

**Master Plan Committee**

Jessica Porter, Co-Chair  
Sarah MacDonald, Co-Chair  
Alix O'Connell, Clerk  
Josh Donati  
Shaw McDermott  
Margaret Adams Whitfield  
James Antonizick  
Dan Hart  
Andrew Tittler  
Sharna Small Borsellino  
Nathan Gauthier  
Dieckmann Cogill  
Daniel T. Maher  
Justin A. Humphreys  
Jay O'Brien  
Scott Steeves



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**DEDHAM 2030 MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Tuesday, July 21, 2020, Zoom**

**Present:**

Jessica Porter Planning Board Member  
Josh Donati, School Committee Member  
Shaw McDermott, Attorney  
Andrew Tittler, Attorney  
Nathan Gauthier, Sustainability  
Justin A. Humphreys, Architect  
Jay O'Brien, Planning Board Member  
Dieckmann Cogill, AICP, Transportation Planner  
James Antonizick, Civil Engineer  
Dan Hart, ex. P&R Member, Open Space Committee Member  
Sharna Small Borsellino, Human Service Transportation Director

**Not Present:**

Scott Steeves, Zoning Board of Appeals  
Sarah MacDonald, Select Board Member  
Margaret Adams Whitfield, Teacher  
Alix M. O'Connell, Parks & Recreation Board  
Daniel T. Maher

Jeremy Rosenberger, Planning Director, opens up the 8<sup>th</sup> Master Plan Committee meeting with a quick overview of the Zoom Webinar Protocols. He then introduced Josh Fiala, Principal Planner at MAPC.

Mr. Fiala introduces his team: Carolina Prieto, Community Engagement Specialist; Travis Pollock (Senior Transportation Planner); and Marah Holland (Transportation Planner). He went over the Committee's values and expectations.

### **Vision Statement**

Mr. Fiala went over the draft vision statement. Mr. Rosenberger added that Jay O'Brien provided some statements on what some of his ideas were for the vision statement. The Committee members discussed the draft vision statement.

Mr. O'Brien shared that he found no difference in the last vision statement compared to this version. He continued by stating that the bullet points in the vision statement appear to be nothing but a grievance and how the Committee should continue to work on integrating Dedham's past accomplishments.

Nathan Gauthier agreed with Mr. O'Brien's comments, however he didn't feel that it needs to be in the vision statement. He believed that having history is important, but the vision statement should be cut down a lot. He stated that the vision statement should be forward looking. He mentioned that he would expect every bullet to have something that could be bolded. Mr. Gauthier expressed that the whole vision statement is especially wordy and should be a little more succinct.

Sharna Borsellino stated if it was possible to include a historical page in the Master Plan and not make the lengthy history part of the vision statement. She threw in the idea of having the history of Dedham as an opening page to the Master Plan so that historical information can be included for all to be educated by.

Jessica Porter stated that she could imagine something in the historic and cultural resources section or just something in the introduction.

Ms. Borsellino included that she would like to see that [Historical information] in the introduction so that it doesn't get buried.

Mr. Fiala shared that a statement on the history of Dedham, which outlines important historical markers, would be appropriate for the front of the plan and the executive summary of the document.

Ms. Porter shared that she hadn't heard anyone that said that history was not important, however, there may have been a question of how to balance a forward looking vision so that it's rooted in Dedham's history and the progressive things that Dedham has done since being founded. She also shared that when she reads the bullets, she reads them as a list of aspirations and that some of the things in the bullet points Dedham is good at or doing already and working to build on each section. Ms. Porter continued by stating that this is a working vision statement and the conversations regarding it will be ongoing.

Josh Donati stated that maybe the Committee could get more specific with the vision statement.

Ms. Borsellino stated that the fourth bullet seemed as though Dedham hasn't already accomplished what is stated. She continued by stating that she understood why Mr. O'Brien would see this as a grievance, even though it's not intended to be a grievance. She suggested that the fourth bullet point be reworded so that it reads more positively and affirmatively such as, "Maintaining communities where residents of all backgrounds and ages can thrive and be healthy."

Shaw McDermott shared that he didn't view the bullet points in the vision statement as statements of grievance and did believe they were well done with certain amendments. As far as the history part, Mr. McDermott shared his points on history. He suggested that the fifth line of the paragraph of the vision statement be reworded to state "It is the time to renew the stewardship of the Town's rich and unique, historical heritage." He shared that this word give a better feeling for the reality of Dedham's history. Mr. McDermott shared that the first bullet point in the vision statement is awkward because it has a bunch of phrases together. The focus of the first bullet is public transportation. He suggested rewording the first bullet point to state, "Expanding equity in public education, based on the imprint of the founding of the first public school in the country." He also suggested that the section on workforce development should be given its own space. It should say something like "Promote innovation in alternative forms of education, including workforce development." Lastly, for the fourth bullet point, Mr. McDermott suggested to reword it so that it states "Enhancing the dedication to a community where residents of all backgrounds and ages can thrive and be healthy."

Andrew Tittler stated that he was an advocate for Mr. O'Brien's approach and agreed with Mr. McDermott's points.

Mr. O'Brien shared that including the words "maintaining" and "continuing" would take the sting out of the current bullet points.

Justin A. Humphreys shared that Dedham has a bit of an influx in folks that are new to Dedham, not necessarily to Massachusetts or New England, but are new to Dedham. He shared that he would like to know more of the history of Dedham himself. He wondered if there are folks that have lived in Dedham, going on 20 years or more, and don't know the history that was being discussed. Mr. Humphreys' shared that he was struggling to understand how much this history has to do with or has an impact with how folks in Dedham are going about their everyday lives.

Mr. Tittler shared that what including the history does is that it sets context. The Master Plan has an educational mission as well as a planning mission to have people understand that many of these things are now new. They have been things that have been objectives that have been going on for a long time. He shared that Dedham is committed to being better than what it has been and is willing to recognize that it has had these objectives for

a long time. He continued by saying that it would be helpful for policymakers to look at these and to acknowledge that they are not doing something new.

Mr. Gauthier stated that the history of Dedham should be given its own space and it should be referenced in the vision statement, rather than muscleing it into the statement.

Ms. Porter suggested forming a smaller working group that would be able to have a conversation on the vision statement and then come back to the Committee with some suggestions at the next meeting or two.

Dieckmann Cogill agreed with Ms. Porter that the vision statement will evolve as the Committee develops the plans. She wondered if it would be better to put a hold and come back to the vision statement as each of the elements start to solidify.

Mr. Fiala agreed with both of the approaches made by Ms. Porter and Ms. Cogill. He added that he would appreciate having some working group help to move the vision statement to a place where people can feel comfortable with it. Mr. Fiala stated that it would be valuable for the process to share the vision statement out to the general public once a new draft is developed and then continue to refine it and make it even better. Mr. Fiala added that the vision statement is drafted from an aspirational standpoint, and not a grievance standpoint.

### **Topic Area: Transportation**

Mr. Fiala shared a slide that showed how the vision statement is responsive to the rest of the content of the plan. He went over the upcoming meetings and each of the topics that will be discussed. The subject of this meeting is Transportation. Staff planners from MAPC will be invited to each of the upcoming meetings to give a brief presentation and to give the Committee some existing conditions research, some analysis, and facts and figures for the topic area. Then , the Committee will be invited to discuss and react to the presentation. MAPC is ultimately trying to define priorities and goals within that topic area. There will then be a one-sheet summary for transportation and economic development that will circulate to the Committee. Mr. Fiala introduced Travis Pollack and Marah Holland, of MAPC, for the topic presentation.

Mr. Pollack began the presentation. He pointed out that transportation is not just something that happens for the sake of just being around. Mobility is not the goal, It's really the means to connect to things in people's lives, such as work, school, daily needs and social needs. Mr. Pollack went over the subagenda and the data sources that were used to gather data for the presentation. The meeting focused on:

1. What is Dedham's transportation infrastructure?
2. How do people get around?
3. Survey results
4. What are the challenges and opportunities?
5. Potential goals

Mr. Pollack and Ms. Holland went over existing data and analysis for infrastructure that included street networks, pedestrian/bicycle and transit, and parking. They also presented

on existing data and analysis on mobility, which included transit ridership, traffic, commuting patterns, and hail ride services. The presentation contained a series of questions for Committee members and the public:

- What surprised you/stood out to you in the existing conditions?
- What do you see as the most lacking in Dedham's current transportation infrastructure?
- What are your top priorities for changing transportation in Dedham
- Are these the topics you see as crucial to address the master plan?
- What do you see as the major challenges to implementation?

Committee members and members of the public asked questions and made comments regarding the presentation.

Mr. Tittler wondered if the large group of people commuting into Dedham is not a stakeholder group that is difficult for the Committee to reach out to. They are contributing a lot to the Town. Mr. Tittler wondered about the outreach.

Mr. O'Brien stated that he was surprised about the mini Uber usage.

Ms. Borsellino asked if Mr. Pollack and Ms. Holland could talk a little bit about where people are commuting to with relation to where our transportation currently exists. Ms. Borsellino asked if people are commuting on the Route 1 Corridor where there isn't any transportation and that maybe that's the reason for the increase in Uber and Lyft ridership for people that are commuting.

Mr. Pollack responded by stating that there isn't much fine grained data that would allow MAPC to look into that level of detail.

James Antonizick stated that the increase in people riding more electric bikes or gas bikes ties into the lack of infrastructure for bicycles.

Dan Hart, Ms. Borsellino and Mr. Obrien mentioned trolleys in Dedham.

Ms. Cogill asked how much of this increase in commuter rail at the Dedham Corporate Center is related to the apartment development or if the increase come much later.

Mr. Pollack stated that the increase came later, since the development of the apartments was over ten years ago.

Mr. McDermott shared that there is tremendous opportunity for economic development around the Dedham Corporate Center based on some of the leading edge in some of the things in the Massachusetts economy.

Mr. Tittler stated that he believes there are major quality of life issues and that the Committee shouldn't necessarily focus on those people who are of driving age and of driving income.

Ms. Holland went over the surey results regarding transportation, the challenges and opportunities in active transportation, safe routes to school, parking, ride-hail and traffic growth, Pedestriad/Bike Safety, transit access and mobility, and COVID impacts.

Ms. Cogill stated that she believed that increasing the frequency, not just time performance, is really important for transit opportunity.

Mr. Hart stated that the Endicott Station decreased the number of stops, which made it inconvenient for a lot of people as far as traveling on the commuter rail. It pushed him to go the the Readville Station, where he would also see other people that lived in Dedham.

Mr. McDermott stated that when thinking of connectivity to 128 Station and making it more accessible without having to drive there would be an interesting opportunity.

Ms. Cogill shared that Readville is more or an urban, high fewuency rail and that she is unsure how that is going to potentially impact the services at Endicott and the Dedham Corporate Center.

Ms. Borsellino shared that due to the traffic congestion, getting to Dedham Corporate Center is becoming more and more of a challenge because there's no other way of getting there other than to drive a single occupancy vehicle. She mentioned that something worth exploring would be to look for a way to reduce single occupancy trips into Dedham Corporate Center and still provide access to people to use that location.

Mr. Pollack went over topic area goals that included parking management, parking repurpose, and electric vehicles and autonomous vehicles, transit access, safety, bike/pedestrian connectivity, bike ways, walkability, and safe route to achool. He then discussed moving to implementation, which would include getting from plans to actions, identifying the low-hanging fruit projects, bringing in key stakeholders, and coordinating between plans and departments.

Mr. O'Brien asked how many people that were using a bike were victims of accidents from cars that were Dedham residents as opposed to non-residents that were driving though the Town.

Mr. Pollack shared that road safety road safety audits would be able to look into that in greater detail.

Ms. Porter introduced Vivian Ortiz, the Coordinator of the Healthy Community Champions (HCC) for Mattapan Food & Fitness Coalition. Ms. Ortix shared that he had recently ridden her bike from Matapan to Dedham and agrees that there are more things that can be added to make Dedham more walkable and bikeable.

### **Community Engagement Update**

Carolina Prieto gave an update on the poster campaign. The posters will be printed and postered throughout the Town with the help of volunteers. A press release will be sent out so that people know what the posters are. People will be able to text through their moile

phone or use a QR code that will lead them to a web browser to submit their response. volunteers will receive a package with lawn signs and flyers that can be placed around Town.

### **Chat Messages**

Jessica Porter: Fred and others, at [www.designingdedham2030.org](http://www.designingdedham2030.org) you'll find past minutes, presentations, videos, etc. We've been discussing the vision statement for the past 3 meetings or so

Jessica Porter: Agree w Andrew about quality of life for kids and older residents. The topic of sidewalks and bike safety was a major theme in the youth focus groups - they spoke about a lack of crosswalks, broken sidewalks, needing to bike to get around, and general lack of infrastructure

Carolina Prieto: Great point Andrew. Thanks for sharing

Jessica Porter: Great Point, Dan.

Jessica Porter: It's really helpful to see the data presented on the map

Jessica Porter: Great point Dieckmann. Fred Civian is here tonight - he's on the committee studying snow removal on sidewalks

Vivian Ortiz: Hello everyone! This is Vivian Ortiz, the MA Safe Routes to School Outreach Coordinator. Thank you Marah and Travis for including our program in your presentation. Really looking forward to working with the schools and Sharna and her Active Transportation Working Group to see more students walking, biking, and rolling. Reach out if you'd like to help up: [vivian.ortiz@aecom.com](mailto:vivian.ortiz@aecom.com)

Jessica Porter: Very interesting data and discussion - thank you

### **Next Steps**

- Ms. Porter will reach out to the Committee to develop working group for the vision statement.
- Get the one sheeters done in the next month or two.
- Receive additional input on the draft vision statement.
- Implement the poster campaign.
- Discussing each topic area in a Committee Meeting.
- Defining topic area goals and strategies.
- Facilitating a community conversation within each topic.

The next meeting will be on September 15<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. The meeting minutes for July 21, 2020 were unanimously approved, and the meeting was adjourned.