

Town of Candia

HOP Steering Committee

Thursday, December 14, 2023

Approved Minutes

Members Present: Carla Penfield, Judith Szot, Sarah Sargent, Brian Sargent, Mark Chalbeck, Anne Lacey (via Zoom), Wendy Ducharme

Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission Staff: Cameron Prolman

Carla Penfield called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm. The Committee approved the minutes from the October and November meetings. Cameron Prolman then requested additional feedback on the revised community survey.

The Committee appreciated the switch from multiple choice to open-ended questions in many sections on the survey but wondered if people might skip some of the questions because they required thought. Anne Lacey expressed concern about questions 14-16 and Carla asked if those questions should stay. Cameron Prolman pointed out that the questions would deliver important information for the Planning Board and Wendy Ducharme recalled a discussion from a previous meeting that concluded that those questions would provide a foundation for discussion at post-survey community educational sessions. She also pointed out that respondents will be able to skip the questions in the online survey.

Judith Szot asked Cameron Prolman how Southern NH Planning Commission quantifies open-ended questions. He responded that they go through each survey and put answers into different “buckets” and summarize trends. He pointed out that you get better responses with open-ended questions, but it is a little more work to generate a report.

Judith asked if the results would be posted online, and Cameron responded that there would be a survey report that could be posted on the town website. Cameron will add an area at the bottom of the survey for respondents to provide an email address if they want to get more involved. Anne suggested adding a thank you at the end as well.

Cameron presented a suggested survey timeline and the Committee continued discussions about ways to get the word out about the survey. Committee members informally volunteered to make various connections but encouraged Cameron to develop a formal sign-up process so responsibilities are clear.

The Committee also discussed how to encourage people to devote time to complete the survey. Becky Sargent suggesting using language about the respondent “helping to shape Candia.” The Committee agreed that the introductory language should be shorter and more personal to communicate the respondent’s important role in shaping Candia’s housing priorities. Carla Penfield suggested the following, more casual language as an introduction:

*Hi folks! We need your help. Your input on the following survey will help direct zoning changes for Candia. We appreciate your help and thank you ahead of time.*

The “zoning changes” language was the subject of some discussion. Cameron agreed to come to the next meeting with revised introductory language.

Mark Chalbeck left the meeting early but the remaining Committee members who were present agreed to have their names listed to give the survey legitimacy and show that it was a local initiative. Other Committee members will need to be approached for their permission. Brian Sargent also suggested including language about how the survey is to be used by the Master Plan committee in the introduction.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 11 at 2:30.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.

*Minutes submitted by Wendy Ducharme*