

JOINT PLANNING BOARD Master Plan Steering Committee

TOWN OF TISBURY
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MEETING NOTES

DATE: Tuesday, March 7, 2023

TIME: 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

PLACE: hybrid meeting: Martha's Vineyard Museum, 151 Lagoon Pond Road,
Tisbury (zoom info below)

Attendance:

Steering C'tee members: Elissa Turnbull (ET), Mary Ellen Larsen (MEL), Cheryl Doble (CD - PB representative, Phil Hale (PH), Susannah Bristol (SB), Melinda Loberg (ML), Rick Homans (RH), Sean Roach (RH)

Dan Doyle (DD) project admin

Planning Board members: Ben Robinson (BR) -Chair, Elaine Miller (EM), Casey Heyward (CH), Cheryl Doble (CD) - SC representative, Amy Upton (AU) - PB Administrator

Consultants: Barrett Planning Group: Judi Barrett (JB), Jill Slankas (JS), Carly Venditti (CV), Dodson & Flinker: Peter Flinker (PF), Dillon Sussman (DS)

Meeting recording found [here](#).

TOPICS:

1. Welcome (SC)
2. Discuss Commercial District Workshops (SC / PB / D&F)
 - Consideration of alternatives

DS presented some summary findings/themes that surfaced from the Feb. workshops
PH: both areas of our commercial districts deserve a grant plan; for the Waterfront Commercial, resiliency and climate change are key; when the storms hit, impacts are big; extension of the Eastville breakwater would allow for a fishing pier, moorings, etc that could make us more resilient, and also possess co-benefits for the town; Phil shared a map of proposed breakwaters from 40 years ago.

RH: 2nd Village Center concept in the B2 is a good one and it can serve a different purpose than the Main St area; the higher value of the properties will boost tax revenue; could we look at the increased tax value that would be yielded from the shift in land uses? A master developer could be approached to work in collaboration with the town if we want to pursue some of the proposed changes in a given district.

Do we need commit to a causeway for Beach Rd? Sea Level Rise (SLR) should be the instructive issue; everything below Main St is at risk; let's think much bolder and decided if we are serious about this issue.

SB: B1 or B2 districts allows for more encompassing look for a vision; a connector road and 5 corners resolution are key; moving the Police Station up to B2 is a big opportunity and may be necessary; we need to utilize our small lanes, leverage open space that is presently lying fallow, and restore buildings in need of attention; moreover, we should restore some of the Beach Rd area to wetlands given imminent SLR; we should include the harbor water when we count acreage and attention/focus on our pivotal zones in town.

MEL: Having grown up in Tisbury, it is irritating to consider moving the town center up to B2. At some point, the connector road layout accounted for a future senior community with a grocery store; let's look at the connector road, the harbor and how we can promote it. As a member of the Finance C'tee, I have to ask how much can the town take on alone?

ML: B2 will be the center of resources for the island; in looking at the B2 and downtown, most of the property is downtown; our job as town planners is to provide adequate

infrastructure for development; we should provide sewer to the B2; this zone needs better road infrastructure to make it connective; in turn, we should revisit the connector road; this will augment a goal that strives for a web of infrastructure; we need to look at Ch. 91 licenses on Beach and Lagoon Pond Rd; more fill could allow us to take advantage of the best harbor in the island.

ET: Housing in B2 could be better achieved through better sidewalks; make it all more walkable; people do not move or visit Vineyard Haven in hopes of a suburban experience.

SR: a boardwalk in the harbor would make it more accessible and improve our appreciation of the waterfront; what sort of development can we take on that can survive 50-60 years? Town services in the B2 is a sound idea; we should consider the following framework when assessing potential investment: what can we build that for at least 50 years?

CD: To Consider Development which allows for the possibility and inevitability of flooding going forward.

Concerned with the lack of Public Access Spaces in the Main Street and Waterfront Districts.

Hoping to garner a clearer understanding of the economic aspects of these project proposals, understanding that this is a predominantly working class Town with an already overburdened Tax Base.

Looking to get a clearer understanding of the B2 District and Potential Connector Road. Less theory, more practical comprehension of where exactly this might go and how it will affect already existing business and light industry in the area. Encourage feedback and Discussion with residents and business owners in the area. What is their experience of what is working and what could be expanded upon.

Diagrams that visualize the prioritization of steps to achieve the visions would be helpful.

BR: The Waterfront Commercial District is and should continue to be a Dynamic Area. Facing incremental sea level rise as an opportunity to engage in the process and develop flexible solutions. Maintaining water dependent businesses needs to be a flexible and creative endeavor literally and figuratively. This includes considerations of the actual structures as well as their usage capacity during the industrious working seasons, but not at the expense of the seasonal tourist potential they could provide.

Conceptualize blending Tourism with a working waterfront- enhance this aspect of exhibiting the seafaring way of life as entertainment, including aquaculture, boatbuilding, and waterway transportation. This Dynamic experience of the working Waterfront in real time allows us the opportunity to engage rather than react. This might allow for increased density by inserting changes that won't disrupt what is currently working and already exists.

What is the role of the State in "filling in the Wetlands" both actual and financial. Is this filled land viable?

EM: Concerned with Tisbury's inability to implement and follow through on past and current ideas- businesses like Vineyard Wind and the Stop and Shop appear to be getting their projects underway. Could the Town learn from their perceived ability to move projects forward? Might the Town partner with Downtown Businesses in an effort to mobilize and follow through?

Relationships with Tisbury's big business owners ie: SSA, VTA, PO, Stop and Shop, etc.

Underutilized areas of interest including Veterans Park, Municipal Parking, and others.

Balancing Eminent Domain with the needs and hopes of the Landowners and the Voters.

CH: Coastal Engineering- in particular Wetlands, preventing damage from Nor'easters

Flooding concerns at Veterans Park and other lowlands, as well the harbor and effect on aquaculture and oyster reefs in particular.

A creative solution might be to consider changing the shape, topography, and network of the roadways in anticipation of sea level rise.

PF: what questions do we have that will allow D/F further delve into for design work?

As far as process goes, PF wants to test ideas and work out design details in their upcoming work; we need to understand the barriers for each of the steps – and identify the critical path in order to set priorities; what sorts of additions / changes would advance multiple goals (ie. trees, w/front access, walk/ped infrastructure)

➤ Consideration of additional outreach

Steering C'tee and PB should submit names of specific property owners/stakeholders who Dodson and Flinker should speak to in helping to refine their alternatives.

3. Review of Project Timeline (BPG) –
Page 3 of the [slides presentation](#).

4. Status of Inventory & Assessment Report (BPG)
JS: This document is currently being revised by BPG and the work is just about complete. There will be one revision issued by BPG.

5. Key Issues Presentation & Discussion (BPG / SC / PB)
The slides presented begin on page 12 of the [slides presentation](#).

What's missing and most critical? What are the levers and tools that should get focus to achieve the biggest impact? Several issues need to be addressed in a more proactive way, and if we identify upstream priorities that impact multiple issues our efforts should be well served;

SLR, zoning bylaws, wastewater and Housing are big issues; housing affects services and access to healthcare; Governance needs to be addressed in a more clear way; we have a lack of leadership and our local government is dysfunctional in its structure.

All of the issues above must be further delineated.

If the town undertakes a Charter Review this upcoming year, it will not be inconsistent with the Master Plan. A Governance Assessment from 2012 needs to be revisited. DD will circulate this to the C'tee.

The Town needs to be looking at how it runs itself and how it governs, irrespective of a Master Plan.

EM: We need more emphasis on engaging Stop and Shop, the Steamship Authority, Vineyard Wind, and MV Community Services given they run Chicken Alley on Lagoon Pond Road.

CH: We need education and a commitment about staying up to date on technology; without that, it negatively impacts our gov't function.

SR: if we do have to retreat from vulnerable roads, how do property owners access their properties? We need more coordination.

The Town carries a burden for the rest of the island's benefit and we need direction on how to address. Is there an opportunity for embarkation fees to be leveraged to help address some of our resiliency issues? Can the MV Commission be engaged on some of the island-wide efforts that must be taken? MVC has recently engaged Melissa Hoffer, the new State Climate Chief who is trying to embed climate change as a key priority across all state departments.

6. Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair

7. Public Comment

8. Closing Remarks (SC)

- Agenda items for next meeting
- Next meeting date

April 4th; DD will circulate a Doodle Pool to identify an interim meeting time that will be dedicated entirely to revising the Purposes found in the 2015 Vision Plan. The Planning Board will discuss if they plan to attend that.

