

**Natick 360**  
Honoring Our Past. Planning Our Future.



**Strategic Planning Oversight Committee**  
**Minutes \* August 1, 2007**

**Present**

Rosemary Driscoll, designated by School Committee  
Terri Evans, at-large member  
John Heerwagen, at-large member  
Bill Mayhew, at-large alternate member  
David Parish Co-Chair, designated by the Board of Selectmen  
Craig Ross, Co-Chair, designated by the Finance Committee

**Absent**

Matthew Gardner, designated by the Conservation Commission  
George Richards, designated by the Planning Board  
Andres Rochwerger, at-large member  
Harlee Strauss, at-large member

**Consultants Present**

Phillip Blackerby, Blackerby Associates (by telephone)

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. EDT by the Co-Chair, Mr. Ross, in the Ed Dlott Meeting Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Town Hall, Natick, MA 01760. A quorum was present.

***Item 1. Minutes***

Minutes of May 30: Mr. Parish moved to approve the minutes of May 30, 2007, Mr. Heerwagen seconded the motion, and the Committee voted 5-0-0 to approve the motion.

Minutes of July 18: Ms. Driscoll suggested an amendment to the penultimate sentence on the first page, to add the following underlined text: "...particular changes made to the Phase I document by the School Committee and the Finance Committee." Mr. Heerwagen moved to approved the minutes as amended by Ms. Driscoll's suggestion, Ms. Driscoll seconded the motion, and the Committee voted 5-0-0 to approve the minutes as amended.

***Item 2. Invoices***

ETC Institute invoice, dated July 6, for the first one-third of the community survey work, in the amount of \$8,530.00: Ms. Driscoll moved to approve the invoice, Mr. Parish seconded the motion, and the Committee voted 5-0-0 to approve the invoice.

Blackerby Associates invoice number 07-016, dated August 1, for work in July, in the amount of \$8,550.00: Ms. Evans moved to approve the invoice, Ms. Driscoll seconded the motion, and the Committee voted 5-0-0 to approve the invoice.

### ***Item 3. Community Survey Update***

As of last week, Chris Tatham reports he had received 600 responses to the random sample and 80 responses on-line from the general public. This pace leads Mr. Tatham to believe that ETC will easily meet the goal of 800 responses from the random sample. Mr. Ross receives the questions from the public. Some people report that they got the preparatory phone call, but did not get a survey. Other calls asked why one member of the household received a survey, rather than other members of the household, commented on various items on the survey, asked for clarification, or wanted to verify that the Town was a sponsor of the survey.

### ***Item 4. Communications with Sponsoring Boards and Committees***

School Committee Vice-Chair commented on the schedule changes, which were received very well, and discussed the Board of Selectmen's decision to defer action on the Phase 1 report, which was reported in the press. Ms. Driscoll will attend the Board of Selectmen meeting when the issue comes up again, to explain the School Committee position on the issues, but will not serve as a School Committee advocate. A vote from the sponsoring boards and committees on the schedule change is not needed. The School Committee wants to see an outline or structure of the strategic planning document as soon as possible.

Mr. Ross distributed copies of the email that went to the board and committee chairs regarding the schedule change.

Mr. Ross met with the new chair of the Finance Committee, who has no problem with the schedule changes. They discussed the role of the Finance Committee in this process. When the strategic plan comes up on a Town Meeting warrant, the Finance Committee will effectively have a second opportunity to review the plan. The Committee discussed whether the Finance Committee might want to hold off commenting on the strategic plan until it comes before it through a warrant. The Committee noted that such a process could result in problems. The Finance Committee will set a policy to have its input in the September-October time frame along with the other boards and committees, and will also review the plan when it receives the warrant. (*Action Item 1.*) Mr. Ross will seek legal advice on the appropriate way to handle the reviews by the Finance Committee.

Board of Selectmen tabled the Phase 1 report until August 6, but it did not appear on the agenda in time. So now it will be on the August 20 agenda.

Planning Board will meet August 8.

Conservation Commission met earlier today, August 1, but the Committee has no information on what happened at that meeting.

Boards and Committees must set up their meetings for September 17-20.

### ***Item 5. Schedule for Balance of Project***

This item was fully discussed last meeting, and no changes have been made since that time.

### ***Item 6. Phase 1 Report Discussion***

Mr. Parish distributed to Committee members a paper on how the Phase 1 report can be summarized and distributed. Keeping the information current and in front of the public is valuable. Boards and committees may update and republish the relevant parts of it on a regular basis. Boston Foundation's *Boston Indicators* project is a rational approach to combining a series of indicators about where the City is and where it has been. It gives the City a basis for a rational discussion about issues, and to use that information to make better decision going forward. The thought is to take the experience with the Phase 1 report as a mechanism to develop ongoing information about and for the Town of Natick.

### ***Item 7. Agenda for August 15***

Primary focus will be development of a template for the strategic planning document. Mr. Blackerby has prepared a "straw-man" draft, based primarily on the Fountain Hills document, to use as a starting point. He will make some changes to that document, and (*Action Item 2.*) Mr. Ross will distribute the draft a few days ahead of the August 15 meeting.

### ***Item 8. Other Business***

No other business was raised.

Ms. Driscoll moved to adjourn, Mr. Parish seconded the motion, and the Committee voted 6-0-0 to adjourn. The Committee adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

## **Summary of Action Items**

*Action Item 1.* Mr. Ross will seek legal advice on the appropriate way to handle the reviews by the Finance Committee.

*Action Item 2:* Mr. Ross will distribute the draft template for the strategic planning document a few days ahead of the August 15 meeting.