



HINGHAM MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

January 15, 2020 Discussion Topics:

- Transportation
- Sustainability, Water, and Energy

Transportation Questions

- 1) We have heard from residents that speeding is an issue on several roadways. To reduce traffic speeds and improve safety, should the Town establish a speed limit of 25 MPH on roadways inside a thickly settled or business district (not including state highways)? This measure is allowed under Section 17 of Chapter 90 of the Massachusetts General Laws. Should the Town develop a traffic calming program to install devices on local roadways to reduce speeds and improve safety? What would be the downside? Who would object, and why?
- 2) Parking seems to be an issue in some Downtown areas (Merchant's Parking Lot 96% occupied on weekday mornings) and new development may exacerbate conditions. We have been told that parking utilization at the Shipyard lots is increasing. Should the Town identify measures to increase or better manage parking in the Downtown such as time revising time regulations, shared parking, enforcement, paid parking? What about evaluating the need for providing additional parking (including structured parking) at the Shipyard? Who would object, and why? How important is this issue?
- 3) We understand that it is difficult to travel between the Harbor, Downtown and neighborhoods without a vehicle. MBTA Bus Route 220 does not have a stop within the Shipyard or stops at the Commuter Rail Stations. The MBTA provides #714 shuttle bus between Hingham Depot on Station Street and Hull. The demand for the Senior Center Medical Van and Shuttle Van exceeds capacity. Should the Town explore a pilot shuttle program that serves all ages and provides service to Commuter Rail Stations, Downtown, beaches, court, etc.?
- 4) We have heard that there are no sidewalks on several roadways and there are few bicycle facilities (bike lanes, paths, trails). Also, that pedestrian signals and ramps at some intersections are inadequate. There is currently no sidewalk plan in Hingham. Should the Town conduct a Pedestrian and Bicycle Study to identify and prioritize improvements? How important is this issue?

- 5) With the large amount of development planned in South Hingham, should the Town forming or participate in forming a Transportation Management Association (TMA) for the area? The TMA would be responsible for implementing Transportation Demand Management practices for businesses to reduce single-occupant vehicles. Examples may include shuttle bus, carpooling programs, flexible work hours, and subsidizing transit passes. How important is this issue?

Sustainability, Water, and Energy Questions

- 1) According to recent climate change/natural hazards assessments, coastal and inland flooding are the top two hazards affecting Hingham today (and projected into the near future). A number of critical infrastructure/assets have been identified at risk, including the Hingham shipyard/coast/waterfront (seawalls, piers, oceanic buffers), transportation systems (commuter rail/ferry service and Route 3A/Otis Street/Summer Street), sewer/drainage infrastructure (sewer pump stations) and ground/surface potable water supply. Due to the complexity of these systems at risk and the funding/timing required to mitigate, should the Town develop an interim flood management plan as a priority? Should the Town also develop an asset management plan that prioritizes both the short- and long-term improvements necessary for resiliency?
- 2) Several facilities and clientele have been identified as both present and future vulnerabilities for the community in terms of climate change/natural hazards, including emergency shelters (number and capacity of), at-risk populations (aging population and assisted living facilities vulnerable to flooding), evacuation routes (road closures/viability of access and coordination with the Town of Hull) and reliance on technology (interruptions in essential services). Should the Town prioritize the development of an action plan to address these concerns and ensure the safety of its residents (and visitors) before, during and after an event?
- 3) Currently, harbormaster operations are spread throughout several facilities managed by several different Town departments/agencies. Further, these facilities lack the capacity to handle certain repair and maintenance work, causing the Town to ship boats and other equipment out of state when the work can't be handled in house. Should the Town commit to making the harbormaster operations completely self-contained (e.g., boat maintenance facilities, independent storage, etc.)? What would be the downside? Who would object, and why?
- 4) If the Town continues to meet the standards of the Massachusetts Green Communities program, it will make significant progress toward reducing energy consumption. However, many municipalities in Massachusetts are choosing to go farther. The Board of Selectmen has asked the Hingham Energy Action Committee and Hingham Net Zero to explore ways

for Hingham to reach "Carbon Neutrality." Should the Town set even more ambitious goals for energy use reduction than what is required by the Green Communities program? For example, take earlier more aggressive steps to reduce energy use from exempt vehicles? Adopt a zero emissions goal within 20 years? What can be done immediately for Town Meeting 2020? 2021?

- 5) Currently, there is nothing in Hingham's Zoning Bylaw about solar energy facilities. According to the state Zoning Act (Chapter 40A), "No zoning ordinance or by-law shall prohibit or unreasonably regulate the installation of solar energy systems or the building of structures that facilitate the collection of solar energy, except where necessary to protect the public health, safety or welfare." So even though the Town does not regulate solar energy facilities via zoning, many systems have been permitted by right either as accessory uses or through a nondiscretionary site plan review process. Wind energy facilities, however, are currently prohibited in town. Would the Town like to have explicit allowances for accessory solar energy facilities in its zoning bylaws? Would the Town like to explore options for allowing onshore and offshore wind energy facilities?

Schedule of Topics for Discussion Meetings

- Jan.15: Transportation, Sustainability, Water & Energy
- Feb. 12: Public Facilities and Economic Development
- March 18: Housing and Land Use
- March 25: Natural & Cultural Resource Areas, Open Space & Recreation