

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

JANUARY 20, 2004

A meeting of the Planning and Economic Development Committee was held on Tuesday, January 20, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber

Chairman David Rootovich presided.

Members of the Committee present: Alderman Richard LaRose, Vice Chair  
Alderman Kathryn D. Vitale  
Alderman David MacLaughlin  
Alderman Robert G. Shaw, Jr.

Members Not in Attendance:

Also in Attendance: Alderman-at-Large Brian S. McCarthy  
Alderman-at-Large Paula I. Johnson  
Katherine E. Hersh, Division Director, Community  
Development  
Mike Lowe, Liaison, Nashua City Planning Board

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CLERK

Chairman Rootovich called for nominations for a Committee Clerk for 2004/2005

Alderman LaRose nominated Alderman Vitale

MOTION BY ALDERMAN SHAW THAT THE NOMINATIONS BE NOW CLOSED  
MOTION CARRIED

VOTE ON ELECTION OF ALDERMAN VITALE TO THE POSITION OF CLERK OF  
THE PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE FOR THE  
ENSUING TWO YEARS

ALDERMAN VITALE ELECTED UNANIMOUSLY

COMMUNICATIONS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS

R-04-06

Endorsers: Mayor Bernard A. Streeter  
Alderman-at-Large Brian S. McCarthy

WAIVING OR REIMBURSING CERTAIN LAND USE APPLICATION AND PERMIT FEES

IN EXCHANGE FOR PAVEMENT OF AN OFF-SITE EMERGENCY ACCESS ROAD BY  
THE DEVELOPER

MOTION BY ALDERMAN LAROSE TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman LaRose

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I made the motion to get this thing going. I really don't understand why we are doing this. I don't know the history of it, and I am sure that Alderman McCarthy could explain it to us.

Alderman McCarthy

I am sure that the Community Development Director can correct me if I mess up the chronology. IN the events around the development of Northwest Boulevard, the City inherited a responsibility to do a piece of work on the emergency access road when we purchased a large portion of that subdivision. As it worked out it was easier to have the developer who was in there doing the work – have that paving done under their contract rather than for us to do it separately. I worked out that the amount it was going to cost was equivalent to a number of the fees that they owed us for delaying subdivision, etc., and the legislation just proposes to do those as a paper swap rather than trying to write checks to each other to cover the cost of building the road and then added fees that were involved in the property.

Alderman LaRose

I guess when that whole area was developed there wasn't a need for an access road – all of a sudden there was a need for an access road?

Alderman McCarthy

The access road was always in the plan. It didn't need to be paved until the end, and when we bought the last pieces of the park we owned the responsibility for getting that piece of it paved.

Alderman LaRose

I was there today. I went down Northwestern Boulevard and all the way to the end. I wasn't sure where that access road was coming out. Then I went to where it begins and I noticed that I assume it is the City that is plowing Perimeter Road?

Alderman McCarthy

Yes.

Alderman LaRose

It didn't look like the access road was plowed. Maybe the access road hasn't been even built yet.

Alderman McCarthy

I don't remember whether it has been finished or not. It is actually on the far side of the Corning building if my recollection strikes me correctly.

Katherine Hersh

My understanding is that the access road hasn't been built yet. The Corning building is empty and was never completed so there wasn't a need to have that access completed in order to get a C.O. and that type of thing. As Alderman McCarthy stated when we acquired the 250 acres out there from Westwood Park we ended up inheriting this responsibility to finish this access road – or part of the responsibility.

Alderman LaRose

One final question. Like I said I noticed that Perimeter Road was plowed. I know that when I was previously on the Board that was put into place so that if the fire engines by the airport station could use that. I don't know if it is automatically going to be plowed by the Board of Public Works or not, and that is something – if we are going to spend this kind of money to have an emergency access road it seems to me that it needs to be open in the winter because many times especially fires occur in the winter.

Katherine Hersh

My understanding is that it will be plowed by the owner of the property in the wintertime. It must be. That is the way – whenever we have site plans and we get them approved and there is emergency access roads it is the responsibility of the owner of the property to make sure that that emergency access is plowed and connects to the public street. It won't be our responsibility to plow. It is their property. We don't have an easement on it or anything. We just ended up having to – at least I don't think so – we have the responsibility of finishing the paving – paying

for the pavement of it.

Alderman LaRose

Thank you.

Alderman Vitale

The road is going to be connected to Perimeter Road or is this going to be access through Deerwood?

Katherine Hersh

Perimeter comes through from the airport and then comes back around and then by the time it connects into whatever those are over there it is now Deerwood.

Alderman Vitale

Perimeter runs into Deerwood, Deerwood goes down to this new access road. Will the access from the fire department always take place through Perimeter Road, which it was my understanding that the airport took care of plowing that – if not is the city going to take care of it?

Katherine Hersh

I don't know who takes care of plowing it. I have no idea how the fire department would access that I just know that they didn't have the two accesses.

Alderman Vitale

-  
In the past, the extension of Perimeter Road where it was gravel was an emergency access area at that point, and my question is why was it agreed upon to pay the remainder? Is it because of the water main that was taken down that originally Corning was supposed to use and was that why it was originally agreed to, and if the water main that goes underneath that access road is no longer being used by Corning why are we paving it?

Katherine Hersh

The fire department historically requests and demands that emergency access roads get paved. If you ask them about their opinion about the fact that Perimeter/Deerwood Drive is not paved they will tell you that they think it should be paved.

Alderman McCarthy

I think it is also important to note that in the unpaved version of that access road was not used

as emergency access onto that property so much as it was used by the fire department to access the outer edge of Amherst Street. There was nobody that was responsible for paving it. We do in general require that emergency access roads be paved. We just paved a significant length of emergency access road at the South High School to get to the gate off of the Turnpike.

Alderman Vitale

Was that emergency access road put in because of the water originally for Corning?

Katherine Hersh

No.

Alderman Vitale

It wasn't put in for Delta. It was put in for Corning.

Katherine Hersh

According to our ordinances you can't have a cul-de-sac more than 500 feet long without getting a waiver from the Planning Board, and then once you get a waiver from the Planning Board you can go up to 750 feet. Anything over that a second means of access and egress is required. A gated emergency access is sufficient, and that is what this is. When Delta Education came in they put that in – that wasn't longer than the distance where the distance is that they approved. Once they got all the way down to Corning that was well beyond the 750 feet.

Alderman Vitale

Thank you.

Alderman Johnson

What is the fees versus the paving that we are waving – how much was it going to cost us to pave versus the fees?

Katherine Hersh

I think that what we are paying is half of the whole cost.

Alderman Johnson

Whole cost of what?

Katherine Hersh

Of paving that emergency access road?

Alderman Johnson

What is the cost of paving? What is the dollar amount?

Katherine Hersh

I don't have the legislation in front of me so whatever the dollar amount is that it says ...

Chairman Rootovich

Just under \$14,000.

Alderman Johnson

I don't have it in front of me.

Chairman Rootovich

It is \$13,792.

Alderman Johnson

That is what it is going to cost us to pave it and the fees would have been about what \$26,000?

Chairman Rootovich

The fees are \$13,792. They are in lieu of the fees dollar for dollar.

Alderman Johnson

It definitely is a dollar for dollar swap?

Chairman Rootovich

Correct.

Alderman Johnson

We the City are going to pave it or are we going to hire a subcontractor?

Katherine Hersh

The owner of the property is going to do the paving. We are waving the fees, which basically is the same as transferring the money to them. We are waving the fees and then they are going to do all the work. We are not doing any of the work.

Chairman Rootovich

As opposed to them cutting a check to us they will cut a check directly to the contractor.

Alderman Johnson

I just want to make sure that it is an even swap for swap. How many other companies have we done this with or is this the only company or the only area that we have actually done this for?

Katherine Hersh

It is a unique situation. We ended up owning this responsibility for the completion of this emergency access when we bought the Westwood site, the northwest conservation land, several years ago.

Alderman Johnson

Are there any other pieces of property that we will be doing the same thing for?

Katherine Hersh

No.

Alderman Johnson

This is the only one?

Katherine Hersh

Nothing else that I am aware of.

Alderman Johnson

I don't want somebody else to come back and say you did this for this property and then we will have a whole nightmare where we will have to keep doing it.

Katherine Hersh

Totally unique situation.

Alderman Johnson

This is a one-time deal.

Katherine Hersh

Yes.

Alderman Johnson

Thank you.

Mike Lowe

... tape inaudible ... speaker away from microphone...

Perimeter Road is not supposed to be open.

Katherine Hersh

It is not open.

Mike Lowe

It is gated. It is supposed to be ... tape inaudible – speaker away from microphone ... we had gated places before where gated roads disappeared. You have to watch it very carefully. ... tape inaudible ...

Alderman McCarthy

There has been a gated access at both Deerwood and Perimeter for 10-15 years. There has never been a problem with it. Pavement isn't changing anything that was always a road that was passable and if people were interested in doing it they would have done it before.

Mike Lowe

There was gravel right?

Alderman McCarthy

Yes.

Mike Lowe

... tape inaudible ...

Katherine Hersh

This is consistent with the plan that has been approved.

Chairman Rootovich

Alderman McCarthy also did send this to the Planning Board.

Alderman McCarthy

I think we requested an advisory opinion – there is no statutory requirement for it to go to the Planning Board.

Katherine Hersh

With respect to the legislation with respect to the funding, but not the plan itself. Okay.

Alderman MacLaughlin

Just a simple question of usage – is there any data available that would allow us to know how often this access road has been used or would have been used were it paved versus it's current condition?

Alderman McCarthy

I think the fire department can probably tell you how often they use it. They do in fact use that road during heavy traffic to avoid traveling on Amherst Street. I believe that paved they will use it for that purpose more frequently because they can gain significant time over having to go through the lights on Amherst Street.

Chairman Rootovich

Are there any further questions? The motion before you is for final passage. I understand that we are also going to wait for written communication from the Planning Board – until that time the motion before you is to recommend final passage. Is there any further discussion?

MOTION CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES - None

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## DISCUSSION

### Chairman Rootovich

Alderman McCarthy and Director Hersh are here to give us a brief presentation.

### Alderman McCarthy

About 6-8 months ago we had started this strategic planning process that I have talked to you about before, and had come up with some intermediate results. I am getting some sessions of the full Board started up again to continue that process. What I felt was important though was we had come up with some intermediate results that I am pretty sure when we go back and look at them we will all agree on because they have been there every time we have done this over the last 10 years. What I wanted to do in parallel with trying to get that overall exercise done was to take some of those items that I had challenged the committees to do, and to start looking at some of those things and try to develop some work plans for how we are going to move forward with some of those items. This committee owns responsibility for land use planning and for technology issues and also for economic development. I think in the three items that I had mentioned in the memo that I sent you were updating the master plan and continuing to keep it up to date and doing additional plans, developing an economic development strategy and plan and also doing something with the land use ordinances that we have spent a significant amount of time and money to get a draft of, and have not moved forward with at this point.

I would also say that at some point there are technology issues I would like this committee to take up because I think particularly in light of the current budget situation there are areas where we could be doing with a small amount of electricity things that we currently do with a large amount of paper and a large amount of manual work. I think now more than ever it is incumbent upon us to look at those things. I guess what I would like to do, and I asked Kathy to facilitate some discussion because she has done this before and she is very good at it, is to try to get an exercise going where we can look at particularly the planning aspects and the zoning ordinances and look at where we want to go from here and try to get a feel for what exactly is the problem we are trying to solve there in our opinion and what is the plan for moving forward with that.

I think the first thing we would like to do is ask ourselves a couple of questions the first of which is what are we doing well at in terms of planning and zoning at this point and the second is what do we need to be doing so that 10-20 years from now we will feel happier with the way that we are doing planning and land use regulations, and then try to start looking at how we get to some of those things from a long-term policy perspective and what the Board of Aldermen ought to be doing to further those goals.

### Chairman Rootovich

Did all of the new members of the Board get the draft for the new zoning ordinance? Okay.

Katherine Hersh

What Alderman McCarthy asked me to do is help you walk through what the answers are to the questions. The first question that we have, the stuff that would be really helpful would be to step back and say what do we do well in the city with respect to planning, zoning, and economic development and the issues that are the responsibility of planning. What I would like to do is I would like to ask each of you – I am going to put that question up on the board and then I would like to ask each of you if you wouldn't mind just doing the post its – I don't know how many of you have done this before, but basically what I would like you to do is answer the question of what are we doing well as a city with respect to the issues and the responsibilities of planning, land use, our downtown – did you want to do technology decisions?

Alderman McCarthy

We could. Why not. It hadn't been on the original list, but we probably should.

Katherine Hersh

The idea is really to answer that question putting one answer on each one of the post its and then we will go through a little bit of discussion on the post it. Once we have taken 5-10 minutes and you have written down all of the things I am going to write down that question and – what are we doing well with the city with regards to the issues that are the responsibility of this committee and then once we have done that what I would like to do is have each one of you one at a time – Alderman Vitale you will be one of them – you will be the first one – we will make sure that everybody understands it – it is not for discussion it is just to make it clear and then we will put that on the board. Then when we get all of them on the board – when everybody has gone around and put all of theirs on the board then what we will do is take a few minutes and have everybody go to the board and arrange them, and arrange them so that they fall into 3-4 categories of things. Then from there we will go back and discuss does that represent what we think we are doing well. We will roll up that sheet of paper and put the second piece of paper up there and then we will talk about what are the things that we really need to do better or really need to be doing if we are going to be a viable community 25 years from now. Is everybody clear on the instructions?

Alderman Johnson

Thank you. Alderman Rootovich I guess this is to Alderman McCarthy too – what happened to the last time we met when we did the strategy with the list and all that we came up with in the prior Board because I think that would kind of help a little bit with the new Board coming in.

Chairman Rootovich

We still have those. I think Alderman McCarthy has a copy as well.

Alderman McCarthy

That is actually where a number of the items that were in the memo that I sent out came from. I will distribute that to the Board again soon and will do the strategic planning exercise to go over those and make sure we are happy with those results. We do have them and we will continue forward from there.

Alderman Johnson

It has been so long since we sat and I would love to see what we said in the past so that we can see how we are focusing now and moving forward with some of these questions that are coming up now.

Alderman McCarthy

I will get Sue to distribute all of those materials.

Alderman Johnson

I think the new Board needs to see what we discussed too so they could see that we all can merge all our thoughts and ideas together. Thank you. What happens if we feel we are not doing well can we put that also or does it have to be ...

Katherine Hersh

I would like to start off with the positive.

Alderman Johnson

Unfortunately none of mine are positive. Mine are all negative.

Alderman McCarthy

I wanted to start out with the positive, but I have to tell you I am having a tough time with it myself.

Alderman Johnson

I haven't found anything positive yet.

Chairman Rootovich

I guess the question is a two-fold question. You are asking what we do well with respect to what your division is doing Kathy or are you looking at what the Board of Aldermen does as a

separate entity or a combination of both?

Katherine Hersh

I am actually looking for what the city overall does. It is not my division and it is not just the committee, but how well do we do on the issues that the city faces.

If you are going along and somebody says something and you think of another one that you wanted to mention and forgot about just write up another post it. Alderman Rootovich would you like to start?

Chairman Rootovich

One of the things I think we did well was the downtown revitalization.

Alderman Vitale

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Land use – maybe just in regards to the Conservation Commission; we are continuing to purchase open space, and attempting to protect our wetland areas.

Alderman McCarthy

We plan the subdivision of large tracks of empty land reasonably well.

Alderman LaRose

As far as land use goes I think they are being compromised. The reason I say that is I am looking at some of the things that are coming in front of Zoning and I don't know if this is under the category of land use, but you have small houses that all of a sudden are being converted into 3 apartments when there are only 2. To me that is also a land use ...

Katherine Hersh

Well it doesn't sound like we are doing that well.

Alderman LaRose

Almost everything on here depends on how the economy is going and how developers want things to happen. For instance the old B.B. Rubber – that is a beautiful tract of land. At one time there was talk of elderly housing there. Nothing is happening, but there is a nice piece of land that to me could be converted into affordable housing.

Katherine Hersh

Let's go back to the question – what are we doing well in the city?

Alderman LaRose

I don't think we are doing that well.

Alderman Johnson

I talked about Al Manoian did a great job in showing Nashua's beauty of the downtown and he should be commended for what he did.

Alderman Shaw

Vision for some areas like the riverfront meaning Nashua riverfront.

Alderman MacLaughlin

I put redevelopment because I think the city possesses the awareness that at this time without any more open space to build on it is necessary to revitalize the space that is already built.

Katherine Hersh

You think that we are doing that well?

Alderman MacLaughlin

I believe that the theme of redevelopment and revitalization is something that all the city departments and administration seem to be very in tune with.

Mike Lowe

Commercial redevelopment.

Chairman Rootovich

I put down that we developed a good master plan and a downtown master plan.

Alderman Vitale

I am not really sure – probably improving and implementing the GIS system. It is now starting to be used for other departments.

Alderman McCarthy

We're willing to support individual plans, which promise significant public benefit.

Alderman Shaw

When you say individual plans do you mean a single site plan?

Alderman McCarthy

Yes, particular plans that come along that people will latch onto and say hey that is a great idea and we will go and pursue.

Alderman Shaw

I have thorough review process for new land uses, i.e, new subdivisions, new retail, etc. It seems to me that we do a very thorough review process.

Alderman MacLaughlin

This is probably not the right terminology, but the site signs for the landmarks for commuters who come to Nashua or those who already live here – they can see on the poles the popular destination points. I think that is a phenomenal thing because we do have a lot of transit population, and this helps them get around with a greater ease. I think it draws them to downtown.

Mike Lowe

Bus transportation.

Chairman Rootovich

Mine is a combination between city staff and the Board of Aldermen – just individuals who are willing and passionate to implement the positive changes.

Alderman Vitale

That we are in the process of working to re-write and make changes where needed to our land use codes.

Katherine Hersh

So you think that is something that we are doing well?

Alderman Vitale

I think it is a good thing that we are doing it. Let's hope that it continues.

Alderman McCarthy

We have good process for public notification of development regulation.

Alderman Shaw

The only other one I have was very similar to I think Alderman Rootovich's earlier – developing master plans for downtown; East Hollis Street, etc.

Alderman MacLaughlin

I summed it up – there are a lot of great things that Nashua is doing to benefit the community and the surrounding communities, but one of the most popular and acknowledged at the Inauguration by our new Chairman is the Holiday Stroll and the whole spirit behind the city cooperating with the private sector to draw people into downtown with a direct economic boost as a result.

Katherine Hersh

Public/private partnership ... tape inaudible ...

Chairman Rootovich

Community involvement and business participation. Every time we have events they are more than willing to participate and contribute financially and put in whatever time and effort that is needed, which is great to have in our community.

Alderman Vitale

Looking to bring railroad service back into Nashua.

Katherine Hersh

That is something that we are doing well because we are pursuing that. Is everybody all set? Now what I would really like you to do is to come to the board and move them around so that we have things that are similar together. Basically what you usually end up with is 3 or 4 categories let's say and then it helps you to better define that we are doing categories as well.

Can you tell me what this long category represents?

Alderman Shaw

It is mostly development and downtown focused, but it is especially the one that I think gets to some of the public/private partnerships.

Katherine Hersh

If you had to title this group right here – I am assuming this is one group and this is a different group.

Chairman Rootovich

Yes.

Katherine Hersh

If you had to title this group what would you call it?

Alderman Johnson

Redevelopment of downtown?

Alderman McCarthy

I would just call it development partnerships.

Katherine Hersh

What about this one over here?

Alderman Shaw

That is like parks and land use.

Chairman Rootovich

Parks and open space.

Katherine Hersh

The next one is.

Alderman Shaw

Transportation.

Katherine Hersh

What about this one over here?

Alderman Shaw

Planning Process.

Chairman Rootovich

The one that says technology we should call technology.

Katherine Hersh

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This one master plan and land use ordinances?

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Chairman Rootovich

Yes.

Alderman McCarthy

This is an interesting result so far.

Katherine Hersh

It is an interesting result. I think what we need to do is go to the second question and then compare with what topics we come up with and see if we don't come out with different topics.

What should we be doing – planning, economic development, downtown, technology – what should we be doing to assure our viability 25 years from now?

Mike Lowe

Small residential development regulations.

Alderman MacLaughlin

I know it was mentioned in the previous question, but it applies equally here and that is the development of commuter rail and making sure that we don't lose track of how that can benefit us.

Alderman Shaw

One of the ones I had is investing in “proven technology” to petition the city for having 2004 technology in 2004 and 2029 technology in 2029. The reason I put “proven technology” is I don’t want to advocate that we go get the latest, greatest, that should solve all problems – we should make sure whatever we are investing in has some track record, and isn’t just going to be gone in two years.

Alderman Johnson

To encourage industry and other corporations to come to Nashua for high paying jobs.

Alderman LaRose

I had written invested technology, but that is a goner.

Katherine Hersh

Actually I think B... tape inaudible ... This one has to do with money and investing in technology – that one has to do with ...

Alderman McCarthy

We need land use patterns, which support a sustainable economic model for the community.

Chairman Rootovich

Comprehensive citywide planning retreat where every division communicates their goals and objectives.

Alderman Vitale

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Address lack of parking for inner-city developments especially residential apartments and possibly too much parking for businesses.

Mike Lowe

East/West access to ... ... tape inaudible ...

Alderman MacLaughlin

I went off on a little tangent here, but I believe ultimately the development of a performance art center at the level of what we see up the road in Manchester would be a great boost to this city.

Alderman Shaw

I will go with a similar one – continue to support more public/private partnerships similar to the Conway Ice Arena.

Alderman Johnson

Try to keep as much open space that is left in Nashua so we don't get congested.

Alderman LaRose

Invest in our infrastructure.

Alderman McCarthy

We need to be able to fund a public and public/private partnerships.

Chairman Rootovich

Adopt a viable new land use ordinance.

Alderman Vitale

Push to continue to develop our trail system.

Mike Lowe

A re-design of D.W. Highway access to Spit Brook Road.

Alderman MacLaughlin

Traffic flow enhancements – not necessarily rotaries, but simply looking at how the traffic is going – we know where the problems are – instead of simply watching the problems grow worse. Try some innovative things at any level to try to address them now.

Alderman Shaw

Develop master plans for all parts of the city by ... tape flipped ...

Alderman Johnson

Increase ridership on the bus lines.

Alderman LaRose

Budget forecasting.

Alderman McCarthy

We need a transportation system; roads, bus, train, etc., which meets the demands of the community.

Chairman Rootovich

Continued input from citizens and business owners through yearly charettes.

Alderman Vitale

Long-range budget planning and updating the public on the needs of the city budget wise.

Mike Lowe

Broad Street Parkway ...tape inaudible ... speaker away from microphone.

Alderman MacLaughlin

I have here working with Massachusetts to try to build a mall exit on Route 3 South.

Alderman McCarthy

You would be the Ward 8 Alderman then.

Alderman Shaw

Adopt land use codes to consider what the city might look like in 2029.

Alderman Johnson

Try to keep Nashua a safe place to live.

Alderman LaRose

Maintenance program for our parks, roads, and buildings.

Alderman McCarthy

We need to continually refine and evolve our master plan.

Chairman Rootovich

Mine is kind of repetitive – more government/private partnerships.

Alderman Vitale

Mine is probably repetitive also – it is more infrastructure and continued development of sidewalks.

Alderman Shaw

How about power lines underground?

Alderman Shaw

Address City Hall and other office space needs.

Alderman McCarthy

We need land use performance criteria, which can sustain a challenge.

Chairman Rootovich

Determining long-range city services.

Alderman McCarthy

We need all boards and commissions to understand the master plan and implement it. We need to treat information as an essential resource in structure processes to take advantage of that resource.

Alderman Johnson

In 25 years maybe we will know where to put the industrial/commercial versus putting them in residential communities.

Alderman Vitale

Don't pass ordinances or codes unless we have the manpower to implement them.

Katherine Hersh

I would say your work is really cut out for you to organize these into categories.

Do you want to tell me what the categories are?

Alderman Shaw

We had one for transportation. We have one that is city hall office space that stands alone.

Chairman Rootovich

Long-term space needs.

Katherine Hersh

Municipal space needs.

Alderman Shaw

Then we have public/private partnerships, quality of life, technology, that we get input from citizens and business owners through yearly charettes, comprehensive citywide planning retreat to communicate goals and objectives for each division so that is citywide planning?

Katherine Hersh

Can I ask a question about this? It sounded to me like the second and third ones had to do with process for the Board of Aldermen or the city officials reaching – doing strategic planning and then the other one sounded more like master planning for residents. Did you want to put them all together? There is just the two of them – okay. What again?

Alderman Shaw

Long-range planning. It is really long-range planning. The next one is really land use. The master plan I think is what we are calling the other one.

Katherine Hersh

Do you have any observations that you want to make about this?

Alderman Shaw

It is actually surprising to me how many transportation items we have up there.

Alderman McCarthy

There is actually no category up there called economic development.

Katherine Hersh

Why is it that you think that is – is it that there is no economic development focus in this exercise or is it that you called them all other things?

Chairman Rootovich

I think it is my perspective that if you do a lot of those things economic development will come. If you Don't do any of those things it won't.

Alderman MacLaughlin

I also think it just simply might be a harder issue to get our hands around. To me it seems a little more nebulous and I am sure there are plenty of things that are very straightforward and obvious to do in the process, but to me it is something that I am not sure I know what to offer up that we should try to do.

Katherine Hersh

I think actually everything that you said in here will result in – all of these things lead to it.

Alderman Johnson

We also have, and I put this down for the negative stuff here if we get back to what we are not doing well, where is the Industrial Authority Committee – they only met a couple of times and they were supposed to meet as a committee, come up with ideas on what we are going to try to do to bring industry and companies back to Nashua versus all of this retail and restaurants. In the long run all of this is great, but if we can't afford to live in Nashua because we don't have good high paying jobs other than retail and restaurant. Let's be honest you can't live on \$7-\$8 an hour and own a million dollar home.

Katherine Hersh

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Are you saying that one of the things that we need to renege on is develop a strategic plan?

Alderman Johnson

Well we have a committee – we supposedly have that committee that we all voted, well I didn't vote it, but everybody else voted to put the committee into place – where are they, why aren't they meeting? I have asked that several times – many times. I think that is an important piece.

Katherine Hersh

Hold that thought because we are going to go back onto that. Are there any other observations you want to make about this?

Alderman MacLaughlin

One thing that I noticed as I look across the tops is there is a balance forming up between the needs of business and the need to develop and the need to come to grips with the fact that the environment is a very big piece of that.

Katherine Hersh

From this part forward I think maybe what we want to do is talk about what is it – what are the things that we can do to continue to do the things that we are doing well and to take all of these and implement those things that we think that we should be doing if we are going to be viable in 25 years. What are the things that we need to do in order to get there? We should think about what are the things that we want to do short term and what should we be doing right now. What should we absolutely be doing right now that we really can't wait for?

Alderman Johnson

I want to talk about downtown. I think that is an important part because we are at buildout. Now we are going to come back downtown and look at where we are going to be. One of my pet peeves of course is where the Goodales Bike Shop is going to go and the expense of condos. This is literally on the other side of the railroad tracks and we have the Laten House, which now we have the low-income people living across from one side to the other. I think that is what we really need to focus on is what are we going to do once the condos come in, and if the owner decided to tear down what he has and make the luxury apartments. Where are we going to put the lower income people who live downtown? Let's face it all the other apartments above the stores are now going to be costing more money because now you have changed the makeup of the neighborhood. I think that is a very important piece that we are going to have to look at in the next 3-5 years – at these condos that are going to be developed downtown.

Katherine Hersh

What do you see as something that we can do right now to address that?

Alderman Johnson

I think we need to know exactly what the landlords are going to be doing with their apartments because as we see – we do see throughout the city apartments are opening up. We are losing people in the city. There are more for rent signs going up on the multi-family and even in the

apartment complexes. We have to decide what are we going to do with the balance of downtown – who is going to be living in downtown. Are we going to be putting people on the street and then how do we adjust when people don't have affordable housing? It goes back to the affordable housing crisis I guess.

### Alderman McCarthy

That brings up a really interesting question not just a need question, but a long-term question, and that is we talk about those things and we talk about viability – I am not convinced we know yet what viability is. We need to understand the basic economics behind what our land use and what that translates into in terms of a local economy. If we have housing that is plentiful, but completely inappropriate to any of the job classes that are here it does us no good. Likewise if we have jobs that are here that are inappropriate to any of the people who are available in the workforce it does us no good.

### Katherine Hersh

What is interesting probably we should have put a post it up here on 25 years from now – what would make our community desirable, and affordable housing should be there.

### Mike Lowe

If we're going to grow as a city we have to build up. If we are going to control the build out we are going to have to build up. Right now the ordinances say that we can't build a building higher than 120 feet. Do we want to find a place in the city where we can build higher than that? Things like that – access and location are the most important things for the viability of the city. Right now we don't have great access to downtown. We have no major hotels downtown. We have no large apartment buildings downtown. That is what is going to in the future, 25 years from now, make downtown viable.

### Alderman McCarthy

I will go back to my original definition of viability. I have no idea whether or not there is anyone who wants to stay in a hotel in downtown Nashua because I don't understand the relationship between the land uses and the basic economy that drives the place. That is actually the point of one of the post its I put up there is I think we need to understand that economic model and then rather than trying to force a land use model that may not represent a condition that can ever exist we need to understand how to make a track of what the economy does and I am not sure going up is necessarily the answer. We have seen dramatic redevelopment. In the 20 years I have been here there is not a single structure south of at least Best Buy that was there when I moved in, and that road was built out 20 years ago. There is nothing that is particularly bigger with the exception of Bernie & Phyl's than the structures that were there previously, but the economic intensity of the area is significant because the uses were replaced with uses that may

not take up any more space but do generate a significantly larger cash flow. I think you have to understand that model and understand all of that.

While I am on that soapbox, a question that came up that I have talked to a number of people about – when we say we would like to get industrial jobs back I think most of us recognize that smokestack manufacturing is never coming back to Nashua at this point – most of it is offshore. What you need are businesses that are capitalized locally so that when money changes hands in those businesses a good portion of it stays in the area. Other than the real estate tax perspective it doesn't do much for Nashua's economic model for us to separate out of state people from their money and divert it off to somewhere else and pay employees who can't afford to live in Nashua and live somewhere else and commute an hour to get here – we are just serving as the depot and not actually participating in the transaction when we do it that way. When we look at things we need to look at other forms of "industry" where what is here is the capitalization of the business – the intellectual property, the owners, the driving force behind it so that portions of the commerce that take place stay in the local economy longer than the otherwise would. I think there is a real need there to do some solid long-term financial planning to understand that and then to understand what that means in terms of some of the public/private partnerships we ought to be developing in terms of redevelopment to try to get a good solid business model around how our economy works in the city.

### Alderman Johnson

I think there are a couple of issues. Being that I have been in Nashua about 25 years – I don't plan to be here 25 years later when I am 75 I plan to be under the palm trees hopefully in warm weather in my retirement days – I would like to leave a nice city for my children; my three kids. One thing I hear from the young folks in the town is there is nothing for kids to do. Maybe that is what we should be looking at – what do we have for our teenagers in the city – a place for them to go versus hanging out on the streets and going to the mall where the gangs are – that is not the place that I think children should be hanging out – the Pheasant Lane Mall. It is not the safest of places and I have heard that from merchants.

The other issue is how far and how big do you want to build downtown? Do you want to take downtown to be a metropolitan city built like New York City or are you going to keep it as a nice New England city? I like the quaintness of downtown. Life is really the malls – that is where life really is around. I like Nashua. I came to Nashua because it was a small, quaint city. I was sick and tired of the big life because I am from New York. You can build Nashua downtown and you can have skyscrapers here. The one thing I found that Nashua didn't do with our schools is we built out instead of up, which would have given us more land and we would have had more school for the area because you went out. I think there are a lot of issues. Do you want to go up and take your air rights or do you want to leave Nashua – I think the beauty of downtown is the way the downtown is. You don't have the big, large buildings, and it is nice. It is a nice New England town. We can go back to a rat race. We can build Nashua into the biggest rat race around and then you take the beauty of what Nashua stands for. We are not in New York City. You could put so many things in this area, but you have to see what attracts people to Nashua.

Is it the performing arts? Is it the sports? Then you have to start looking at if you have performing art centers very close to each other is one going to make it and one not make it? Manchester is bigger and Nashua is smaller, but we are not a big city like New York. New York you can have 20 arenas in there and there won't be enough because you have so many people and you can fill them.

You really have to pinpoint what exactly do we want to see Nashua become in 25 years.

Katherine Hersh

Let's do it a little different way.

Alderman Shaw

I think we got a little off target – what should we be doing now – I guess some of what I am wondering is there is certainly a need to look at anything we do right now has to be very cost effective or essentially very little in the way of cost just considering the financial situation we have going on. I certainly think we have a lot of items up there about planning that are certainly items that we can look to bring people together and be talking about some of this vision and actually working the strategy. That is the kind of thing I think that we can be funding that is not going to really be very costly at all. Also kind of along the same line I am wondering if we can also look towards other sources as far as other cities as far as models that they have had for their economic development successes, what ways they got there – we certainly can look north to Manchester to see the kind of things going on there or we can look all around. It is a matter of – there must be some good sources to point us at some of the models of some of the key things that we might want to consider. That I think are short-term things that can maybe get us starting to address some of these items.

Katherine Hersh

Maybe it would be easier if we just took these different topics – this is what we say is important for us to be doing so that we are viable for the next 25 years. What I am trying to get you all to is the action items. Some of those actions items as you say may not be feasible to do this year or next year, but they may be things that you want to put on your list for out 5 years or whatever.

Alderman LaRose

–  
It seems to me that one of the major things is budget forecasting. That is not costly. It is something that should be in the process at all times that we should be looking not just this next budget, but having a forecast for years ahead.

Katherine Hersh

I am going to put it down even though it is not really this committee, but I will put down

forecasting since it relates to everything else that we are trying to do so for example even if we are trying to do a master plan we want to forecast those budget items for the capital improvement plan and so forth. Why don't we take this – it is short and I think it is pretty concise. ... tape inaudible ... Are there any action items to address of the things that we put up on there?

Alderman LaRose

Technology – we need to invest in technology, but people have to understand that it is costly and that it is always changing – it is like buying a piece of equipment for public works or purchasing automobiles – periodically they are going to have to be replaced. It is not an asset that will have a life of 50 years and then you remodel it and it goes on for another 50 years. People have to understand that technology is an expensive thing, but it is something that you have to do. You can't live in the past and say well we used to do it this way and that way.

Katherine Hersh

Do you feel that the city has a technology plan that we are working on?

Alderman LaRose

No.

Katherine Hersh

Is that something that you think would be important?

Alderman Shaw

Yes.

Alderman LaRose

I think it is important, but I don't think it will be achieved. If we are going to operate like the State of New Hampshire believe me – one of the problems with technology maybe not so much in the City of Nashua, but at the State level everybody is concerned about their little area, and when we talk about being able to talk with this department and that department when the time comes to implement it everybody becomes territorial for their department. That is unfortunate.

Alderman McCarthy

That is actually a good – I think that is a good short-term item that we need to break down those barriers so that we are working towards the common goal and not towards protecting the status quo.

Chairman Rootovich

We did something like this 10 years ago. We went to the Hunt Building and we spent 3 days, we hired a facilitator – I remember it was the same exercise. There are 3 of us left on this Board that participated in that event – three of us – there isn't one division director or one department head in the city remaining other than Sue Jeffrey – none in any department, and we have been through three administrations. Along that way at least in my experience with division directors, each one of them had either a different vision or a different plan. If we are going to do this – we talk about an action plan – there should be some action plan that is enforceable whether that be through some sort of resolution document or something else because – again I am very positive, I am very excited with doing this, but if we are going to do this high intensity exercise there needs to be an action plan that we are going to follow through on, but it needs to involve everybody. For us to sit here and talk about technology and not have the technology department on the same page as we are it means nothing. I think it has to be more comprehensive than just this group. We can lead the way, but I do believe that again it needs to encompass the Board of Alderman, the Mayor, the Division Directors, the Department heads – that whatever we implement does get implemented. We need to do it. I agree and I want to do it. I keep thinking about that exercise we went through 10 years ago. I thought that was a great exercise. I thought the ideas that came out of there were absolutely brilliant. We left there all excited at least I left there energized, and as time went on 2 years, 3 year, 4 years, 5 years and the funny thing is after Alderman McCarthy had called me and spoke with me this Sunday I actually pulled out that file. I actually pulled that out. It is funny that a lot of the things you see here are the same things we talked about. Again I don't want to go around in circles because I hope that whatever plan we implement actually gets implemented in the right facet whatever document that takes we need to do that.

Alderman McCarthy

I guess I completely agree with you about that exercise. I have thought a lot about why we didn't make further progress on that and one of the things is we didn't keep the process up, which is one of the things I intend to re-engage and get us on the track to do that. The second thing is I think you are right we need to memorialize the goals as goals at the policy level by this Board. We then need to involve the departments in terms of development of action plans to implement them, and the last thing is we need to integrate that with our planning in such a way that that is the thing that we hold the departments accountable for. The goal we should make no mistake about that. As the policy setting board we get to set the goals and objectives for the city and we get to pay for those goals that we think are important and not pay for the ones that we think are not. That is a blunt way to put it. I think there needs to be much more of a teamwork effort than that.

Chairman Rootovich

I agree.

Alderman McCarthy

That is the bottom line, and at some point those goals and objectives have to be acted upon by the 16 people who routinely sit around this horseshoe and we have to persevere in doing that if we are ever to make progress. I go back again to this year's budget – there are a pile of things there that can help us with responding to not just our operating costs, but our planning models and how we are going to respond to this problem. We owe it to ourselves and our constituents to keep up on this this time, and to make sure that it gets in place.

Alderman Shaw

I think to follow up on Alderman Rootovich and Alderman McCarthy's point – I think the plan also needs to have a consistency or basically it has to be across citywide. We can't afford to adopt a plan that implements great solutions for all the different departments and divisions and then only find out that we could have done something that was right across. Then I think something that Alderman McCarthy alluded to in his opening comments as far as a short-term technology is that we really can look at using e-mail for our communication both within this building and even to many of the Aldermen and others that receive the documents and paper so that we can – I think we actually have the opportunity to significantly reduce our cost of paper, our cost of the use of copy machines, and take advantage of that. I don't think we necessarily need to force an implementation, but quite likely most of the paper that we do send around never actually gets read so that is an area that we can certainly I think make things more efficient and save some money right up front.

Katherine Hersh

If you don't mind I would like to change this first one to say ... tape inaudible ... a particular plan that... would you mind if I responded to your comment? Being one of the few people that were there back in 1994 and having gone through that session -- ... tape inaudible ... I found an audiotape that I was looking for something and I found an audiotape that happened to be the meeting in 1996 when we met with Jody who was the facilitator back then and originally again for the Board – it was a meeting that we had in the Aldermanic Chamber that discussed getting that strategic planning started again and meetings where everybody would be on board with this meaning the Mayor, the Division Directors – everybody so that we could move forward. At that time there was no interest even on the Board in city hall. I actually gave you the tape. I think that if the Board is interested in that if the Board will lead it that will be helpful to move the city forward. I think a lot of what we want to see – I do see the votes to pass it and the types of information that you request from divisions when they come in to present – the format of that information – the following year for example if you have goals and objectives for a particular area and those are articulated and you expected those to be implemented in the following year or 6 months from then you can have people come in and report for example I have a grant writer and I have a revolving loan officer and even ask when I first got this position funded – the Board of Aldermen could decide whether or not they wanted to continue to fund this. ... tape

inaudible ...

Is there anything else that you want to talk about with technology? What do you want to do about this? I am still trying to get like actions that you want to do. Is it a priority? How do you want to handle technology?

Chairman Rootovich

I would like to hear what their long-term goals are. First of all do their goals involve all city departments or are they inclusive only to the concerns of City Hall.

Katherine Hersh

Does anybody want another subject?

Chairman Rootovich

What about the planning issue with all the division directors?

Katherine Hersh

Which one this one – long-range planning. Okay. I'm looking for action items. How would you get to the goal? How do you accomplish the goals on each?

Chairman Rootovich

Every Division Director submits 10 year plan – 10-year goals and objectives and shares that with the other divisions and how this policy making board is going to encumber some sort of plan to get the majority of that done at a reasonable cost.

Alderman Shaw

Would you want to prescribe how that is done or leave it up to the Division Director's prerogative? What I am trying to get at is do we try to encourage the division as their own conduct a brainstorming session?

Chairman Rootovich

We have no authority to demand that.

Alderman Shaw

Right.

Chairman Rootovich

I guess we would have to take that lead with the Mayor.

Alderman McCarthy

I guess I have two schools of thought on that. We need to hear from the Division Directors what their goals and objectives are, but in larger sense as part of our annual review we need to either express our goals and objectives for the services or we need to accept the ones that are presented to us by the Division Director. Basically those goals should be set by the consensus of this Board. It is interesting to me when a Division Director comes in and says I want to renovate all of the parks in the next two years for example – it is a noble goal, it may not be one that I as a member of the Board of Aldermen share and am willing to fund. I think that is a source of input to policy because the Division Directors have a perspective that is not the same as ours and there is information that comes forward that we wouldn't have otherwise, but in some sense that is only a piece of the goal setting exercise, which basically has to be done – essentially whether we want to say it that way or not through the budget process.

On an annual basis we review the goals, objectives, and costs of the departments and tell them to go forward for the next year. I think one of the things that we are going to come out with is making that process different in the way we interact with the departments. You have sat through this for 10 years also and we throw nickels around like they are manhole covers and millions of dollars go out the back door without so much as discussion because that is just the way the process works. We need to elevate that from a policy perspective to look at what are the programs, what are the services we deliver, what is the cost of delivering the unit of service, do we want to deliver that service, and how can we deliver that service in a more economic manner over time?

Chairman Rootovich

The other part of this Brian is Carol is doing this exercise now. She is going to provide the Board a spreadsheet, but if there have been capital improvement requests that have been in the book for one year and the next year you don't see them at all – they were an absolute priority and the following year you don't see them at all.

Alderman McCarthy

I have sat on Capital Improvements for 10 years.

Chairman Rootovich

I see more and more you shake your head – I guess as a policy making board we need to look

at not just the year to year, but really take a long-range look at what each division plans on doing with their division. I really think we don't do enough of that. I don't think we need to look at it on a year to year basis I think we need to look at it as a 10 year plan and what the cost is going to be associated with it.

### Alderman McCarthy

Sometimes those capital improvements are also part of an underlying policy discussion that you didn't have particularly some of the things around solid waste and waste water are areas where we headed in a direction on solid waste that we decided not to go in because when you step back and look at the whole problem that solution didn't make sense. You have to pull the capital improvements plan back a little bit and look at it as an implementation of the goals and objectives rather than a stand-alone wish list of things we would like to build.

### Katherine Hersh

Can I say as a Division Director that I would welcome this? This would be so great for me to be able to really articulate to you the things I am trying to accomplish. Sometimes I feel like I come into the Board to get something – a contract approved or something, and it just seems like for me it is one piece in this big long thing that I am trying to accomplish, but when I come to the Finance Committee it is the contract that -- the Finance Committee understandably the way the process is conflicting when you come back. For me I would love to tell you the things that I would like to accomplish but conversely I would really like to know what you want me to try to accomplish. More than anything I appreciate this because I want to hear what you think about what I should accomplish.

### Alderman Johnson

I just want to talk about the 10 year. I think 10 years is good looking out, but I think I would like to see a 5 year and 10 year so I can see where you want to be in 5 years because 5 years sometimes is more durable than 10 years out because in 10 years personnel can change, directors can change, and then every year you have to go back or every 6 months as you start going through your goals and objectives and as you start meeting them. Then you have to go back and re-write them and what goes now to the top of because what you might have 10 years out might become priority at the front. I think sometimes we break it down 5 years, look at 5, and then you can go and look at 10. You have to keep updating your goals and objectives. This way everything becomes current.

### Alderman Vitale

Going back to what Alderman McCarthy and Alderman Rootovich said about the long-range planning and the Board of Aldermen maybe coming up with the goal for that long-range planning including the division heads, one reason I think that would be important for the goals to be in place is our division heads can come and go and if there is no goals in place every time you get

a new division head in if they are the one initiating what the goal is you will always be at flux and will always see those changes of what are the top priority. If your division head comes in and knows what the goal is they maybe can update that list, but there should be no major changes to the list and, therefore, we can keep moving forward as a city.

Katherine Hersh

I am not sure how I can phrase this question.

Chairman Rootovich

What she is saying I think is – she makes a good point. I think each division director that has come in this city, whatever division, really has their own goals and objectives. They have their own vision for whatever reason and the vision they have and their goals should be made by the policy making board. They come in and see that source document and say I am taking this position in this division and these are the goals and objectives of where the city wants to go and that is what they are asked to follow not their own.

Alderman McCarthy

On that same line, and to go back to Alderman Johnson's point about the 5 and 10-year plans, I actually think that what we need to have is basically a continuous document that says this is what happens over the next ten years and at periodic intervals we update that. You should be able to see 3 years, 5 years, and 10 years out. I think as Alderman Rootovich just said no matter where those goals come from they need to be agreed to and memorialized by this Board so that they are understood. They basically form the contract between the city and the division directors as to what we expect from them. As division directors come and go they may ask to change that contract and that is good – when they come in and say I think we could be doing it differently. We have seen in recent years in particularly in Public Works where there were ways we had established of doing things where the division came back and said there is really a better way to do that and when we have seen them we have agreed to that. I think that basically again that annual process of reviewing the goals and objectives and re-approving that 10 year plan and then understanding what it costs to pay for the next year's worth of the plan is the way we ought to be moving on our budgeting process.

Chairman Rootovich

One final comment. I think it is a lot easier to sell the public when the public sees a plan. If they know what that cost is going to be down the road it is a lot easier for them to sell it and buy it.

Alderman Shaw

I would like to see us establish what the frequency is that we will revisit the long-range planning. Is it going to be an annual basis, is it going to be every two years to coincide with the new

terms? Whatever, but establish a process for the update because I think it might help us latch on and not fall prey to the problem of we are having success starting off, but then we don't know how to come back and keep the process going.

### Katherine Hersh

That is a process that actually Roger Houston – he is the reason I got a call out – it is a two-year process because it is a two-year term. Part of that process is a citizen survey so it helps the Board of Aldermen to get the information from the citizens to understand what the citizens' vision is for the future of their city and then the Board of Aldermen at the very beginning of the term does their short term and long term goals and there is actually a whole book of the planning process and everything else that is articulated in that and is pretty related to what Nashua could do and is similar to what Alderman McCarthy and I were thinking about originally when we put that strategic planning legislation in place back in 1996.

### Alderman Shaw

The other thing I wanted to suggest is that we consider who is going to participate in this process. What you just said there is one part of that perhaps where there is citizenry input, but at some point it is a matter of how broadly do we involve different groups or is there a core group of whatever, but I think we need to work also to define who is part of the process.

### Alderman MacLaughlin

I am noting as you noted that division directors might actually benefit from something like this. You yourself have acknowledged that you would get a lot out of this because then at the Board level I think the Aldermen will also benefit because they won't vote in an erratic fashion if they understand the goals and have bought into them. It will take several major themes; it will take the teamwork as our committee Chairman has noted, it will take leadership as our Board President has called for, and it will take buy in from the individual members. I think the level of friction that some of us have witnessed over the last two years especially might begin to reduce because there would be a greater understanding and less need to hype up the conversation beyond the fact that we are trying to work toward a common purpose here for the benefit of as many people as possible.

### Mike Lowe

Just a thought – I think we have to think of having a meeting of all of the boards – an annual meeting of the Zoning Board, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, the police and fire commissioners – all the boards because we all see things slightly different on each board and we all see things that need to be done and need to be fixed and we never do anything about it.

### Chairman Rootovich

It would be a good idea for negotiating contracts too wouldn't it?

Mike Lowe

Well that might be, but ... tape flipped ...

Alderman Johnson

Would be good because our goals and objectives are different than the fire commissioners and the board of education. The Board of Education always had their action items when I was on the board so we always knew what we were doing and then when we were done with it we put them as completed action items. The board – if you ask what the fire chief's and the fire commissioner's are they could have two different goals and objectives together. What you want to do is make sure it is all coordinated. Still it would be interesting to see what the boards think and what each department head thinks and to see where they are also because I don't think that at times they are in sync either.

Katherine Hersh

As the Board of Aldermen your mission and vision should be up here and then all the other boards and commissions should all have mission visions, goals and objectives that are all consistent with yours. Just like the state legislation and then you have local legislation that has got to be consistent with the state legislation but can be more detailed or can be more stringent or whatever, but all of theirs should be consistent with yours. If they don't know yours or you haven't clearly articulated yours then you can't ask them to be consistent with you. Where you have to be at is up here – to figure out what you want, where you are going in the short and long term, which is that whole strategic planning process that Jody is working on.

Alderman Johnson

I am glad you brought that point up because again you can see how fragmented we were for the last two years because nobody knew where we were going on the Board in a lot of areas. The Board of Public Works had one agenda and we couldn't figure out what their agenda was half the time. When you read the minutes of some of the meetings things that should have come before us just never did. That is where I think we need to let the other boards and commissions know where their responsibility is and what role they play and where we play our role – we are up here and unfortunately they are down there, but we basically have the final say. I think that would be very good in the long range planning that the other boards and commissions – we have to work together as a team and that we all know what positions – how we work.

Alderman McCarthy

That was actually one of the things that came out of our last session with Jody and you are

absolutely right. There is essentially two policy-making boards in the city; there is this one for city affairs and there is the Board of Education for education. There is a policy making responsibility to the Planning Board in the adoption of the master plan, but beyond that the decisions of those boards should be subservient to the policy that is set by this Board. Most of the boards; the Fire Commission, the Police Commission, the Board of Public Works are there to assist in the administration of that department and not to make policy. No one knows more than me some of the policy problems we have had in between those boards over the last few years.

Katherine Hersh

That has been a really important discussion.

Chairman Rootovich

It is the foundation.

Katherine Hersh

It is the whole foundation. It leads to everything else that you want to do. Do you want to continue?

Chairman Rootovich

What is the pleasure of the committee? Another half hour?

Transportation --

Katherine Hersh

What we are trying to do is come up with action items to make sure from the transportation perspective that we are a viable community 25 years from now. These are the things that we said we do well- we have bus transportation and the fact that we are pursuing commuter rail. Then these are all the things that we think that we still need to do from a transportation standpoint.

Alderman LaRose

Infrastructure – if you recall when we did the charette for the southwest quadrant when we broke up into different groups – well the group that I was in I started to talk about roadways – right away everybody shut you off because they do not want to hear about roadways, but the fact is if we planned our roadways before we planned everything else everything else would fall into place. People would know where things are going to be and there wouldn't be that I don't want it in my backyard syndrome. I think planning our infrastructure is certainly one of our important

elements. We have actually lost one of the important roadways that we wanted to build in the mid '80s, early '90s was the southwest bypass. When I was on the board we were starting to put money away to do the environmental and layout a plan, and the idea was that we were going to lay the whole thing out from Spit Brook Road down to the Merrimack town line and then we were going to present it to the State and say here is the plan, here is the environmental studies, and then it got caught up into politics because somebody is running for U.S. Congress and they are making promises here and there, and it dies.

Alderman McCarthy

It is worse than that because we also in the process after we devoted the corridor to where it was going to be did not build surface roads across the corridor for connections that should be there that are not in anticipation of having the parkway, which never happened.

Alderman LaRose

People say you guys don't plan, you don't plan – you try to plan and there is people throw things in your way. We get developers to donate corridors.

Katherine Hersh

There are dedications of property out there.

Alderman LaRose

Unfortunately the things got into a political process and then it got killed so you are at a point where now you can't build it – well you can build it if you want to build another big dig like they did in Boston. That is the sad part.

Katherine Hersh

I will got to Alderman Johnson, but I want to hold the thought that there is another issue that you are talking about and that is how do we get better commitment and implementation of stuff that is planned because you are mentioning something that I can mention 5 more roads that fall into that category.

Alderman Johnson

As a matter of fact I had on here not doing well as far as in the city we have all of these developments that we build in the city and we never looked at our old infrastructure – if we are going to be able to handle the amount of cars that are going through like Main Dunstable Road, West Hollis Street is just holding its own right now, but we are having two more developments coming in. I threatened to put a traffic light on West Hollis Street now because you can't get in

and out of developments. We allow development but we don't allow for our infrastructure to grow. The roads are all broken up because now we have heavy trucks going on roads that were never built for this. I think that goes to part of the planning and the infrastructure because we are not doing a very good job of keeping up with what we have now and we need to look at different avenues of routing traffic around the city and there are not too many places you can go.

Chairman Rootovich

I guess Mrs. Hersh's question is action plan.

Alderman Johnson

I am going to elaborate on this now – up there we have the need for the bus, which I am sitting on this transit authority committee, which I think they would like to throw me off already. I have said this before you have to give a reason why to put somebody on the bus, and we talked about that with the seniors. If you are in the mentality that you get in your car and start your car and that is how you get around the city that is exactly how you will get around the city. You have to give people a reason why. Part of the problems – I get calls from Scott all the time to get the shelters – if you don't have shelters and people are out in the elements they will not stand at a bus stop. If the bus stops are not shoveled and cleaned people will not stand out at the bus stop because you are standing in the middle of the road now. If you want to get your elderly and your handicapped people to go on the bus if your bus stops are not cleaned you can't get them to go on the bus. You have issues with trying to get ridership and you really have to think in 25 years from now what is traffic going to be like in the city and how do we promote ridership on the bus? How do we expand it? What are we going to do to expand the bus system and if that is now going to become a way of life to get around Nashua versus the cars.

Even maybe implementing more express buses to Lowell, to Manchester so people won't even take their cars on the highway – more to Boston. I grew up on the city buses and the trains. I never knew what it was like to drive a car. I admit I can't drive in snow – I never learned because I lived on public transportation. Being in Nashua I never even think about public transportation. You have to change the mentality of how you view city buses versus your own car. I think that is going to be a big task in itself.

Katherine Hersh

Is this something actually that the rest of the members of the Board or of the Planning & Economic Development Committee would be interested in – a vision for expansion of the bus?

Chairman Rootovich

Absolutely.

Katherine Hersh

Mr. Newman will be coming in either in February or March to talk to the Board a half an hour before a full Board meeting to talk about the bus system and started an after 7:00 program, they have a training program where people are trained to teach people how to ride the bus. There are a whole lot of very interesting things that are going on. He will talk about bus shelters and things like that. If there is an interest in encouraging bus use this is something that most of the money is federally funded and that would be helpful as we go forward – if this is an interest that the Board has. Right now what we do is maintain what we have. If we can get CMAC money we will expand it. We are not pushing to expand it until we know that you want that.

### Alderman LaRose

The problem I find with the bus system is the problems we have in the city as far as the way the rivers run and things like that. We don't – personally I think the problem with Nashua is that we need another river crossing west of the turnpike and not east of the turnpike like the Broad Street Parkway. I have always said that. I have always said that we needed another roadway west of the turnpike. If you had a bridge west of the turnpike it would facilitate to implement a better bus transportation. The problem with the bus transportation is that if you come up in my area, the north end, and you go up Broad Street you still have to come back down Broad Street. You can't access West Hollis Street. You can devise a plan where you could have some drop off bus transfer stations. I think that is one of the problems.

The other problem I find is, and this goes way back, the problem with Nashua was when Nashua started to expand in the north end, the northwest section, the bus system never went with it. The problem with the Hudson bus line at that time was that the school department actually subsidized the bus system in the City of Nashua because it was a no bid contract. The bus system said well it would cost us this much to bus kids and it costs us so much to run these bus lines that we have so they tacked it on then they went to a bid and that is when the Hudson bus line more or less went out of business. They kept one bus line open to keep their franchise open, and when the city came into the transportation business we had to buy out their franchise. My recollection was that it took us at least a year to negotiate with them. That is one of the problems. Unfortunately everybody likes to hop onto their cars. The other unfortunate thing is when we studied the bus transportation we looked at Hudson, Merrimack, and Hollis and the only people that wanted to join were Hollis and the ones that you really needed were Merrimack and Hudson.

### Mike Lowe

One of the things that we here at the Planning Board a lot is parking. I think that we probably have a run out in the downtown area, the parking in those parking garages to subsidize at least 20-30 different developments that are going on – some that haven't been built and some that are several years later are being built. We need to get a handle on this desperately because pretty soon we will – the parking lots are going to be filled at night with the people in the different condominiums and units around the city and there will be nowhere to park. You will have cars on the streets because there is nowhere to park. Every single time the Zoning Board will say we

will let you put three spaces at the parking garage or we will let you have 5 spaces over here so that you can build this piece of property – sooner or later push will come to shove and there will not be enough, but nobody has an idea of how much is let out.

Katherine Hersh

Are you talking about downtown?

Mike Lowe

I am talking about downtown right now, but I mean...

Katherine Hersh

I know that the downtown master plan actually they did an analysis of the number of office space that will need space – well number of associated with downtown and the uses of that space and what the demands are for the use of the number of parking spaces .....

Mike Lowe

Is that everywhere?

Katherine Hersh

Downtown.

Mike Lowe

The downtown goes now all the way to Hollis Street.

Katherine Hersh

Well if you are talking about neighborhoods that is different.

Mike Lowe

I am talking about city lots where some of them are in neighborhoods. We need a parking plan.

Alderman LaRose

Technically we are committed to building another parking garage for the courthouse that we haven't done.

Alderman McCarthy

On that same issue that Alderman LaRose had brought up about the river crossing, which is basically one aspect of the fact that we have no circumferential roads – all of our major roads are radials that converge on Main Street. Even without the river in the way within the quadrants there is no good way to get from Main Dunstable to East Dunstable to West Hollis Street – there is no way to get from Amherst to Broad Street easily. We either need to give up on that or we need to identify corridors in there and improve them such that we do have those circumferential accesses.

Katherine Hersh

I am looking at that saying that is a plan – that is one plan.

Alderman Shaw

That really seems like that is the things that needs to be especially the 5, 10 year kind of plan because it seems pretty clear to me to fund any of the kinds of roadways that have been a big part of this discussion it is not something we ...

Alderman McCarthy

We are sort of doing it with Spit Brook Road, but even there where we have the right of way and we don't have some of the pressures we will have in other parts of the quadrants it is tough. When you get to try to find roads – the problem is that most of the corridors that exist go through heavily residential areas. At some point you either bust at the seams or you have to have some of those connections.

Alderman Shaw

Right. It seems quite daunting, but if we plan it as something that we will implement in a sufficient amount of time that you can properly fund it whether it is through federal dollars or whatever or part of re-development of an areas – it is easy to think at points we are never going to get there, but if we have it further out it could be something that is accomplished.

Katherine Hersh

This type of plan could go to NRPC. We could talk to them about that. It likely wouldn't be at no cost, but certainly it would be something that they have a lot of data that they have collected – they have a traffic count that actually would be very interesting for the Board of Aldermen to see how that traffic count works because of the information that they can get out of that traffic count. We looked at a lot of the actions for the circumferential highway with that traffic count. It is very interesting to see.

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Alderman LaRose

That is the problem with the circumferential highway is that the state never planned a complete circumferential highway around the City of Nashua and that is what has to be done. In my personal opinion they were trying to solve – they kept saying we don't need a complete circumferential highway around Nashua. I think they were trying to solve their 101 problem by not making a circumferential highway. In other words, they were trying to find a way to get 101 to go to Milford and they had to go through a lot of wetland so they couldn't get it. It wasn't important for a complete circumferential around Nashua, but it certainly is.

Katherine Hersh

What actions do you want to do or do you want to do short term comments?

Alderman MacLaughlin

Here is one that I think is very simple and I think simple informational based – two of the worst congested arteries in Nashua are Spit Brook Road on every weekend, mid day to late day and Daniel Webster Highway along the retail strip. The bus serves that area now. What I would like to know from the people that administer the bus system is what routes in the city are more successfully used among the routes that it currently provides? Where is the ridership at its greatest and where is it at its least, which is pretty helpful sometimes. One of the points that I think we are noting here is that the bus that services South Nashua along the Spit Brook Road and Daniel Webster corridors may not have the number it could ideally have right now due to the fact that it's hours of operation may need to be tweaked. For example, a lot of people who drive in these single passenger cars are employees of some of the many businesses that exist in that area many of whom would like to leave their car at home if there was another way of getting to work. The problem is that they may be able to take the bus into work, but by the time most of them leave they would have to walk home. The idea here maybe is additional bus route possibilities, just sort of suspending a trip during the day with the bus so that it could pick up an additional one in the evening without affecting its need to hire more bus drivers for longer hours and just getting the number out there as to how many people whether it is through a traffic study or what it might be, but how many passenger cars are there on these roads sitting in traffic, and what would be the projection is this service were enhanced that some of these numbers would decrease. I think the number would be fairly surprising.

It is getting the information out there and – for example I know that I am pretty well involved in creating traffic on those roads myself because I drive, but I would be one of the first to jump on the bus and leave the car at home. The other things is in this Spit Brook Road area my goodness how many condos are there? How many town houses are there where the cars just coming out of those routes clog up Spit Brook Road trying to get somewhere else? I think the bus ridership issue is very much associated with the concept of commuter rail. Later on the bigger vision would be leave your home, get to a safely maintain bus station or depot of pickup point, get on the bus, get to a commuter rail hub and take whatever point exists then be it all the

way down to Boston or simply down to the Pheasant Lane Mall.

### Alderman LaRose

To touch on what Dave just said, I think one of the problems when you start talking about the bus system along Daniel Webster Highway and that area is congestion. Maybe what has to be looked at is to run more than one bus so that like every 15 minutes you are getting a bus. It seems to me one of the drawbacks of the bus system is that you have to wait such a long time to get your ride versus a city like Boston or New York when you go into the subway or even the bus system they are one after another. Granted the unfortunate thing is there is no bus system that runs profitably. It is a subsidized system and how much are you willing to subsidize to gain maybe ½ a dozen riders. That is the problem.

### Katherine Hersh

Regarding D.W. Highway and the mall area, there is a plan to put in a – there is an effort that we have been working on to create an internal road system so that there would be an internal movement of shuttle system that would go from Pheasant Lane Mall all the way up to probably as far as the Old Navy and hopefully where the commuter rail station will be and then back down again staying off the main road so that – every 15 minutes people could get on that and wouldn't be driving from Pheasant Lane Mall up to Old Navy they would just leave their cars there and shuttle bus.

Actually the more I am thinking about it when Paul Newman comes in I think he should come in for an hour so you can have this discussion.

### Alderman Shaw

Actually all of the infrastructure is there for it except that one little section between Staples and Spit Brook Road. If you put that in then the whole loop is just about in. There are a couple of other lilt spots where you would have to put just between two parking lots, but other than that the whole internal loop is already there. That could really cut down on the traffic because you would go park at one of the parking spots, get on the bus, do all your shopping, then come back to your car and leave. Then you are not going from one space to another to another you have a bus route that does it. It is just that one little section.

### Alderman Vitale

If we can move on to a different item, I was going to suggest both short-term and long-term is to rate all of our roads and get a maintenance plan in place.

### Katherine Hersh

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Rate them from whatever type of road that they are from their conditions like paving and ...

Alderman Vitale

Both because depending on how they are built they have different maintenance requirements. We do rate them? Do we follow their maintenance system?

Chairman Rootovich

No.

Katherine Hersh

- Another area that you all deal with a lot is stop signs, speed limits, parking, and things like that.

Chairman Rootovich

That is one of the things that Alderman McCarthy had given the Infrastructure Committee to do for their ...

Alderman McCarthy

In fact the road maintenance plan was also in there.

Katherine Hersh

So probably transportation action will go on board with Infrastructure.

Alderman McCarthy

It may. A lot of what we just talked about was not on their list either to start with. We might want to move some of them around. I think we will probably find substantial overlap as we do this with each committee.

Alderman LaRose

I think if you are doing planning and you are talking transportation it also as you say it overlaps so I think that if we have some kind of a vision and we send it to them they can take a look at it and see what our vision is and what their vision is.

Alderman Shaw

At the risk of maybe doing something in the process, but I thought of another category under transportation perhaps that we didn't have earlier, and it is perhaps also a sensitive subject in some ways, but it is the whole question of the airport and the use of the airport as both

transportation and as an economic engine. It is something that I think we really need to consider how the airport and its usage...

Katherine Hersh

Do you want to put the airport under transportation as something that is important for the future viability? Is that what you are saying?

Alderman Shaw

Yes.

Katherine Hersh

Is there anything else that you want to do today? Do you want to do another category?

Alderman Johnson

Let's put the airport on now.

Katherine Hersh

Put the airport on transportation?

Alderman Johnson

Yes because that is part of transportation.

Katherine Hersh

I was going to put it over here on the list of things that are important to the viability of our community. If there is something that you want to list as an action item related to the airport then I would put it here.

Alderman Shaw

I guess I would like to consider – this could be one of those things that we basically already have some sort of plans or visions for the airport, but do we have anything that is really regarding any sort of use of the airport for regional jets and commuting or again as an economic engine in terms of businesses that rely on air freight and other things. It is just a matter of I think we need to again what is the community willing to support and not in terms of that because that is also surrounded by residential areas, etc.

Alderman LaRose

I think he has brought up a good subject, but I think we have to understand what their master plan is before we even really discuss it.

Alderman McCarthy

Probably what we ought to do is get Roy and people from the Airport Authority to come and meet with us to talk about that. We have actually had that discussion before, and my recollection is you get fairly satisfying results if there is a plan there and an understanding of where we ought to be, but we should probably do that again.

Katherine Hersh

Maybe Alderman Rootovich that could be part of the strategic plan process whenever – you guys like to do that every two years or whatever – that there be some ability to update everybody on those master plans because a lot of the – especially on the questions – I am sitting here and saying they don't know this or that, they don't know this exists – how can you know all that stuff that goes on.

Alderman Shaw

Could you add to the list something about review master plan?

Alderman McCarthy

Right there under airport plans put review master plan.

Alderman Shaw

Were you thinking under the long range planning?

Mike Lowe

Some pieces of information I picked up fairly recently is that the airport is the most used non-commercial airport in New England. Non-commercial is heavier than Boston.

Chairman Rootovich

Mrs. Hersh what documents are going to be provided to the committee? Are you going to give them a summation of this or are we going to leave it like this and just bring it back? What are your plans to facilitate this?

Katherine Hersh

I look to the committee. If you think that this is desirable and you want to continue with the rest of the categories – you and I can meet on Friday morning and we can figure out – maybe put together a schedule – it would be good to have the airport authority come in and update you on the airport master plan. It would be good maybe when Paul Newman comes in maybe he should be coming to this committee as opposed to the full Board. Those are the types of things and then figure out where we want to go. I was going to have; actually it feels like we can just roll this up.

Alderman McCarthy

We will get our office to transcribe everything.

Chairman Rootovich

It is important that we can have a document we can follow as we go so we can refresh.

Alderman McCarthy

It sounds like we probably ought to continue this exercise at some point because we haven't done any of the long-term goals, but if we get that transcribed then we can ...

Chairman Rootovich

I guess my plan would be if we don't have too much legislation in committee, which I don't see too much coming up at the next couple of meetings, this would probably be the topics we should cover at our next meetings. We will take a hard look at it.

Alderman McCarthy

The other thing I would like to accomplish tonight is a little discussion about what we think was good and bad about the way we have done this so far because there are 5 other committees to do this with also.

Alderman LaRose

I thought it was very good. What I liked about it was it was very informal. It was more or less sitting down on the couch in your living room and it was a little bit back and forth. I realize that it is probably hard for the transcriber to transcribe some of this stuff, but I thought the flow was great. I thought there were a lot of good ideas.

Alderman Johnson

Can I just add one other thing and then give you my other comments? I just wanted under airport where it says review master plan, I would like to put a little sub-category – find out about

power – that is a very big issue in Ward 1 and the noise factor – kind of find out what they have as far as the noise. I would like to get what the noise within the area is. I would request from the Chairman if – I know I don't sit on this committee – you will be giving a copy to the full Board so everybody gets to see what is being done? If I can make another meeting I would like to.

Chairman Rootovich

Sure.

Alderman McCarthy

It would be best that once these things get done it would go out to everybody on the Board.

Chairman Rootovich

It would be my intention that everything that comes out of the committee gets provided to the entire Board.

Alderman Johnson

Thank you. I thought it was informative tonight. You get to see where other members of the Board stand on certain issues whether you agree or don't agree. You get that idea so at least you know when you have a discussion you have an idea where your fellow colleagues – what issues they are passionate about and can understand why they are. I would like to go through this on Infrastructure too.

Alderman Shaw

I thought it was very good. I think it clearly got all of us involved. I know when we were first presented with this exercise tonight I quite frankly didn't know that I either knew enough or had enough opinions to even really participate that actively and it seemed to be actually quite easy to do and I think like these kinds of processes typically are you do have a certain synergy and you can build off of other thoughts. The other comment I wanted to make, and I don't know if it was a matter of I have overlooked some communication or if it was intention, but I actually think I might have benefited if I would have been able to do some homework coming into this and been able to prepare for the questions. I thought we had basically a single item agenda.

Alderman McCarthy

That is my fault. I decided sort of at the last minute that we ought to try to push forward with some of these and do them sooner rather than later.

Alderman Shaw

I think actually we have accomplished quite a bit and I think in spite of not necessarily coming in with the opportunity to have done home work, which I don't know if I would have accomplished anyhow, but I think it didn't seem to prevent us from being able to generate a lot of thoughts and ideas.

Alderman MacLaughlin

I certainly would echo Rob's opinion and also the comments made previously by Dick and Paula. I found it useful because coming out of a ward mindset you often wonder is your ward going to be in sync with the other 8 wards that are out there and how does that work with the Alderman-at-Large in terms of what their priorities are. What struck me about all of this other than its rainbow effect here is that there is a great commonality of interest and priorities and what we are doing at long last at least I am able to see is do what others have called for and that is to begin prioritizing what we want to accomplish in this next session. I don't think that was always clearly defined previously. I have a feeling that once we get through this both this evening and in other evenings and work our way through these categories we will find even more categories and we are going to I think stick with it instead of putting it away in a drawer somewhere. It is opening up a whole realm of possibilities here for the next two years. I am finding myself even though the hour is getting late pretty excited about the possibilities, some of the things we can do on this committee.

Alderman Vitale

I agree with everything that has been said, and I look forward to continue with the process.

Alderman Shaw

I just realized I kind of wanted to amplify something Director Hersh said earlier, and having already been to a couple of Finance Committee meetings I have found that we have already had a number of items come up that we have questioned how they fit in terms of priorities within a given department. Director Hersh mentioned at one point about how it is much easier if there is a sense of where an item fits within an overall plan for the department as opposed to it just sitting there as something. I think again it is further cause if you will for us to pursue this process so that it very well might streamline some of our other opportunities instead of going well does this really fit in with what we need to be doing. I think we will help ourselves out as well in terms of how we can conduct the business.

Mike Lowe

I think it is planning and that is what we are doing. I am glad to see we are doing it.

Alderman McCarthy

I thank everybody for participating. I think this was a good committee to start with. We need to keep doing this.

Chairman Rootovich

We really do need to have an action plan though, and I agree we need to follow through and see for the first time since I have been on Board that we can get it done. That is what this is all about, and that is our intention.

Is there any further discussion? I will entertain a motion.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY ALDERMAN LAROSE TO ADJOURN  
MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was declared adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Alderman Kathryn D. Vitale  
Committee Clerk