings and cost of housing. Small housing was available in the 1950's and 1960's not everyone wants a "McMansion".

Ms. Logue added we had a chart where houses follow the income trend. Smaller houses are coming back.

Mr. Cohen added you need to be in the upper income category and earn 100,000 to buy in Nashua.

Mr. Cummings added does anyone want to add an economic strategy to the discussion.

Economic Development Break Out Notes

After introductions the following were brought up by the public during the first and second session

Economic Growth

Existing conditions, what makes Nashua distinct

What makes Nashua special

What is the proportion of Nashua to New Hampshire

Discussed commuting patterns. Where do those that live in Nashua work.

Employment & affordability. What can jobs afford

What does the regional job growth look like. How are we positioned. What do we look like in different job sectors

What are the current trends

Thought that retail would be higher.

Concentrate on great location and capturing the shoppers that come over from MA

With Amazon, and more people buying online is the retail market going to be as strong in 10 years. The virus has given us a glimpse into the future.

Utilize box stores and turn them into apartments, mixed use, affordable housing.

The Daniel Webster Highway is a strategic place for change to residential. Perhaps more of a village feel. Live/work/play.

What strategies should we pursue

Are we on the right track.

How do we bring in younger workers

MOBILITY & TRANSIT

Date: March 2, 2021

Facilitator: Elizabeth van der Els

Scribe: Julie Chizmas

Mobility and Transit – Round 1

- Laura Telerski – State Rep for Ward 8. This is her first Imagine Nashua meeting. Also the Deputy ranking member of the House Transportation Committee.
- Paul Patti – Ward 8. Member of Nashua Rail Advisory Board. Wants to bring rail back. Here to help move transportation forward and integrate overall accessibility to different parts to what would be Central rail.
- Ray Guarino – Ward 7. Former transportation planner with NRPC now works for an RPC in Mass. Worked on transportation section of 2000 Master Plan. Board of Education member.
- Emma Rearick – Lives at edge of French Hill/North End. Attended 1 or 2 of the previous meetings
- Elizabeth Lu – Nashua native, Ward 6 Alderwoman.
- Bill Schwartz – North end resident for almost 5 years. Transportation planner for Nelson/Nygaard. Has lots of ideas.
- Kerry Miller – Work in Mayor's office – just listening in.

Goals Discussion:

#1:

Ray: Thinks this is a very good goal. Need to look at transportation network as a system. Transit and rail needs to be accessible by other modes. Transit works well with sidewalk and ped access to the stops. An action that's part of the goal should be for the City to adopt or codify Complete Streets policies. Complete Streets is context sensitive and looks at the road from the point of view of all users. For example, if there isn't enough ROW for a bike lane, there could be sharrows. It's a mindset of how we look at streets for all users. DPW could have a policy instead of an ordinance, which could be controversial.

Bill: The idea of a multi-modal network is a priority. It's important to improve transit access. In terms of connectivity, it needs to be a high priority. Not just NTS – an ability for people to ride in a vehicle who don't own a car or choose not to ride in a car. Particularly for an aging population.

Paul: Making the City accessible for all people of all types is important. IT person by trade and with computing capability we have the ability to quantify the different roles - commuter, walker, handicapped person – whatever their needs may be – what are the roles we need to consider. He can't walk down East Dunstable beyond where the sidewalk ends. Has to walk in the road when he gets to one of the brooks – and that's a main road. Sidewalk are coming and we are making progress. We are getting there but how do we do that faster or more efficiently. How do we design that moving forward? We need the different means of transportation –walking, bicycling.

#2:

Bill: From the standpoint of health, should we be flagging areas where health indicators are of concern. Should we try to address those specifically as opposed to more broadly? Focus on specific areas in the

City – like where there's high incidences of asthma. Mobile or stationary sources. Not just reducing emissions – may be other reasons that public health is impacted. There may be ways to address that like investments in recreational facilities.

Laura: Important to keep in mind the advancement of electric vehicle technology and what would make the City welcoming to visitors with electric vehicles but also what would encourage citizens to want to take the leap into expensive technology that would make an impact. With respect to health and different modes, ride share options for people don't have vehicles or need one but want option to easily use ZipCar or scooters for the day to get people out of their own cars.

Elizabeth Lu: Her relatives use bus system and there should be more bus shelters for bus stops to encourage bus use. There needs to be much more attention to make the bus routes bearable. There's nowhere to stand and wait for bus in the winter. We need to address this and make it work.

Emma: One of the big challenges to walking in winter is sidewalks don't get cleared. What strategies could be used to encourage more snow clearing or facilitate it? A lot of the walking networks disappear in the winter.

Bill: City has sidewalk plows but maybe a specific action under the goal could be to buy new plows and expand the sidewalks that get cleared.

Elizabeth: Nashua is so big – it doesn't seem feasible to use city services to clear all the sidewalks. Could there be a program that incentivizes people or downtown merchants to clear their sidewalks to free up the City resources for harder to reach areas? Could there be recognition for merchants who do their own clearing. Is there a way we can start a grassroots effort to hire young people to clear sidewalks in their neighborhoods?

Paul: Like adopt a sidewalk? Not just in front of their house – like a street. Or a business adopts the sidewalk and gets a sign recognizing them. They could clear themselves or pay money to have them cleared to get the sign.

Emma: City she lived in in Kansas had City Snow Partners program. There was an ordinance that residents have to clear their sidewalks in front of their house but for elderly who couldn't clear, they would match them up with young, fit volunteers who would shovel.

Elizabeth van der Els: Some cities have awards to celebrate most flowers or decorations. Maybe we could channel that into sidewalk clearing.

#3:

Ray: All of the goals are well written and hit the right notes. Goals are broad based statement then we talk about the specifics, but transportation policy should support land use. But we should create land use designed specifically to give people options. The Board of Ed is building a new school that is an island that can only be gotten to by vehicle. Current Elm St location is great but there's no way they aren't going to build a new school in SW Nashua. Transportation shouldn't come after land use – they should be coordinated together. Don't build housing development then roads around it. Plan the transportation system as new neighborhood is being planned.

Bill: The word parking is missing from this one. If you manage and limit the amount of parking offered, you lower traffic. We could be more bold with this one. Integrate parking into goal statement.

Time ran out

Mobility and Transit – Round 2

- Michael Pedersen: Ward 5, Mayor's Representative on Nashua Planning Board, State Representative, on Public Works and Highway Committee. Big claim to fame is speech on advancing commuter rail and getting it passed and approved. Worked out well. Bringing commuter rail to Nashua has advanced as far as it can go and some day we should have it.
- Mike O'Brien: Alderman At Large, State Rep. Was on transportation Committee for 14 years, Mayor's Commuter Rail Commission, loves trains. Live and die on the Boston dollar and if we tie a train into the Boston economy we will make money.
- Rep Latha Mangipudi: State Rep Ward 8, grew up as daughter of railway employee in India. Big rail advocate. Rail will tie is into mass transportation, density, housing. Nashua is the most diverse city in the state. Would like to see the bus system strengthened and to all corners of city, Boston Express, and rail.
- Hollis McGuire: Knows very little about transportation – does economics and did that session first. Business advisor for SBA development center. Has worked with hundreds of Nashua businesses. Here to learn and listen.
- Elyse Butterworth: Emergency Management Coordinator. Interested in the Master Plan because they deal with the emergency plans so whatever the Master Plan is for the city they need to account for it in their emergency plan. Transportation is a big part of almost every emergency and every response so this will have major consequences.
- Peter Schaefer: Ward 7 and if the train comes to Nashua, will be 2 blocks from his house. Goes to a lot of City meetings since retirement. Buses in the City have long loops to pick up more people. The City should loop buses clockwise and counter clockwise to save time. Interested in connecting transportation in Nashua to surrounding communities. Lots of assets and you shouldn't always have to drive. Many people neighboring towns don't have resources and come here one way or another and if we could connect to their resources that would help Nashua.
- Homa Jaferey: In Nashua since 2000. Lives in Ward 9 and raised her two kids here. Grew up in London with public transport and misses it so much. It's really important because Nashua is growing fast and we need access to get to Boston for the best hospitals, etc. We need to work on that.

#5:

Latha: Boston Express has really connected us to Logan. It was much easier than to go to Logan than Manchester. Connectivity between the airports would really help.

Mike O: We're hitting a dead end on the train because of the economic cost. Hoping the new Administration in Washington has infrastructure goal that includes a commuter rail aspect. But right now, the state isn't going to pay for it so we need federal money. As Alderman, deals with parking issues. You need parking when you have reliance on cars. Look at the schools – there are large parking

lots around the high schools. We need to increase local, reliable, timely public transportation. Need a bigger investment. Getting people to the commuter rail would be by public transportation.

Latha: Last mile connectivity is very critical, whether connection to commuter rail or regional Boston Express or within the City. Want to highlight that transportation infrastructure and multimodal transportation is the focus and we are a big donut hole in the middle in the state because we don't have rail. Knows of investors who will invest in rail – how do we lure and keep them? We need to engage them before they go somewhere else.

Mike P: We need mass transportation going both ways. Peter's comment about buses – same with trains. You can't just go to Boston in am and home in pm. If you want people to shop or use the PAC, it would be more successful if we had adequate public transportation. If commuter rail goes to Manchester, there would be a link between the rail line and airport. If we could get federal money to make that happen, people could fly into Manchester and get on the trail, have access to entire US.

Mike O: That is being discussed with Manchester. Doesn't care about Manchester but they haven't been playing ball with us. If it goes to Manchester, it definitely would have to connect to airport.

Latha: Other thing going for Nashua is we can use the Crown St Park and Ride for commuter rail from Lowell. Maybe Lowell can use our parking lot since they have an issue there. Start in Nashua and go to Boston from here.

Mike O: We purchased a lot there already for commuter rail even though it's not there yet but there's a possibility for a station there. Is it big enough? Most commercial properties in that area have discussed offers tentatively of expanding for the rail project. The neighborhood knows it.

Peter: Look into the past to look at the future. Original rail lines to Nashua were actually used for horse drawn carriages. There could be smaller lighter things that are lighter, making the tracks easier to maintain. More like buses on tracks that you control digitally you could do a lot with it. You could send people right to the PAC.

Time ran out

OPEN SPACE & ENVIRONMENT

Imagine Nashua – Meeting

March 2, 2021 6pm

Open Space and Natural Resources Breakout Room Notes

Justin Kates, facilitator

Deb Chisholm, note taker

Justin went over the introductory slides with the group.

1. Expand and Enhance Recreation and Green Space

- “green” space suggests big. We should be more inclusive with our language to support urban park areas too.
- Green implies manicured like Greeley Park. Mine Falls Park is wooded and people don’t think of it as green space.
- Some areas not open to the public. Con Com is trying to improve access to Joyce Park. We should do similar with Pennichuck Pond.
- Balance is key while protecting our natural resources. Balance is also important with redevelopment.
- Maybe we should rephrase the goal to say ...”Balance protection of Nashua’s environmental assets with opportunities for redevelopment, **as well as opportunities for open/green space as part of redevelopment.**

2. Access and Connectivity

- Some areas aren’t accessible for public use and should be
- Many parks e.g. Atherton Park have a lot of green space, but nothing for families. Baseball diamonds have limited use and require a lot of people to use.
- Long-term development of park system improved programming
- Suggest a group that focuses on open space and natural resources, sorta like the Business and Industrial Development Authority does for business
- Some of the open spaces should be kept more natural
- Expanding our rail trails to better connect the city could bring people to Nashua.
- Connect the parks and advertise to all ages
- Mine Falls Park is accessible to many areas of the City. We need to create more connected spaces.

3. Climate Change Preparedness and Action

- The Beazer Site off Hillsferry Road should be a solar farm, not another cookie cutter single family home neighborhood. If it’s going to be housing, it should have more than just housing.
- We should include drought when talking about climate change and support water saving measures
- Extreme heat should also be considered

- Carbon neutrality seems separate from climate change and things like addressing stormwater. However, drought and hydropower are connected
- Community resilience is super important
- Electric vehicles should be better supported. We should make it more difficult to build/replace gas station and add more charging stations.
- Many people can't afford EVs, so maybe gas stations should be required to be better prepared by having backup generators so they can remain open during power outages.
- Clarification needed on carbon neutrality. Is it for the municipality or for all citizens?
- There need to be more incentives for people to be more carbon neutral
- How do we prepare so we don't end up like Texas did with the storms last week? Do more to ensure buildings can withstand outages.
- Solar and battery storage

4. Outreach and Education

- Characteristics/themes for specific areas or neighborhoods makes things easier for people to remember.
- Brands, signage are important
- Celebrate National Green Week
- Uniform/single location to find information on recreation areas. A place where people can find trail maps, parks etc. One page on the City's website
- Social media, apps to promote interaction with people to showcase our resources and make Nashua a destination

5. Riverfront

- Enhanced access to the Merrimack River

ARTS & CULTURE

Imagine Nashua Public Meeting #3 - Topic Area Goals

Arts and Culture

Facilitator: Taskina Tareen

Notetaker: Cassie Mullen

Breakout Room #1

Is there an opportunity to do more regarding arts and entertainment since overall spending in Nashua is low?

Paul Shea – Absence of a real venue could be a major reason for low spending in Nashua. We need to attract more people to Nashua. The performing arts center should help a lot. More midsize venues would also be beneficial, more 100-150 person venues.

Judith Carlson – Nashua only has a few nonprofits who have staff. Many of them are volunteers and not paid staff. Also, many of the events in Nashua are free. Portsmouth and Concord both have performing arts centers. This study only focuses on nonprofit organizations.

Lindsey Rinaldi – Looking at the goals what types of ways could we attract new people to the city?

Judith Carlson – Cultural diversity should be in everything we do. It is hard to come up with something for arts and culture, it should be in the upper levels of all the goals, and in all goals, permeating everything we do. Nashua is the most diverse city in the state. Do we put it in as a goal, or an overriding principle?

Carol Eyeman – It may be a good idea to keep it in the goals as well, to be more explicit.

Gloria McCarthy – On historical preservation, we want to be careful that we do not save every brick in the city. Some buildings are just old and not important. For example, the hotel next to Riverwalk, is very historically significant and it would be beneficial to restore and preserve the culture of it.

Judith Carlson – Why is the historical preservation a goal in the arts and culture plan? Especially since many of the historic buildings are privately owned. I am not sure it belongs in this section.

Lindsay Rinaldi – There are situations where the city would like to preserve arts buildings.

Paul Shea – History is of cultural importance and is relevant of this section. Judith has very valid points, but there are a lot of stories to tell in Nashua and it could be very attractive to tourists if we tap into historic resources and make them a draw to the city. i.e. Strawberry Banks in Portsmouth

Judith Carlson – The wording says “preserve historical buildings.” I agree with Paul 100%, but “historical buildings” is very specific and has to do to usage. Where so many are privately owned this is very challenging. Plus, this is a city plan, and it needs to focus on things that are achievable for the city.

Taskina Tareen – This may be a wording problem, preserving buildings could be a land use issue, where here it could be celebrating and preserving history and culture.

Lindsay Rinaldi – Are there any goals here that anyone feels extra passionate about?

Manny Ramirez – Citywide support for arts and culture. There are many nonprofits doing great things for the arts and culture in Nashua, if we could strengthen the support for arts and culture, we could do great things. Whether that means promotional or supplies, or just continuing events it would be greatly beneficial.

Paul Shea – If Nashua could re-evaluate land use tools to accommodate arts and culture, such as outdoor venues, that would be beneficial. Nashua also should invest in current facilities.

Breakout Room #2

Lindsay Rinaldi – which of these goals are you particularly interested in? Is there any existing collaboration that could benefit any of these goals?

John Spira-Savett – A lot of the goals are on the supply side, are there opportunities for engagement by partnering with organizations or cultural gatherings? I am in a religious group now and I would love to be partnering with other religious groups to experience and learn new things as well as meet new people.

Paul Metzger – Much of the emphasis is on the performing arts center, what is the support from the community for all of the smaller art centers after? There is a fair amount of investment that needs to be put into existing facilities.

John Panny – We also need to focus on making the infrastructure around Main Street safer and transportation access. What about public fields? Existing fields are in abysmal shape. A draft goal needs to be, who is going to maintain these fields?

Taskina Tareen – Public ground is a big part of arts and culture, but it is also fall under land use and economic development.

Judith Carlson – Community theater and performance groups. Court St. theater needs to be improved. There needs to be focus on improving 14 Court St. The business model of the performance groups does not fit in with the business model for the performing arts center, so it is important to maintain the existing group performance facilities. As well as outdoor performance areas.

Laura Telerski – It is also important for accessibility to continue to provide free events so residents that cannot afford events can still participate.

Lindsay Rinaldi – Is there an audience for collaboration?

Paul Metzger – I would say yes. There are rarely conflicts. However, it is also very important to coordinate to prevent conflicts in show dates, auditions, etc. We do really need to focus on diversity and inclusion, as there is no diversity in theater right now. Maybe it is about engaging the high schools and making all feel welcome?

Jon Spira-Savett – There are certainly seats that do not get filled that we could pack.

John Panny – If I am going to see a high school show, the performance level is different. The maturity of the actors is different. They will be better off after four more years in college. If I am going to pay for a ticket, the college experienced actors are the ones I would want to see.

Lindsay Rinaldi – Is there an audience for one-time special workshops with a special focus?

John Panny – why aren't we doing this? We have two high schools and the Court St. theater?

Lindsay Rinaldi – I agree, but the venue is only half the problem.

Lauri – We believe that our investments we are making now will engage private investments in that area. Like lighting parking garages or bright painting of walls to make people feel safer. There needs to be public-private partnerships.