

1 **TOWN OF CHESTER**
2 **PLANNING COMMISSION**
3 **September 19, 2022, Minutes**

4
5 **Commission Members Present:** Peter Hudkins, Cathy Hasbrouck, Barre Pinske, and Tim Roper
6 at Town Hall.

7
8 **Staff Present:** Preston Bristow, Zoning Administrator/Town Planner, at Town Hall; and Susan
9 Bailey, Recording Secretary, via Zoom.

10
11 **Citizens Present:** Jason Rasmussen, Executive Director of MARC, Bill Lindsay at Town Hall; and
12 Malia Cordero of MARC, Evan Parks, Arne Jonynas, and Steve Mancuso via Zoom.

13
14 **Call to Order**

15
16 Acting Chair Tim Roper called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

17
18 **Decisions Made:**

- 19 • None

20
21 **Action Items:**

- 22 • Tim facilitate the distribution of the Community Survey as discussed.

23
24 **Agenda Item 1, Add or Delete Items on the Agenda, if necessary.**

25
26 Tim noted that at their recent open meeting law training, they learned that Agenda Item 1 is not a
27 legal agenda item because they cannot add to the agenda without warning it, so he removed it from
28 the agenda. Peter noted that they could change the order of items. Tim moved to change the order
29 of the agenda to: Citizens Comments, then Keys to the Valley, then the minutes approval, and then
30 Update to Community Survey. Peter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, and everyone
31 approved.

32 **Agenda Item 2, Citizens Comments**

33
34 There were no citizens' comments.

35
36 **Agenda Item 3, Keys to the Valley Community Workshop Led by MARC**

37
38 Tim thanked Jason for his time and putting the presentation together. Jason said the Keys to the
39 Valley was a project that was finished with a couple of their regional planning neighbors two years
40 ago. He would share their findings.

41
42 Malia gave a brief presentation regarding housing statistics and demographics and presented slides.
43 There was about a 1% growth from 2020 to 2021 to a little over 3,000 residents. Density was
44 56.25 and Chester's median age is 54, which is a little higher than the state average. Chester has

1 an aging population which is a concern with housing and people downsizing and moving into
2 smaller homes while trying to maintain independent living.

3
4 From 2019, they saw a big change in home sale prices. Over 10 years, that adds up to an over
5 82.5% change. The median Vermont home was listed for 58 days which is the fastest homes have
6 sold since at least 2012. The median value of these homes is a little over \$200,000. MARC would
7 email the slides from the presentation, following the meeting, to those interested. A table from the
8 Department of Taxes gave a summary of the different types of properties sold from the beginning
9 of 2020 through March of 2022. It included information about what low-income households may
10 look like, tax information, and the different types of employment and where the employment rates
11 are at.

12
13 Jason said they would email the members the slides. Jason noted that there had been a comment at
14 an earlier meeting that Chester wasn't growing but according to the most recent data, Chester has
15 had a 1% growth in the past year. Jason added that he didn't know that anyone would be shocked
16 to see the number of homes sold and the prices at which they have sold. Tim asked that additional
17 slides be posted with the packet on the website.

18
19 Barre thought people moving here from COVID had an impact on the numbers so with respect to
20 planning, they are looking to the future. He asked if there was any research or anything they knew
21 of regarding predictions of where people would go and if the numbers went down or things would
22 change. Jason said part of the Keys' work was trying to predict into the future. He said projections
23 were tricky and never accurate. He said there's a lot of speculation about climate change and sea
24 level rise and when oceans get higher, people living around Boston may move here. He wasn't
25 sure. Jason said they saw what happened in the pandemic and it probably could happen with other
26 things like sea level rise and thought they should be prepared. Jason said they should look at it
27 with eyes wide open and be aware there could be other development pressures coming. Barre said
28 he wondered if it would go down because his friends who have houses here have been called back
29 to work in the city and thought they may leave here because they couldn't afford having two
30 homes. His concern was the prices would fall because people would leave, and he thought that
31 would happen before the seas rose. Jason said there were some studies done in Vermont to survey
32 folks moving here and they asked if people were here to stay and quite a few were saying it was a
33 seasonal home for them. He thought a quarter would not be staying and some were uncertain. Jason
34 thought housing was slowing down and his friend is a builder was seeing less jobs coming his way.

35
36 Jason gave the Keys to the Valley slide presentation. The study was done by MARC, Two Rivers
37 out of Quechee, and the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission. It included
38 a 67-town area in two states. They didn't want the study to just be statistics, so they brought
39 bankers and builders and others to the table. They wanted to solve the issue of what they could do
40 about it. They created a scenario regarding where things could happen and what they might look
41 like. By the year 2030, they projected there would be a need for 10,000 new homes in the 67-town
42 area. 4,000 new homes were developed in the last decade. This would be a jump of 2 ½ times. He
43 didn't want them to get hung up on the number, as it was only a projection. It was meant to try to
44 estimate the scale of the problem, which was big, and most were aware. A third of the households
45 were cost burdened. They use a 30% household income as a proxy for paying too much for
46 housing. He heard an economist say that during the pandemic, that may have changed because

1 people were spending so much time at home that they may be willing to spend more, so 30% may
2 not be the right number. The average household size is shrinking. It's currently 2.3 and is expected
3 to shrink down to closer to 2 by 2030. Jason pointed out houses were sold very rapidly and at high
4 prices. He said they need affordable homes for people who live here and the prevailing salaries.
5 The types of homes work for the people who live here and not necessarily someone moving here
6 from Manhattan. They need to make sure residents have homes they can afford. The study
7 projected a need for 318 new units in Chester during the same timeframe. It's a smaller chunk of
8 the 10,000. Out of the 318, they were looking at 280 owner occupied type housing and 48 renter
9 occupied housing. Jason didn't know that was accurate, but they were trying to estimate. From
10 2013 to 2017, the number of cost-burdened households who paid 30% more on mortgage and rent
11 was a quarter more for owner occupied units and close to three quarters for rental households.
12 Affordability for rentals is significantly worse, which is typical. Jason presented pictures of the
13 types of homes that were needed, which included larger housing projects like 20-30 units, which
14 may not work in Chester, and farmhouses converted to multiple housing units, and accessory
15 dwelling units such as garages converted into housing. Those aren't being developed in great
16 numbers but there is a need. Homes that are converted into multi units, and smaller single level
17 energy efficient homes, and tiny houses. Jason asked what their reaction was and what types of
18 homes they wanted to see in Chester. Tim pointed out there weren't any manufactured homes, and
19 they had discussed a planned manufactured home community. Jason agreed. Peter said they needed
20 to change their regulations regarding manufactured homes because it calls out a specific size. Peter
21 said in theory, they couldn't have anything different. He said with the current regulations, a tiny
22 park would be impossible given the setbacks and the way it's set up. Jason said they needed to
23 rethink that and asked if a tiny house community was something they wanted to consider. Peter
24 said absolutely and it had been brought to the Planning Commission before. Cathy said the church
25 owns a flat space and thought about a tiny community to help their parishioners, but the rules were
26 too restrictive, and the church wasn't ready to start digging. Barre mentioned a row of Monopoly
27 houses in Wellfleet that likely happened before zoning and were now iconic. Barre thought a
28 problem with modern zoning was because of setbacks and guidelines, they can't do things like
29 that. He didn't know how to rewrite the zoning bylaws to allow something that doesn't fit. He
30 liked the idea of a farmhouse with modern construction and having it fit the area. He mentioned
31 the red house down the street with the barn could fit 15 people in it if it was redone inside. To retro
32 it would be expensive, but he wondered what it would cost from scratch. Barre thought there was
33 incentive for investment and thought, as a board, they might want to dip their toe in the water if
34 they have the statistics that show demand and supply, and demand regulates costs, and it seemed
35 like they didn't have enough supplies so there goes the demand which raises prices. Barre said
36 when the housing bubble burst, people were reluctant to build, and builders lost their business. If
37 the demand had returned, maybe they could get some incentive to get people to invest again. Jason
38 said it was very expensive to build right now and so they may need more than regulatory reform.
39 Jason thought Barre's point was good. He said that was the idea for workshop 4 and they could
40 talk more about it then.

41
42 Jason showed a map of some properties in Chester where there is water and sewer and included
43 hypothetical housing types, including accessory dwelling and duplexes and it could easily allow
44 for 6 new units in the block without impacting the character of the area. Cathy noted the church
45 on the corner of Church and Main Streets in the picture was available too. Jason said there was all
46 kinds of potential. Jason said the whole idea was to get people to see that's what they were talking

1 about. Barre said where he grew up in Minnesota they planned and built developments. He
2 wondered from an economic perspective if it would make sense to try to zone for something like
3 that in a cornfield off Turnpike Road because it's easier to put the facilities in ahead of time. Barre
4 thought it made a lot of sense. Jason said he would take his direction from the Planning
5 Commission. Jason said one of the things they are considering is where water and sewer currently
6 are and where it should be, should it extend anywhere, where should there zoning districts be,
7 density standards, and so forth. Tim thought he heard Jason say they were going to talk more about
8 how to make some of this stuff happen in the fourth workshop. Jason hoped so and said they were
9 good questions.

10
11 Jason thought many of them see headlines that zoning is bad and creating problems for housing.
12 Jason said it was partially true and there were other factors. Act 250 and wastewater permitting
13 both played a role. Building codes, especially in the village center, building material cost, and
14 labor cost all played into it. Regulations could be improved. Jason showed a graphic from the
15 Zoning for Great Neighborhoods project and said mirroring recommendations were coming out of
16 it and the Keys' project. There are dimensional standards, minimum lot size, density standards,
17 setbacks, and parking standards. A lot of it they had discussed with the Village Green District.
18 Street standards, which they hadn't discussed much, was another factor to consider. They were all
19 relevant considerations. There was a review matrix through the Keys' project and a slightly
20 different one from the Zoning for Great Neighborhoods. They could do a self-assessment which
21 would help identify some of the common issues. Some types of housing are not explicitly called
22 out in zoning or sometimes they must go through a heightened review process. He told them to
23 consider a tiny house community, row houses, or the thing they think they like, like live/work units
24 where there's a shop below and an apartment above. Jason said they ought to be thinking about
25 them and make sure to allow for them in zoning. He thought adding a few new categories to the
26 list tables might make sense. Cathy asked what cohousing was. Jason said it was land that is owned
27 collectively and the houses on it are individually owned. Jason gave an example of Cobb Hill in
28 Hartland, which is not affordable, but a little higher end. He said it was housing clustered around
29 a working farm and a nice way to preserve farmland and incorporate housing into it. He gave
30 another example of Bristol Village Cohousing where they took a historic building made it a
31 community house, gathering space, and common kitchen for the community which included newer
32 units outback – apartments mixed with single family housing. In their case, they have a shared
33 septic system. Jason said it was a nice development. He said in other parts of the country there is
34 a growing senior 55 and up type of cohousing and there were a lot of them being built as a senior
35 housing alternative.

36
37 Tim asked about ADU housing, which may be the path of least resistance in the short term in towns
38 such as Chester. Tim recalled the State having regulations for ADUs related to the main house and
39 the size. He asked if 30% was the maximum and if it was something they were bound by as a town.
40 Jason said they could change it and are encouraged to. He said the State law has gotten tweaked
41 over the years to be more lenient and accessory dwellings are an interesting option. He thought
42 30% was yesterday's idea and they should think about increasing the size to 900 sq. feet or 30%,
43 whichever was greater. Tim thought that was how it is currently read. Preston said when they did
44 the Village Green amendment, they updated accessory dwelling units to what the thinking was
45 then, and it wasn't that long ago and now there's even talk they should change it again. He said it
46 was 30% or 900 square feet and maybe it should be updated again. Jason said they could look at it

1 and make sure there's no room for further improvement. Jason noted they had been thinking about
2 adaptive reuse and mixed-use buildings in the Village Green. He thought next, they should
3 consider what it means in the rest of the Village Center and Stone Village and other parts of town
4 and what fits in what part of town. Jason provided an example of what an allowed use table could
5 look like where there was more specificity. He said they didn't necessarily have to do it, but it was
6 a suggestion. They could consider how to make the permitting process easier and more reliable for
7 a developer.

8
9 Jason thought they should look at the rest of the Village Center District, Stone Village, and others
10 and make sure the dimensional standards are based in reality. He thought the setbacks were shrunk
11 quite a bit in the Village Green and often the standards don't match reality and it creates problems
12 with nonconformities and expansions and things are much more difficult to make happen as a
13 result. He said there was talk about eliminating minimum lot sizes. There were things like
14 removing density caps for the number of units and other things they may want to consider. Jason
15 mentioned zero-line setbacks where a house is built on a side lot line and may want to consider
16 that instead of requiring 30-foot side setbacks which they wouldn't currently meet. There are a
17 number of things they may want to look at as they work through things.

18
19 In terms of the rural districts, Jason said some folks were getting rid of minimum lot size and
20 looking only at density. The idea was you were more focused on the overall density and reserving
21 large lots and having smaller house sites. He said it was something they could explore when they
22 got to the rural parts of town.

23
24 He said transportation and parking may be more important when they started going down the Route
25 103 corridor headed south. They may want to think about the minimum parking requirements and
26 where they should be, and how you could do better access management and how it could look
27 nicer and incorporate sidewalks. He thought those were things they may or may not want to include
28 but they should think about them. Peter suggested a micro park and ride. He said people used to
29 park in Gassetts when there was a store to park at. Peter thought having a couple of those places
30 where you could park your car securely would eliminate travel but thought it fell less in the
31 regulation category and more in the asking for transportation money. Peter thought the one in
32 Downers had ten cars. Jason agreed. Cathy suggested that people park there to ride to Hanover and
33 others agreed. Jason said there was a funding mechanism. He said Jim Mullins was the town
34 manager in Weathersfield years ago and used those funds to develop the parking lot that Peter was
35 referring to. Jason thought it was something to look at and thought the more you could make a
36 functional and attractive area, it may lend itself to housing. Peter said they need a reduction in their
37 space requirements for parking spaces. Jason said they could revisit the parking standards again.

38
39 Jason said the opinion coming out of the Keys to the Valley project was if you do nothing else, to
40 do these three things: reduce parking requirements in the downtown areas, increase accessory
41 dwelling area maximums by making it easier to build a larger one, and permit residential and
42 downtown and village centers by right which meant permitted use, so you would see Preston for a
43 zoning permit instead of going through a public hearing process.

44
45 Tim noted one of the things that has come up repeatedly over time is more mixed-use zoning for
46 neighborhoods and buildings and wondered how it would play into it. Jason thought they did a

1 pretty good job of it with the Village Green District. The first place that comes to Tim's mind is
2 the stretch from Town Hall back to Main Street. Jason asked what people envisioned. Tim said
3 professional offices or art galleries with apartments above, specialty stores, and things like that. It
4 seemed to him those would support vibrance in the community, but he didn't know how much it
5 would help housing. Jason thought on a smaller scale, live/work units so maybe a craftsman who
6 has their shop downstairs could live upstairs. He thought it was an option they could consider and
7 allowing them explicitly was a good thing. Tim said there was a building with three units and an
8 old carriage house he considered buying. Jason thought they could explore those options.

9
10 Bill Lindsay asked for a definition on the 10,000 homes needed by 2030. He asked where Windsor
11 County fell in relation to the 10,000, as it was a regional study. Bill said if you ride to Dartmouth
12 there's tremendous housing increases and multiple dwellings partly due to Dartmouth being a
13 teaching school. He said real estate in that area is probably at an all-time high, as well. He noted
14 Okemo is already getting pressure for the ski season not being able to provide housing. Not being
15 able to provide housing makes it difficult to provide jobs. He wondered geographically if they
16 identified the housing crisis to regions or just overall in the Valley. Jason said yes, they had tried
17 to break it down by town and he had provided Chester's numbers. He said by going to
18 KeystotheValley.com, you could dive into the numbers if you wanted. He said he went to Library,
19 Reports, then Data, to get to the housing page forecast. The short answer to Bill's question was
20 most of the units were in the core of the Upper Valley. They are Norwich, Hartford, Lebanon, and
21 Hanover. They are generally calling for more of the units than other parts of that region, but the
22 housing need is everywhere. The data set would allow you to drill more if you wanted and the data
23 could be viewed by county and Windsor was a pretty big number. Jason added you could also go
24 to the town level. He said the core of the Upper Valley was a big part of the 10,000 and they were
25 building a lot of large apartment buildings. He wasn't convinced that's what people in this area
26 want to live in and it wasn't addressing our need and the price point of those units were a little
27 high. Cathy pointed out that the needs forecast showed the number of households would grow by
28 318 in 2030 versus what it was in 2010. She said if you cut it in half, saying half were issued in
29 the first decade, Chester was issuing building permits for 10 houses per year, so that would be 100
30 houses if things went well, and they were looking for 150 or 160. Jason said it was by no means
31 perfect science and to have some caution, but we need more housing than we have been producing
32 and at a lower price point than what is out there, which given the cost of construction is hard to
33 do. Barre asked if the basic concept was problem solving for the job situation like the Dollar
34 General that has been closed for a few days and Ramuntos at the Jiffy Mart was closed on the
35 weekend as the last 2 people had quit, and even Smitty's had to close for a couple days. Barre
36 wanted to put out there that there was a basis for these things and why they're trying to do them.
37 Is it a place people really want to live, do they have the goods and services available, and is there
38 enough culture here, and does a little town like this really grow? He said the little town that he
39 grew up in, everyone had moved out and the same with a neighboring town where they tore the
40 buildings down. He said it wasn't happening here and they were looking for a way to have changes
41 while considering the character. He was thinking he had to get his buddies to start building some
42 houses cheap but he's busy. He asked if a lot of what they were discussing was trying to facilitate
43 the working class because they're getting pushed out and can't live here. He asked if it was part of
44 the basis of what they're talking about. Jason agreed they were. They want new teachers coming
45 to school, or workers coming to NewsBank to find housing and be happy with the school. Barre
46 asked if costs were based on supply and demand and they were trying to figure out the supply, he

1 thought they should do an encouraging incentive and some people may be willing to build around
2 here and if they felt confident, they could do it. He thought these statistics could bring confidence
3 to people who want to do things. He hoped they could get some press on it, get it out there in the
4 public, and do some zoning to fit and try to get some of this stuff to happen. He suggested building
5 homes along snowmobile trails, like his friend had and they may not be taking up a house in town
6 which could be available for housing and lower the price point because the demand would have
7 been settled. Barre said he was one of the biggest offenders because he has a big building that
8 could be converted into apartments, but he didn't want to.

9
10 Tim thought work was being done in Chester to better understand occupied households by full-
11 time residents and part-time occupied, and they are also looking into short-term rentals. He
12 wondered if the 2010 numbers took that into account. He thought the 2010 numbers would have
13 been less short-term rentals. Jason said the numbers for 2010 and 2030 projected under owner
14 occupied households was 1,040 in 2010 and 362 renter-occupied in 2010 were year-round
15 residents so they didn't include second homeowners. Tim asked if 1,402 represented the number
16 of full-time occupied households at that time and Jason said it was total households year-round
17 and didn't include seasonal units. Tim asked him to doublecheck. He was hoping to get a better
18 sense of that and appreciated Jason's office helping with that. Jason said they would verify the
19 numbers. Tim noted that Cathy is digging into the Grand List and looking at the number of
20 homestead exemptions to understand. Jason would circle back with the numbers.

21
22 Steve Mancuso was under the impression that community workshop meant inviting the public in
23 and going through the bylaws from page one but didn't see any effort other than paper of record,
24 nor did he see any workshops scheduled to publicly post. Jason responded that the intent for tonight
25 was to go through the information based on the Keys to the Valley study and some newer data and
26 try to get a sense of what it said about housing in Chester. Jason was hoping to learn what folks
27 thought they should change in zoning to address those things. They will go into a lot more depth
28 into zoning in the next steps. Jason said Preston had given him a bunch of changes and they would
29 be going through that and looking at it soon. They would also be revisiting some of the zoning
30 districts and going through some of the stuff and suggested to tune in for future meetings. Preston
31 said he had given Jason his administrative wish list and Hugh had encouraged them to come up
32 with a schedule of how they planned to do it in the next year. Jason asked Steve to come to future
33 meetings because they would get to it.

34
35 Barre said part of why people move here is for recreation of which snowmobiling was a big part.
36 If they are looking at people who come to recreate as taking up part of the housing, he thought
37 people like that may prefer to live along the trails. If cluster housing could be done along the trails,
38 someone could develop log cabins along the trail and then that would free up housing that may be
39 available to someone who wanted to raise a family there. Jason thought one of the next steps would
40 be looking at maps and figuring out what should go where, and he was open to conversation about
41 that in general terms and looked forward to talking about it with Barre regarding what he
42 envisioned.

43
44 Barre asked Peter about the lot prices at Remington which hadn't seemed to change and
45 wondered why nobody was building. He thought there were places around with smaller lots for
46 development and asked Peter if he had any insight into why nothing was being built. Peter

1 responded that Remmington was more high-end and that Andover improved a bunch of Class 4
2 roads and as a result, it blew up out by Chris Myers which created several lots and took the market
3 away from Remmington. Peter said it developed much of the area by Andover/Londonderry and
4 Andover/Weston on that hill. Barre understood. Peter said when he was a kid, the road ended at
5 Red Top but now it has all opened. Cathy noted the views up there were nicer than Remmington
6 Road. Preston said various people had spoken with him about buying a lot at Remmington but the
7 original plan was the town would take care of road but now the town has no interest in doing that
8 so the people who build out there have to take care of the road. The other thing was that although
9 power lines are out there, someone must pay to connect. Barre told Peter that he and his friends
10 had ridden up to Bailey's Mills which is a class 4 road that crosses over the snowmobile trail. Barre
11 thought that may be an area where they might want to develop. Peter said the 1,400 acres there are
12 owned by Tomasso and are conserved. There was discussion about where it covered. Barre thought
13 what Peter said about the Class 4 road made sense if they wanted improvements and other stuff.
14 Peter said they needed to concentrate on where the water and sewer are now. The town can only
15 find about half the manholes as there is no map with all the manholes. Peter said the map he derived
16 came from users because they can't find the manholes. Tim thought Julie was working on getting
17 it mapped but Peter said according to Jeff, it wasn't. Tim agreed they needed to focus on where
18 the water and sewer were. Barre suggested they include it as an agenda item in the future on how
19 the housing relative to water and sewer and relative to septic worked. Barre said a lot of Cape Cod
20 was septic. Cathy noted it was sand and not clay. Tim said when they discussed changing zoning,
21 they would look at density and the obvious place to increase density was where there was water
22 and sewer, especially sewer because that was the most expensive.

23
24 Tim thanked Jason for providing them with the information and hoped he had gotten some good
25 feedback from them to help inform them of their next steps. Tim would ask Amie to add the
26 presentation to the packet and Malia would make sure Amie or Jason had all the necessary
27 information.

28 29 **Agenda Item 4, Review and Approve Minutes from September 6, 2022, meeting**

30
31 Cathy moved and Peter seconded a motion to review and approve the September 6, 2022, meeting
32 minutes. Tim asked on page 9, line 36 that the sentence "Tim thought it was interesting the 1%
33 rooms and meals and alcoholic beverages" he wondered if they could add the word "tax" after
34 meals to clarify it. A vote was taken, and the motion was carried unanimously, and the minutes
35 were approved as amended.

36 37 **Agenda Item 5, Status Update on Community Survey**

38
39 Tim met with Julie Hance and Amie O'Brien last week and they were not only enthusiastic about
40 getting the survey out and getting the results but also helping the commission with doing it. Tim
41 said they had discussed a few different things. They considered sending a brightly colored postcard
42 with a link to the online survey to encourage folks to go online and complete it. Understanding
43 that not everyone would want to or is comfortable completing it online, there would also be the
44 option to call or email Town Hall and request a paper copy be mailed to them. Tim would also
45 volunteer to sit at a table in Town Hall on election day and encourage people to complete a paper
46 survey there. Cathy suggested putting a QR code on the postcard so they could go directly to the

1 link with their smart phone. Tim agreed. Tim said Amie had started working on creating a
2 SurveyMonkey version and quickly realized the free version doesn't offer much depth, so she
3 reached out to Jason and his team, who have a license for SurveyMonkey, and they have already
4 completed the first draft of the survey. Tim noted there were a few changes which he highlighted
5 and sent to them, so it matched what the commission had already approved. Tim said the next step
6 would be to get the postcard designed. Julie asked that the postcards be ordered, and they would
7 just need to design the print on them. Tim asked if everyone had a chance to read the cover letter
8 and press release. He thought they would include it on the postcard but then agreed with Peter who
9 pointed out it would be a lot. Tim wanted to get feedback before he deemed it good to go. He
10 wanted to make sure people understand it's for the Chester Planning Commission and not for any
11 other reason, such as political. He said another facet would be the press release that would include
12 the link as well. Barre thought it was great what Tim had done but thought it probably should have
13 been talked about before designing postcards so that it came from all of them as a board but at the
14 same time, having someone get something done and taking initiative was good. He thought Amie
15 and Julie were the ones who they would want to deal with but that it should come from the Planning
16 Commission. Tim thought that was a valid point. Barre said he wasn't complaining but wanted to
17 put that out there. Tim said it would be possible to create a draft and bring it to the Commission
18 for approval. Barre didn't think it was that big of a deal and was complimenting him for getting it
19 done but at the same time, noting they were a board, and it was a gray area.

20
21 Barre was concerned that the median age was 54 and wondered if they were making the right
22 decision doing it online with the age of the residents. He wondered if someone had to put in an
23 extra effort to get a paper ballot. He said people may be more computer savvy than he thought.
24 Barre wanted input from the other members. Tim said he gave it some thought and was in the same
25 place and wondered how many people were comfortable in that same demographic with doing that
26 versus coming into the Town Hall to fill out their ballot and drop it into the box which is why the
27 discussion came up about having a table with the survey available and encouraging folks to fill it
28 out. Tim said he would engage with everyone who came by and ask them if they did one and if
29 not, encourage them to do one. Barre asked Tim on average, what they got, 700 or 800. Tim
30 thought 550 or 535. Barre thought it was a little more for a bigger election. Tim said it was mid-
31 term. Cathy thought they couldn't afford to miss an opportunity of catching people when they were
32 voting if it wasn't killing them to do it. Tim agreed. Cathy said if they made it easy for young
33 people to do it on their phones, they would get their input. As much as you considered the bigger
34 columns of people in their 50s and 60s, those people wouldn't be here much longer. They need to
35 reach out to young people. Tim said they could post the cards around town and other things to
36 reach them. Tim wanted to get back to Barre's point about the postcard being approved by the
37 Planning Commission. He said he had mixed feelings about it because he thought Julie and Amie
38 were good at doing it. He would be happy to take what they deemed a final draft and bring it back
39 to the board for them to look at. He felt the closer they got to election day, the more distracted and
40 busier town workers would be, and wanted to get it going before then if possible and there wasn't
41 much time yet. He asked the board what they wanted. Barre asked if they cared that much about
42 trying to put more effort into having it mailed and if they wanted to see the postcard. From Barre's
43 opinion, the fact it was getting done was most important. Tim noted with the cover sheet, it was 5
44 sheets, and the postage would be a couple thousand dollars per Julie's estimate, plus the time to
45 print, fold, and stuff envelopes. Barre noted that economics was part of it and had to be brought
46 into the picture. Cathy said they had sent postcards out to their high school class because they

1 couldn't tell if people paid attention to their emails. Text messaging isn't an option because they
2 don't have phone numbers so postcards became the least expensive. Tim noted they could have
3 hard copies available at the town office and other places. Peter thought because of the time
4 constraints, they needed to trust Julie and Amie and it needed to be out there well before November
5 8th. He trusted their decision making. He didn't have a problem with it. Tim said that's how they
6 would run with it. Tim asked for any feedback on the press release. Peter wished him luck with
7 the size and Tim said they would figure it out. Tim thought maybe it could be at the beginning of
8 the SurveyMonkey. Cathy said her experience with the postcard was that there wasn't much room.
9 She thought the QR code was very helpful and would work well for those under 50. Tim noted the
10 next meeting was Monday, October 3rd. This Wednesday night the Selectboard had the public
11 hearing for adaptive reuse and legacy use on their agenda. Tim said he would come to support
12 Peter and Cathy who would take the lead.

13
14 **Agenda Item 7, Adjournment**

15
16 Peter moved to adjourn, and Cathy seconded. A vote was taken, and it passed unanimously. The
17 meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.