

**TOWN OF SHELBURNE
SELECTBOARD RETREAT
MINUTES
April 30, 2022**

***Hybrid meeting held via teleconference and in-person.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Ashooh (Chair), Luce Hillman, Cate Cross, Kate Lalley, Matt Wormser.

ADMINISTRATION: Lee Krohn, Town Manager; Peter Frankenburg, Finance Director; Adele Gravitz, Planning Director; Diana Vachon, Town Clerk.

MODERATOR: Tom Little

OTHERS PRESENT: Members of the public participating in the meeting included Don Porter, Joey Palumbo, Tracey Beaudin, Joyce George, Rebecca Jewett, Susan Moraska, Don Rendall, Paulette, The Tompkins, Jane Zenaty, Jean-Henri LaPierre, Tom Zenaty, Bill Deming, Jim White, Samsung Galaxy J7, iPhone, Judy Raven, donna Fialkoff, Lee Suskin, Percy, Steve Brandon, Steve Baietti, Robilee Smith, Ted Grozier, Ken Scott, Steve Kendall, Bill Keogh, Jeff Carr, Media Factory.

Mike Ashooh opened the meeting at 2 PM and explained the theme of the retreat is “Shelburne 2035, long term steps to achieving town goals”. Tom Little moderated the meeting.

Financial Planning and Prioritization

The following was noted/discussed:

- Capital improvements in the budget are used for operating expenditures and long term capital investments such as wastewater, water, and stormwater projects.
- Capital plans typically cover five years, but in reality, a longer term horizon is needed to be able to achieve goals.
- Capital improvement expense (most is debt service) makes up 22% of the town’s operating budget.
- Projected total for capital improvements in 2035 is about \$4 million.
- Capital projects include the wastewater treatment plant, fire/rescue station, vehicles, building maintenance/repair, stormwater requirements, bridges/roads, waterline replacements. Not included is renovation of town offices, other building improvements (roof replacement), ‘Downtown Designation’ requirements, village center improvements, stormwater mandates, new technology.
- It will be a challenge to do capital improvements beyond those essential to continue town operations. Budget increases will be necessary. Wise decisions must be made.
- ARPA money that has been received (\$2.2 million) must be spent by December 31, 2026 and can be used as town match money for grants and to invest in items with long term benefit to the town.

- Revenue sources to the town in addition to property taxes include user fees, growing the grand list, attracting more businesses to town, and possibly a local options tax.

Growth and Development

The following noted/discussed:

- Steps are being taken to address current problems with form based code.
- Steps are being taken in the Planning Office to help expedite the application review process and involve the CBCs, and identify what the town can do to be more attractive and welcoming and promote community development.
- The town needs to be more proactive in keeping young people from leaving town.
- Zoning regulation reform is needed to make the town carbon free and energy efficient.
- A bike path from the village to the town beach or brewery or other places in town is needed.
- A mix of commercial and residential development is needed.
- A boutique hotel, better use of town parks, making the town more inviting to visitors, being on the grid for electric car charging stations, building a visitor center, promoting local stores and resources are steps that can be taken.
- A mechanism to manage growth and infrastructure is needed for inclusionary zoning, 10% perpetually affordable housing stock, “missing middle housing”, and workforce housing.
- The Diversity & Equity Committee wants to hire a consultant to audit the evolution of practices of the town and where improvement is needed. The committee is working on a strategic plan for the next two years and hopes to hold events quarterly to gather feedback from the community. Goals for the next five to 15 years include housing, access to the beach for people without cars, urging businesses to offer jobs to formerly incarcerated people, helping people without credit cards when payment is required by credit card only, posting placemaking signs recognizing the Abenaki heritage in Shelburne and refugees locating in town.

Natural and Scenic Resources

The following was noted/discussed:

- Goals for 2035 include getting people out of their cars and walking or biking. A consensus is needed and a financial commitment.
- Integrating the needs of bike/pedestrian infrastructure with the needs of transportation must be balanced.
- Golf carts could be considered for senior citizens. E-bikes or rent-a-bike are also options.
- Commuter parking lot for people to leave their cars and ride the bus or an Amtrak train stop at the station in Shelburne would be beneficial.
- The town could host seasonal festivals to attract visitors.
- A bus shuttle to bring people to the beach could be available.
- Open natural spaces are one of the highest ranked community values. Conservation preserves natural resources and community values for future generations.

- Open Space Fund should be renamed to a conservation fund to avoid confusion on with open space issues. Terminology for open space needs to be refined.
- The map of natural resources in the town should be used in development decisions and strengthening the zoning regulations.
- More funding will be needed to meet open space needs and to preserve 30% of the land mass by 2030.
- Scenic views need to be protected.
- Ecosystem/biosphere needs to be separated from the undeveloped land.
- The town needs to determine how much of the environment to protect from human activity. Time is critical with the environment.
- A management system must be in place for conserved land.
- Green spaces in neighborhoods and “pocket parks” will allow more people to benefit from conserved land than just those with access to the land.
- Town decisions should be made with climate in mind.
- There are programs available to help towns with climate change preparedness.
- Municipal buildings should be addressed first. Renewable energy should be used.
- The Planning Commission should be considering planet and environmental concerns at each stage of the process.
- The town is taking many steps now to address climate change.

Staffing Long Term

- Staffing in town needs to increase to continue providing town services. There is more work and services to provide and not enough staff.
- A workforce audit will be done.

Wrap Up

The implementation of ideas discussed at the retreat will be a challenge. Continued community involvement and participation by the many talented people in town is needed.

The retreat concluded at 6 PM.

RScty by tape: MERiordan

For the Selectboard

Date