

Minutes from the Master Plan Advisory Committee Meeting, 7-30-07 at 6:30 PM, Hilton Senior Center

Attendees: Robert Straubel, Bev Gulazian, Larry Cuddire, Berenice McLaughlin, Sally Laffely, Jerry Klima, Bobbi Klima, Brenda Chouinard, John Haggerty, Jackie Haggerty, Barbara Souther, John Davidson, Lisa Davidson, Pat Beevers, Virginia McCullough, Ed Hunt, Joyce Hartt, Louis Masiello, Don Levesque, Lisa Pearson, Chris Reilly, Leah Hill, Sue Brown, Rick Taintor

TRANSPORTATION

Sue Brown (consultant) presented questions that need to be answered:

- What needs are most pressing?
- What infrastructural improvements/installation could improve traffic flow and safety?
- What operational procedures could improve traffic flow and safety?
- What solutions are economically feasible in the short term/long term?

Traffic:

Questions arose about traffic- what happened to the blinking light in the square? Don Levesque discussed the traffic lights-biggest problem areas-School St and Pleasant St. Need defined lane to turn Left on Bridge Rd. Would pedestrian overpasses for the Square better help the flow in the Square? DL-we don't have the foot traffic to warrant that type/cost of construction. A pedestrian light with countdown can help, let's you know if you have adequate time to cross. Sue Brown-are pedestrian counts required with traffic regulations? DL-lights can operate in 2 modes; either each street gets an allotted amount of time or sensors. Possible to do counts on how many times the pedestrian lights buttons are pushed as well. Do a study on demographics of users, particularly of Beach Road, what would they want in terms of transportation services? Beach changing as not just summer users at beach, year-round-condos, more development, not just seasonal.

Public Transportation:

- There's a lack of public transportation, other than "Ring and Ride". Commuter station and bus station to airport, need public transportation to these transportation nodes.
- Create a shuttle bus system-Hampton, Salisbury, Plum Island, Newburyport, etc. Parking lot was built for bus parking. DL-have to guarantee a certain amount of ridership.
- We pay the train station funds, can that money be put towards other transportation areas;
- LP-Hooking up with Amesbury bus from Stop & Shop, down 110 and Beach, great goal for master plan;
- Have MVTRA map out where Ring and Ride is used. If bus service at the beach, can't have the bus sitting in traffic, beach traffic still as bad as always;
- Use college kids to direct traffic;

- Use the system that Sand & Sea Festival did on heavy weekends, not allow lefts from Beach Road, only Right onto Lafayette to access highway.
- Park & ride in Newburyport overcapacity. Bus terminal could work at interchange at 110 & 95-either with the Boston day commuters/travelers to airport, town could benefit! If used as commuter, could use for staging for beach bus on the weekends. Create a Logan Express in Salisbury.
- Newburyport bus area being expanded, we should be a part of that plan and get Salisbury involved. 286 bottleneck, but it's a shared road with NH, not as much control.
- MVPC, via the TIP, look at the Square. Another dangerous area-Main St and corner of 286 and High. Important to know what to study in order to get items on the TIP. LP gave background on the TIP.

Water Transportation:

Sue-would water transportation work? Idea-Creating a pier at Salisbury Beach for ferry service to Newburyport, using town pier at State Reservation a possibility, although there's a lack of parking. Jerry Klima spoke with DCR, they're open if someone wants to operate a private shuttle/water taxi, at the current docks, from center, to beach, park at reservation/ in town, acting as a trolley service, into Newburyport as well. RT-work with Harbor tour in Newburyport, tourism!!!! RS-tie in with boardwalk. Town pier off Rings Island, problem, no parking and to be used for commercial use-fishing, etc. New pier near Bridge Marina? Need to center docks near high population-Newburyport, beach center, Plum Island.

Sidewalks:

Sidewalks-part of transportation, need a priority list to get established, need to map a priority list. What are most important walking streets? Where are people going? Where do sidewalks need to go? Create sidewalk fund for planning board to utilize. In 2001, town did road management study-curb, road, drainage, sidewalks. Study should be done 5-10 years. 73% rating out of 100% for all of our roads. See where we'll spend Ch. 90 monies, but this money mainly for overlaying of roads. Looking at south end of beach for sidewalks, also center of Gardner and Maple St. New sidewalks priority-center of town-loop, Bartlett, Cushing and Lafayette. Ferry Rd also, there are some sidewalks, not on whole road. RS-are grants available? Sidewalk funds a possibility! Link to potential busservice, 40Bs, senior center. One road lasts about 20 years. Start program, developer funded. Where should sidewalks be? True Road, Lafayette Road(near train trussel), need sidewalk to school-wanted to wait until sewer goes up Lafayette and state wants to straighten road. Question posed- is there a minimum distance of how far away you need to live from the school to take the bus? LP- Because there are no sidewalks, town's decision to have school busses for whole town. Need funding for sidewalks as well as a maintenance program for sidewalks, existing sidewalks not intact. DL-in other towns, if someone wants sidewalk in front of their house, they pay half, town pays half.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Questions to be answered:

- What types of economic development is appropriate in Salisbury?
- Where should economic development be directed?
- What is needed to support appropriate economic development?
- What effects will development likely have?
- How can the effects of development be mitigated?

Businesses:

Chris Reilly discussed what economic development is: How to better attract better businesses and help businesses stay. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the town, he has conducted a needs assessment of the town. Maintain existing commercial base and attract better businesses. Major commercial areas include: Beach area, Elm, Lafayette, Bridge, Rabbit. Beach Revitalization, infrastructure on Rabbit Rd. will help to attract businesses. Need the right business climate, streamlining the process to attract the right types of businesses. What is the town looking for? Resorts in beach? What types of businesses? Factories-light industry, distribution, good location at highways. Rezoned Elm St for office parks, belief that town not friendly to office parks developments, town asks for too much. Engineering firms want a clear delineation as to what the permitting process is, so developers can see up front the costs to their development. Department and board to work on this. Questioned what is the chief industry in town? Restaurants, hospitality, medical, construction large growth industry in Salisbury. Want to attract technology jobs? Office parks? Different zones, C4 versus office park. Need to revitalize gateways. With all of the development, how does this effect water, sewerage, will there be enough for current residents? Sewer/water access fees, buying land for more sources, etc. Town needs commercial development, mixed use, commercial along 95. Office parks attract the right business, problem though is current office parks in other areas are vacant. Need buffering from office park to Linda Lane. Need economic development, but need to protect residents as well...balance.

Clusters:

What are the unique aspects that Salisbury offers that would attract a unique business? Waterfront? marinas on Bridge Rd-highways and water. Green industries? Boat storage, tow-boats, fishing, aqua-culture, cluster on Bridge Road-marina services. High in auto-uses: mechanics, sales. Lack of infrastructure on Rabbit Rd keeps businesses away.

Image:

Salisbury's "bad image" hopefully going away. Square footage much cheaper than other areas. Need to improve image of the town with the master plan. Jerry Klima discussed the changes in the town-finance better, better staff, biggest negative-overall appearance on Bridge Rd and Elm St. Rick Taintor explained that having cheaper square footage can be good and bad.

Planning Board in hard spot-looks at developments that are “better than what was there”, but still not the image they want. What is the image of town? What’s “pretty”? Institution for Savings great. Different design guidelines for different areas-Square, Beach, Bridge, Elm, etc.. Need more specific design standards? SL-what is meant by streamlining the process? Reducing the amount of boards? CR-business resource team-collaborate with the private and public entities. Have to consider how much residential growth you’re willing to absorb with large commercial developments. How can we improve current businesses? CR-balancing act-upgrade business climate while not alienating current businesses-flexibility.

[Other ideas, Business Improvement Districts (BIDS), Tax Increment Financing (TIFs) to encourage private betterments to area].

Next meeting-Monday, August 6 to discuss the Beach District, meeting in The Upper Deck-Broadway, 6:30-8:30.