



TOWN OF GRAFTON
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PLANNING DEPARTMENT

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Town of Grafton Planning Board
FROM: Fiona Coughlan, Town Planner
CC: Natalia Alward, Planning Assistant (via email)
DATE: February 7, 2023
SUBJECT: Master Plan Update and Recommendations

This memorandum has been prepared as part of the meeting materials for the February 13, 2023, Planning Board meeting. It serves as a status update for the Board regarding progress on the Master Plan and recommendations to address Phase IIa. The Planning Department is coordinating with the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) on this effort.

STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Town Planner has been in discussions with CMRPC over the past month on the status of the Phases II and III contract. Pricing for Phase III was in negotiations and a revised figure was eventually agreed upon - \$20,000. The Town Planner will apply for an EEA grant in April with CMRPC to offset whatever costs we can and hopefully cover Phase III in its entirety. The grant may be up to \$50,000 and requires a Town match of 25 percent. The Planning Department notified the Assistant Town Administrator that they will be requesting funding to cover Phase III at May Town Meeting (\$20,000) on January 26, 2023.

A reminder that CMRPC and the Town Planner discussed that Phase IIa work may proceed (up to \$40,000) upon contract signing. Recommendations to begin include working with CMRPC to launch the community survey, soliciting input on the prior Master Plan's *Vision and Goals*, and to identify needs, preferences, and opportunities for each chapter. The Board should take this opportunity to provide input on the relevance of unmet implementation items from the 2001 Plan. It is recommended that the Board, with the assistance of the Town Planner, pursue the following:

- Brainstorm Vision Statement and Chapter Goals language based on current priorities;
- Evaluate survey question options to address with CMRPC, using data gathered in Phase I;
- Assess survey distribution/circulation strategies, including online and paper versions, translation needs, etc.;
- Provide the Town Planner with suggestions for stakeholder interview attendees; and
- Confirm the desire, need, and ability to establish a Master Plan Committee to assist going forward.

Until the Phase IIa contract is signed, it is unclear what the Board's level of commitment will be. At minimum, the Board should be available to participate in the CMRPC Kickoff Meeting, the



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two public workshops, and the public meeting. The Board should also consider the design of these events, display materials, and question prompts for public engagement. These events are in addition to discussing the Master Plan at regular Planning Board meetings. More concrete details and roles/responsibilities will be finalized at the Kickoff Meeting with CMRPC.

Thank you.

Fiona Coughlan