

Plainfield Climate Resiliency Plan

Core Team Meeting #1

November 18, 2021

Members Present

Erik Burcroff, Peg Keller, Ed Stockman, Tim Walter. Absent, Jerry Little, CJ Lammers.

Background

In anticipation of formal receipt of a Local Land Use Planning Grant from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and in partnership with the Conway School of Sustainable Landscape Planning and Design a core team has been formed to help facilitate the local implementation process. Town representation on this core team includes Tim for the Energy Committee, Erik for the Conservation Commission, Ed for the Agricultural Commission, Jerry for the Planning Board and Peg for the Zoning Board. This is an ad hoc team assembled to organize the grant process and ensure that all relevant voices are heard to yield the best outcome. In order to proceed in the most inclusive manner possible, Peg began by asking members to reflect on their own experiences with public engagement in Plainfield for past planning efforts.

Public Engagement Discussion

The following observations were noted:

- It often takes more than one year and more than one town meeting to get content adopted
- Public education is imperative prior to town meetings
- Groups should be prepared to present content for more than one annual cycle
- Plainfield Post and on line meeting invites are the most used notice vehicles
- Many were involved in the creation of the Municipal Vulnerability Plan and Hazard Mitigation Plans and as this process continues those efforts, there is existing buy-in on which to build
- Messaging is important to building support/ for example, roads and infrastructure is often better understood, more tangible, than talking about "climate resiliency"

Reaching folks who may feel separate or marginalized from community development discussions and issues was discussed. Older vs. newer resident (relative to tenure vs. actual age) dynamics were noted. There are folks new to the community who may provide valuable input and want to get involved. The balance of protecting individual property rights vs. support for the public good was noted as being ever present in any community development effort.

It was suggested that asking the students to do a current demographic analysis to show age and income stats (and possibly other categories) could provide information about resource disparities. The Plainfield Support Network was noted as a possible

outreach mechanism to reach folks who may be struggling and whose voices need to be heard. Current real estate activity as a research component was also noted as being potentially informative. Peg said the students could be helpful in preparing maps for Town Meeting in May that were suggested at the public meeting on the Local Wetlands By-law, to serve that effort and this plan.

Stakeholder Identification

In addition to seeking maximum input from local residents, other project participants mentioned were the Land Trust groups; Hilltown, Kestrel, Franklin, the Audubon Society, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and the legislators. Peg will do a draft list of all relevant participants and send it to the Team for review. Regular communication will occur with town boards and committees. Project updates will be sent to the Plainfield Post and posted on the website.

Role of the Core Team

Discussion followed about Core Team responsibilities in this undertaking. Many of these are listed in the Preliminary Agreement that the Selectboard will sign with the Conway School. Our role will include:

- Identifying stakeholders to participate in the process
- Honing in on the project scope to be ready to discuss with the students
- Meeting with the students (2-3 students) in early January of 2022 to review goals and objectives
- Establishing a detailed scope of preliminary planning and design work for the project
- Reviewing and approving a final contract drawn up by the student team, to be signed by Selectboard
- Organizing and assisting with outreach, scheduling and booking rooms for public meetings (2 sessions)
- Distributing drafts to team members and coordinating responses in a timely fashion
- Maintaining regular contact with the student team
- Reviewing a draft copy of the preliminary plan and responding within time frame
- Attending formal presentation at the Conway School (or via zoom) and provide feedback

Timeline

The students from the Conway School will be doing the work from January to April of 2022.

The Core Team will meet with them early in January and establish a formal time line for the remainder of the project. Generally, it will look like this:

- Early January 2022 Core Team Meet with Student Team
- Early February 2022 Final Agreement for Project Proposal
- March 30, 2022 Project Completion
- April 30, 2022 Project fee due upon receipt of the Final Plan

Meeting Summary

Peg will do the notes for this meeting, and continue to do so for the duration. She will draft a Stakeholder Participation List and send it to the Team for review. She will send a Preliminary Agreement template Conway used for another community project so Team members can see the content and what we are agreeing to. Conway will then draft one for our project. It will be signed by the Selectboard.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting of the Core Team will be December 8th, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom. The agenda will include a discussion of Plan Content. In preparation of that discussion, Team members are asked to review the MVP and HMPlans on the town website and be ready to address the following questions:

1. Of the multitude of anticipated impacts of climate change, which ones do you think impact Plainfield the most? (extreme weather events, heat, cold, flooding, etc. healthy food access, health-aide support, etc. name all that apply and why they are impacts in a rural area)
2. Where do you see the greatest push/pull of issues and resources? Can you identify 3 or 4 that are tantamount and in need of analysis? A few short, broad statements would be helpful.

For example, is the conflict between large solar arrays and loss of forests and ag land the biggest conundrum facing the town? Are future climate migrants and development of more of the town a concern? Is the MVP Program sufficient to address town infrastructure needs (mainly larger culverts) or are there other areas of concern that need to be addressed.

Notes from the joint board meetings held at the beginning of this process (posted on the town website in the Planning Board files for January 21, 2021, February 18, 2021, March 18, 2021 and March 29, 2021) can help refresh your memories about these discussions that you held with your boards.

Thanks!!

"See" you on Dec. 8th. Thanks to Joan Wattman for being our Zoom operator person!

Respectfully submitted,

Peg Keller