

## STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

JANUARY 3, 2019

A meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee was held Thursday, January 3, 2019, at 7:05 p.m. in the City Hall Room 208.

Alderwoman Mary Ann Melizzi-Golja, Chair, presided.

Members of Committee present: Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Chair of Budget Review Committee  
Commissioner Matt Plante, Nashua Police Commission  
Ray Guarino, Board of Education  
Kim Kleiner, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor

Members not Attendance: Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien  
Commissioner Kevin Moriarty, Board of Public Works  
Mike Rosenblum, Chair, Airport Authority  
Commissioner Paul Garant, Board of Fire Commissioners  
David Pinsonneault, Library Board of Trustees

Also in Attendance: Sarah Marchant, Director, Community Development  
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

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PUBLIC COMMENT – None

Chairman Melizzi-Golja

We have some new members on this Committee and in an attempt to kind of summarize where we are and how we have been focused and how we have approached developing a strategic plan, I have asked Director Marchant to come and do a condensed version of what she did when this Committee first met so that the members would have a sense of what our focus is at this level versus the focus they and their individual boards or commissions may take once a strategic plan is developed. So with that said, I am going to turn it over to Director Marchant.

PRESENTATION

Overview on Strategic Planning with Sarah Marchant, Director of Community Development

Sarah Marchant, Director Community Development

Alright, thank you. I don't have too many slides here I promise, but will go through quickly. So just for a quick overview for those who haven't been here before, which is not very many of you actually in the room, but this is the Committee composition, these are the many Boards and Commissions who are represented here. So the purpose of this group is to create a Strategic Plan to send to the Board of Aldermen for approval once every term; so once every two-year term. And then to for the Mayor to work with the Committee to implement the policies to an operating plan. So that is the general charge of this Committee.

With that, we started with the vision and mission that is part of our ordinances today and I just wanted to make sure we all saw them again before we went back down this road, but this is the vision statement that the Committee worked on recently, the past cycle. I don't think I need to read it for you, if you want me to I will.

But this was a good effort by everyone to make sure that this was updated along with the mission statement which is here. I won't read it word for word for you.

Talking about those long-range plans, what we are here for that are stated in the Mission Statement and this is borrowed from the Center for Strategic Governance who said we could borrow it, I did ask permission, I didn't just steal it from the internet. We have this here, this is kind of an overview of Strategic Planning. So if Strategic Planning and Strategic Governance is the large umbrella over what we do and if anybody wants a copy I do have it here, but it two parts, it is strategic thinking and then operational governance. It is deciding what is important, what our core, vision, mission, what are our goals and then implementing things down to the daily tasks to make sure we are actually bringing those goals to fruition, that vision to fruition.

This is kind of the nice umbrella that we can keep kind of going back to and thinking about it when we are trying to finalize our strategic plan. So that is a good overview. And just another way to look at it is you set a goal, the objectives underneath are clear, measured and they lead to an outcome that is part of the vision. For example, a previous goal was to protect our water supply and there are a whole bunch of objectives and steps in place. It took a while to do that but the City purchased Pennichuck as a protection of our water supply and we are the sole shareholder.

The other part of strategic planning is that we are not looking at year-over-year things but we are trying to have that longer vision over the long term to meet, trying to set long-term policy to meet that vision. So some of the tools that we use to do that are our capital improvements process which is going on right now with everyone submitting their capital improvements; items into our collective bargaining agreements are certainly part of our long-term planning process. Our debt and bond services which the CFO and Finance goes through pretty frequently and updates the Boards on and making sure that we have sufficient levels of reserve and a stabilized base which the City has worked very hard again and has an excellent bond rating. So we are keeping up with that side of it keeping those long-term and making decisions based on the long-term goals.

As part of your hand-out or that came with the Agenda, I didn't copy all of the objective on to the slides, I just copied the goals. The idea was to walk through these goals and the objectives here, maybe I should have put them in a different order but I am actually skip two slides real quick. Our goals are kind of to run through the goals and look at some of these objectives, I think we have some that aren't really that 25,000 foot level that are maybe more focused on individual areas not really divisions necessarily or departments. And so kind of making sure that we feel comfortable with these and if we can get to a point whether it is this meeting or another that we feel comfortable with the goals and objectives and sending them to the full Board for review and then getting to the citizen input that we talked about a couple of times in the past. Getting to that public, some kind of a forum where citizens can give input back on a plan that has been put together, back to the full Board for a final review and over to the budgeting process. So that is coming fast and furious and so we'd like to kind of move on some of these.

I am going to go back to the goals. The first one is – The City shall promote a clear communication with residents and businesses. There are some things in here, many things that are excellent like utilization of Channel 16. I think that is a broad, over-arching part of how we can have our communications campaign that makes sense, to meeting that goal. Some of them do a get a little bit into the nitty-gritty, which maybe isn't as much a part of what we want in this. An example might be a video series on restaurant licensing, that isn't really part of the larger umbrella. So if we wanted to maybe run through some of these things?

REVIEW, DISCUSSION AND REVISION OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES AS NEEDEDChairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Could we back up to the slide for Strategic Planning. I think it is real important and we discussed this the last time that as you kind of that down, Strategic Thinking & Operational Governments and we are doing the strategic thinking part. The nitty-gritty stuff that the divisions and departments and boards and commissions will be looking at really fall on the operational government side. As we talk about this what we should be developing here are goals and objectives are really that strategic thinking piece and not getting into some of this other stuff that is more the role of the department, like do the Police want to get more bicycled officers downtown? Or does the School Board want to increase their adult education programming? Those sorts of things are down here and we are looking up here at what is the umbrella and what is that we should all be working towards as a City.

And then as Sarah said, being aware of how that should then drive your budget. So looking at these broader goals and objectives, figuring out which ones you can address and which ones are priorities and then using that to drive your budget, which as we have discussed in the past, means that someone's budget may go up 2% and someone's budget may go down a per cent. It is how are we doing this and how is it all working together, driving towards meeting these goals.

Ray Guarino, Board of Education

I know I came on this committee kind of late in the process and I think you have a really great, you have a lot of great goals and objectives. I just have, I guess I would like to see something about the environment, promote a clean environment and sustainability, probably under Goal 4. I know this is kind of late in the game but rather than say "sustainability" it might be something like recycle, promote recycling, promote a clean environment and recycling where possible, something like that.

I don't really see that anywhere in here so that would be my only, except for, my other comment would be equity, that the City should promote equity throughout the City we should have sort of equal, everyone should have equal opportunity towards resources. So those are my only two comments regarding these goals and objectives for this Board to take under consideration.

Alderman Dowd

There are three main upper level tenets of Strategic Planning and one is where we sort of started and where do you want to get to. But in order to take the step on how to get there, you have to know where we are right now. On these plans where are we right now, where do we want to go and if we are already there, we don't need to address it. But then the downstream as Mary Ann was talking about, how do you get there. And when you get to the "how do you get there" it goes into smaller different groups. If we are talking about something the Police Department has to do, it goes to the Police Department. We are not going to tell them what they need to do, same thing with the Board of Education and the Mayor's Office, the Board of Aldermen.

The other thing that we need to look at some point is cost. And it may be a great thing we want to do, as Kim can tell you, we may not be able to do it tomorrow, we may have to put it off for a while, because we have to watch the tax rate. We have a lot of things on the table and I mean a lot of things on the table and we have to spread them out. Actually the definition of Strategic Planning is – a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization or some other entity is, what it does and why it does it. So we want to make sure when we review these steps there are things the City can do, if it is outside the City's tenure then we can't probably put it in our strategic planner. There are some I think that have changed since the last time we met. So we will have to review all of these and maybe tune them up.

Kim Kleiner, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor

So I think back a few months ago you had us call all of those goals and objectives in the beginning of the budget – the Mayor and CFO Griffin our Finance Team, we have been looking at those again. What we issued about a month ago was kind of an overall process that we are asking the divisions to take a look at and do when they develop their budgets. We are asking them to really this time think about it and put together their objectives and drive their budget down from those objectives and then at the same time create some documents that we can put forth to the Budget Committee on what the changes in the budgets are, you know what their change over year it is and what is driving those changes. So we can just take those documents and give them right to you because we know that is what you have been focusing on more the changes versus the nitty gritty of the numbers.

How we are asking them to prepare their objectives is a little bit more detailed and a little bit more forethought than we have asked in the past, kind of refining that process from the first time we did it. I think it would be great if we could then say – well these are the objectives, which obviously when the directors compare their objectives they are looking at what the Mayor has asked them to focus on. So ultimately it comes down from above, but how that relates to what the Aldermen see as their overall strategic objective then will be important.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

And I think it is really important that as some point the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen come together on this so the message is more dovetailed together than – this is what the Mayor thinks is a priority and this what the Board of Aldermen think is a priority. Which is why I think it is great that you are on this Committee so we have that communication because at the end of the day it is one City and we should have common priorities in moving forward, I would hope.

Ms. Marchant

I almost wonder at this level if the objectives are really that important. If the Strategic Planning Committee could lay out some quality goals that you felt comfortable with, I really think that is the meat of what you are trying to do, right? That is setting that backbone of that overlying umbrella and then letting all your boards and commissions do what you do to set the outcomes and then to line up all the items underneath it?

Mr. Guarino

So you are looking for more general terms for the objectives in general?

Ms. Marchant

The goals should be the very high-arching goals, right?

Mr. Guarino

Right. The objectives are fairly not that specific either?

Commissioner Plante

That's the idea I think.

Ms. Marchant

And they probably shouldn't be, they really, really shouldn't be even at this level. So that is why it hard to create objectives, from this group creating the objectives.

Commissioner Plante

It seems like we are going back and forth we go up and down and back up.

Alderman Dowd

My suggestion is that the goals at some point when we finalize them, would be given to whoever has the responsibility in that area. We can give them the objectives as thoughts from this committee, but the ultimate solution will be if we are talking about a cleaner city, it's BPW and you know we don't want to tell them to use orange trash cans, they can decide whatever they want to do.

Mr. Guarino

Right, so maybe it is the terminology that they are going to come up with more specific actions, we are going to be more in general terms, whether you call them goals or objectives. What we are looking for is the guidance, the general guidance? And as far as specifics, they are going to have the specific actions. I think it is like the terminology. I am used to having goals as being very general, and then objectives a little bit more specific, measurable; and then actions, a specific action to reach your objectives.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Sarah and I have talked about this too and some of these as everyone has indicated, some of these objectives are really nitty-gritty and they are think division level. But I am wondering even if we to use your term Mr. Guarino, just have the goals and maybe just have some guidance and not all of these objectives, but pull out a few key things like you know using social media and whatever. And just streamlining processes, whatever, just pull a couple things out here so there is some guidance so whoever gets this whichever division head or commission or board gets this, they can say – OK this is kind of the definition of what they were looking for. And this is kind of the big end goal but it is going to be tailored.

Alderman Dowd

So working with this committee at the goal level, we need to determine as a group who we think is responsible for that and then let them take a stab at – where are we today; where do we want to get to; and what will it take to get there.

Ms. Marchant

I don't know that that's this committee's responsibility.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

No I don't think so either.

Alderman Dowd

Not this committee; I am talking about the divisions.

Ms. Marchant

But this committee's responsibility is to set the goals, right just to set the strategic ...

Alderman Dowd

Right, what I am saying is the step below that, we have to determine who we should give it to.

Alderman Wilshire

Yes right we have to know whose goal that is going to be.

Ms. Marchant

Will it could be many peoples.

Mr. Guarino

It could be overlapping.

Ms. Marchant

Most of these goals really should be many divisions, it should many, many things.

Mr. Guarino

So what we should do is take out the word "objective" just under goals and just have these bullet points. For example, Goal #4 – The City of Nashua shall provide a healthy and safe community. I'd like to add promote a clean environment. That is very general and so the departments will figure out a way to fill that in with their actions, their measurable actions like some kind of recycling program. I say recycling, it could be a specific one that have compost, someone may do composting or someone do recycling. It depends on the department and what they are handling. But let that specific objective up to them and take out the word "objectives" and just have bullet points under the goals. The goals would be general guidance.

Alderman Dowd

Recycling is a lofty goal but today there is nobody that wants it; I mean there is no place to sell this stuff.

Ms. Marchant

So maybe a word just like "sustainable".

Mr. Guarino

Sustainable, yes.

Ms. Marchant

Because then we are taking care of our environment and our resources.

Alderman Dowd

It could go beyond this and I am not supporting this but it could be legislation that bans plastic bags for trash. I mean things like that because recycling is getting to be a very complex issue. There are things that drive the cost up and screw up the process, but that's BPW.

Mr. Guarino

It could be like someone figures out a way to re-use something it doesn't have to be necessarily recycling.

Ms. Marchant

But for the purpose of the goal you are talking about the environment right?

Mr. Guarino

Right, we are talking about promoting sustainability. I didn't like to use the word "sustainability" because believe it or not some people think it is a dirty word, but it just means recycling basically.

Ms. Marchant

It means a lot of things.

Mr. Guarino

Yes it is a big umbrella of re-use, recycling, sustainable practices.

Alderman Dowd

It better not be a dirty word we are using it big-time in the new school project.

Mr. Guarino

I would just take out – if it were up to me – I would just take out the word "objectives" and have these bullet points under the goals and the goals are broad, general statements and let the departments come up with theirs.

Alderman Dowd

And I think some of these are, even as they sit now, for objectives are too specific, too lower level. I'm not sure who cleans the list.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

This is the list that we ended up with the last time and so I think we need to go through and just even if there are things you think we should strike out, let's do that now. Then we can look at some guidance language under each goal.

Alderman Dowd

Yes, for instance there was one bullet or objective, I think it was –create a vibrant downtown. That is like ok let's create peace and harmony in the entire world. I mean how do you do that? And who does it? I think that's probably too broad. So those types of things should be taken out.

There are things we can do to help in that process and one is the Performing Arts Center but that is already in there under another bullet.

Ms. Marchant

We can start with Goal 1.

Alderman Dowd

Good place to start.

Ms. Marchant

Yes.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

So are we all comfortable with Goal 1. So we are going to keep that. So the objectives, are there things you would like to remove?

Alderman Dowd

Well one thing that struck me was we have one that says Facebook, one that says YouTube, let's generalize that into one and use social media, which by the way is the second sub bullet.

Ms. Marchant

So maybe just pull that second sub bullet out?

Alderman Dowd

Improving social media?

Ms. Marchant

Yes.

Alderman Dowd

I was thinking....

Alderman Wilshire

That is something he was going to use.

Alderman Dowd

I was going to use that and get rid of YouTube and Facebook.

Mr. Guarino

It is kind of redundant, yes.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

So do you want to leave – utilization of Channel 16?

Alderman Dowd

I would.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

But we can take out those things under there?

Alderman Dowd

Facebook page would be under social media also.

Alderman Wilshire

New city software is that just part of the communication to business owners?

Ms. Marchant

It's under stream line permanent – I mean that is too specific, I think you just kind of take that out.

Alderman Dowd

Yes let's take those things out. Whoever is responsible for streamlining the permitting process will determine how to do that.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

You know when you look at the goal it talks about communication with residents and businesses. So the first bullet is clear communication to get information to citizens. Do we just have "clearly communicate information to businesses" so we split that up. I think the communication is what drives participation at Town Hall Meetings.

Ms. Marchant

Instead of Town Hall Meetings it should be City Meetings and Events to kind of bring it up a little bit versus just the Town Halls? There are all kinds of public meetings here, board meetings, there are all kinds of things that require participation.

Alderman Dowd

Participation of citizens in City Government; something like that – you know the Town Meetings are run out of Jim's office and we certainly have public input at the Board of Aldermen meetings.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Well I mean all of our public hearings and all of the plans ....

Ms. Marchant

There are so many plans and projects and boards and I mean just more citizen participation across the board so kind of saying it that way.

Ms. Kleiner

So one of the examples of how we went to or one of the things we've done to do that is the City Academy. And out of the City Academy we have gotten a number of citizens who have stepped forward and are now members on our Boards & Commissions.

Alderman Dowd

So when we give these goals to whatever group we feel is responsible for, we should be getting some feedback from them as to how they are going to approach it.

Commissioner Plante

It's their budget presentation, right?

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

I don't know if we get feedback, I mean I think once this is adopted and this is like the Strategic Plan for the City, I think to Commissioner Plante's point like they get it, they figure out which of these they are going to focus their efforts on and that is where they are going to put their resources.

Alderman Dowd

Right I guess that's good.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Because otherwise we will appear to be micro-managing.

Ms. Kleiner

So can I make a suggestion? I think once you've gotten your goals, certainly communicating them to the Boards & Commissions that oversee like the Police Commission and the Board of Education. But what about a Memo to the Mayor allowing the Mayor to sit with his Division Directors and then give you feedback on where he feels they fit in his divisions and what goals and objectives he has asked his divisions to come back with objectives?

Alderman Dowd

In other words have his Directors and see who wants to grab that balloon?

Ms. Kleiner

There's a part of me that is going to – you want the Mayor to buy into these goals and work with his Division Directors you know. As the Police Commission is kind of autonomous so they are going to work on their own. But you really want the Mayor to be able to sit with his Division Directors and come up with a plan and then come back to you and say – well these are what the Division Directors are going to work on to obtain these goals.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

I guess I agree with you, I think the Mayor gets these and like Police Commissioner, the Fire Commission gets them and the Mayor says – OK this is how I see priorities. The School Superintendent will say – this is where I see my priorities fitting in with this and this is what we are going to work on. I think that is a conversation he has with the people who work for him and he charts his course that way to address these and it comes out in the budget process. But I don't think he necessarily has to come back and report to us. I think if the Board of Aldermen approve a document and say this is a Strategic Planning goal, vision, whatever, you know, Board of Ed will take it and the Superintendent Mosley will sit down and say – clearly communicate with residents and businesses. What does that mean for the school department? Does it mean a lot or not much?

I think that I would see you and the Mayor having that conversation with all the Division heads and then using that and then saying – OK these are priorities, this is how each of these dovetails with these goals and so now we are going to move forth with our budget and this is how we are going to justify it; taking this and dovetailing it with what we see as priorities.

Ms. Kleiner

Right and you should see those, you should be able to see that correlation in budget.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

In the budget, right.

Ms. Kleiner

Objectives and things that we lay out.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

So I guess I am totaling agreeing with you, yes. I wouldn't see him coming back and saying this is what I'm thinking. I would just see that being rolled out with the budget for each division.

Ms. Kleiner

Well we are hoping that with those documents at the beginning of each budget section you'll be able to see more clearly the correlation.

Mr. Guarino

I have a question because what you are talking about is budget planning for your budget and we are talking about strategic plans, so I am a little bit confused. So is this something that we want to fit in an existing budget? Because I see Capital Improvements Programs up there which means it is outside the budget also. So this is a document for the future? So someone in one of these departments can say – OK this is not in our budget but we need this. I'll give you a good example, ok? Under our infrastructure what I see missing is improvements, now this is very specific unfortunately, but improvements to our traffic signal equipment and signal coordination, ok? I think that is definitely needed in the City and I think what is happening is they are given a budget and they are saying – Oh we can't do anything because it is in our budget but no one ever says – What can we do beyond the budget; how are we going to plan for the future, can we get it on the Capital Improvements Program and maybe get dovetail, buy into some federal money and have a big project for the future?

So I guess my question is, this is a strategic plan, a document for not just budget planning but also for future, you know, beyond that? Am I correct?

Alderman Dowd

So again one of the things is, where do we want to get to? Another part of it is how do we get there? And maybe something you want to, the group that is responsible wants to get there in 2019 and the City is not going to be able to do it until 2021, 2022 because of keeping the tax rate sane.

Mr. Guarino

But you have a separate process where the departments do get budget planning and this is different because this is long-term/short-term strategic planning. When we go to the departments they should have that understanding.

Alderman Dowd

By the way, Capital Improvements and bonding is all part of the budget.

Mr. Guarino

Right, Ok but I mean I see up there that this is going to be part of that so it is going to be part of the Capital Improvements Program. So they can look, what I am saying is that I hope that the communication to the departments is that this is a plan for the future. You can look to the future for some of this even though it is not in the budget now.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Right.

Ms. Marchant

Yes.

Alderman Dowd

Facilitate communication between businesses, professional organizations and educational programs, that's probably too detailed and ought to probably come out.

Ms. Marchant

Yes.

Alderman Dowd

And Wi-Fi in the downtown? Whoever is responsible for communication ought to make that determination but if you go downtown and turn your phone on you'll find there is more Wi-Fi hook-ups than – it would have to work better than.

Ms. Marchant

So again I really think that if we focus on the goals today and not necessarily these bullets underneath we are going to get a much more solid base to send out.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

So look at Goal #2 – A safe and well-maintained infrastructure and utility system that is coordinated with existing needs and with plans for future growth.

Alderman Wilshire

What exactly does that mean? What exactly does this mean? Does it mean – I don't know.

Alderman Dowd

It means a lot of things.

Mr. Guarino

Infrastructure is streets, buildings, pipes.

Alderman Wilshire

“A utility system that is coordinated with existing...” – I'm not sure what that part means? The wording is a little funny.

Alderman Dowd

It is coordinating with existing needs.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

And it should be – and plans at a minimum plans for future growth. So it is working with our current needs but also looking towards the future.

Alderman Dowd

So that gets back to where do we want to go, where are we now and how do we want to get there. So if we have something lacking today, or something that we think we anticipate in 2025, something we want to get to and that is going to be up to somebody else to say how we get there.

Mr. Guarino

I would just say that meets existing needs, instead of coordinating. A safe and well-maintained infrastructure that meets existing needs and accommodates future growth.

Alderman Dowd

Yes that's probably good.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

And I think when you look at all the objectives under there, again we can go through and say – that's community development, that's BPW, it is all stuff that they would be looking at. So again what does this mean for my department or division?

Mr. Guarino

As a personal pet peeve I'd like to see the traffic signals coordinated because I sit there on Daniel Webster Highway and watch a green light coming out of one of the dealers it is green and there is no cars coming out of there.

Alderman Dowd

Presumably and I use that word presumably, BPW has control over all the lights in the City, so if you don't like the way they are operating I'm not going to give you a name on who to call.

Commissioner Plante

I've sent requests and it is the same thing on East Dunstable. No cars there and it turns green, so you sit there and then it turns green the other way, it's just silly.

Mr. Guarino

There are a lot of intersections on Daniel Webster Highway that are like that and there are a lot of red light runners especially in the morning because they just get sick of it and run the red light because there is nobody coming so they just go.

Alderman Wilshire

What happened to the smart lights we used to have?

Ms. Marchant

Those are I think the only program, this was before my time, but my understanding is we have the CMAC funding to coordinate all those lights and that was only for Amherst Street. So all that money, that was an only an Amherst Street project. And so they coordinated those to the best of my understanding.

Mr. Guarino

What happens over time is they break down and then go out and they fix them but they don't fix them the way they were and they change.

Alderman Wilshire

The settings?

Alderman Dowd

I can tell you that they have made changes to those lights when people were complaining about them so it is like anything else, getting them to be perfect is probably an impossible goal, getting them to be 80 or 95% efficient is probably easy.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

More realistic.

Mr. Guarino

They might have to update the controllers for the latest equipment.

Alderman Dowd

I can tell you for a fact that they are putting in the new lines in the road because they have been digging up every intersection. So next year when we put the final pavement over they will all be buried

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Right. So Goal #3 – Nashua will continually improve the quality of lifelong education for all citizens so they are well-prepared for life and careers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Sounds a little wordy.

Alderman Dowd

It's a good thought, it could probably be a lot more succinct.

Commissioner Plante

Just chop off after "citizens".

Ms. Marchant

First clause only?

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Ok and again I think we can just get rid of all those objectives that are under there. The City of Nashua will provide a healthy and safe community.

Mr. Guarino

For all? Because maybe we could say something about equity.

Ms. Marchant

Healthy Safe and Equitable Community.

Commissioner Plante

What is an equitable community?

Mr. Guarino

It is like you don't want like any part of the City not to receive any benefits and sometimes some City parts get neglected and sometimes in some sections of the City they put the dump the worst things down that end so you don't want to.

Alderman Dowd

I think when we put this together it was a combination of providing adequate and police support and also tied in, we combined a couple of objectives, this was also a public health issue.

So a public health and public safety and we wanted to keep it as general as possible. The more specific you try to get the more convoluted that it gets.

Mr. Guarino

Right, but I think equitable is very general.

Alderwoman Melizzi-Golja

Mr. Guarino I just asked Director Marchant to go back. What if we say – Nashua is a proud, vibrant and welcoming community. Nashua offers its people ... and then somehow “equitable opportunity”.

Mr. Guarino

Equal opportunity.

Alderwoman Melizzi-Golja

Or equal opportunities for personal growth? If we work it and put it in there in the vision statement I think that captures it because I really think for each of these goals we are talking about equity.

Mr. Guarino

Sure, yes.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

So if we were to smith that a little?

Ms. Marchant

Equal opportunities.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

And then maybe again – Continuously examining its processes to enable efficient and equitable delivery of services that enrich – so we could talk about it in both places or just we can play around with that? Does that work for everyone?

Mr. Guarino

Yes sounds good.

Commissioner Plante

Sounds good.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

I just think that might be a bigger umbrella than trying to work it into one of these objectives because I think it should apply to all of them at the Department Division level.

Alderman Dowd

So Goal 5.

Ms. Marchant

So we are going to leave 4?

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

We will leave 4, healthy and safe community. Yes.

Alderman Dowd

So Goal 5 sounds like it's ...

Commissioner Plante

Are we scratching the objectives in the Goal 4?

Alderman Dowd

It's not that we are scratching them I think we are giving them to whoever is going to be responsible.

Commissioner Plante

Right yes I just didn't want to go past it without scratching it out if we can.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

And I would say my feeling is in Goal 4, the whole thing of coordination of City Departments and Community Agencies is probably one of the bigger places where this occurs. It is Health & Safety and I think Education, I think that is where we see City and Community really coming together to meet objectives.

Alderman Dowd

I think the other group that we fell under this particular one was Justin Kates.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Right. Yes.

Alderman Dowd

Isn't Goal 5 an objective of the Board of Aldermen and the Mayor probably?

Ms. Marchant

I think if you took off that end piece, if you were just talking about effectively managing resources, I don't know if this is, maybe I am taking it somewhere else, but not necessarily to ensure citizens receive great value for their tax dollar. Because then you could be talking about environmental resources and financial resources, you could be talking about ...

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Or hydro-electric dams.

Alderman Dowd

Solar panels. Where did you want to cut that.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

After resources. Number 6 – The City of Nashua will make the City a regional center for arts, culture and recreation.

Alderman Dowd

I read that and I said I think we need to re-word that. We can't force Nashua to be a cultural center. We can do things that would help promote that but we can't make it.

Mr. Guarino

So we just say promote instead. Can we just replace it with promote?

Ms. Marchant

The City of Nashua will be ...

Mr. Guarino

Will promote or strive to.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Or support efforts?

Alderman Dowd

Strive to be a regional center. That is about all you can do, you can't force anything. You can put every cultural thing in the world downtown and nobody comes.

Alderman Wilshire

So you are just taking out "make" and changing it to "strive to be"?

Mr. Guarino

Promote the City as a regional center for arts?

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

I think strive doesn't, I know it just doesn't sound like the right word there. It is like we are reaching, we are trying to reach our goal, which is striving to do ...

Mr. Guarino

I like the word promote. The City of Nashua will promote the City as a regional center for arts, culture and recreation. I don't see anything wrong with that.

Alderman Dowd

Sarah doesn't like it.

Mr. Guarino

Awkward grammar?

Ms. Marchant

No it's ok I am just having an issue now, I see that this City and then sometimes we address ourselves in these goals and sometimes we don't so just the consistency. Goal #3 says "Nashua" and 4 and 5 say "The City of Nashua". So just trying to be consistent and number 2 doesn't say anything; do we really need to?

Commissioner Plante

Are you going to re-write these?

Ms. Marchant

I will just keep consistency for that yes. I can fix consistency there yes.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Well it could be support efforts?

Alderman Dowd

As long as we get away from the fact that we can't drive it to be that. We can provide things that would strive to allow it to become.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Well and again I think this where we are supporting or providing but this I think one of those things where it is the City and Community Organizations. So we will support the City and the collaboration of City and Community organizations to promote Nashua as a regional center. I am feeling like we really need to have community organizations in here.

Ms. Marchant

I think Community Organizations are probably all these. And so these are the goals of the City so I don't think we should just put it here but I agree with you what you are trying to say, something bigger. Our health and safety is something bigger than just us, right? There are so many organizations that help make that happen.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

And then do we go back to number 1 then – shall promote clear communication with residents, businesses and community organizations?

Ms. Marchant

No because they are either residents or businesses probably right.

Alderman Dowd

So 7 does that ...

Ms. Marchant

We didn't do 6.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

What do you think Kim.

Ms. Kleiner

Will provide ...

Ms. Marchant

Provide a regional center for arts and culture.

Alderman Dowd

Provide the ...

Commissioner Plante

Framework or structure.

Alderman Dowd

Provide the structure or provide the things that would make it – like allowing the Performing Arts Center to be developed or reinvigorating Court Street, helping the downtown improvement committee.

Ms. Kleiner

Invest in the arts and culture.

Alderman Dowd

Making sure we don't lose the head of the downtown.

Ms. Marchant

The City of Nashua will become a regional center for arts, culture...

Alderman Dowd

“Become” – again we are forcing. We can provide the things that would allow it.

Ms. Marchant

We could go back to the framework.

Commissioner Plante

Provide a fertile environment.

Mr. Guarino

I think we should keep it simple, just say – the City will promote downtown.

Ms. Kleiner

Maybe it's the regional center that is getting us hung up.

Ms. Marchant

Yes maybe it is the regional center. That's a good point. So the City of Nashua will promote its art culture and recreation.

Mr. Guarino

Will promote arts, culture and recreation.

Alderman Dowd

No we want to provide the environment to attract people to Nashua as a Center for the Arts.

Mr. Guarino

I think the simpler the better.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

And part of that Rick becomes managing resources. If you are looking at parks and waterways as resources that ties 5 and 6.

Ms. Marchant

Riverfront it is coming yes.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Ok #7 – The City of Nashua shall ensure that downtown Nashua is a safe, clean, attractive and accessible urban center.

Alderman Dowd

Does that combine half of the others?

Commissioner Plante

Oh Downtown is ok I see.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

We have had this discussion since the beginning of this committee. Do we say well each of these is already under a goal and assume that the downtown will be focused on. Or do we have a stand-alone goal that specifically focuses on downtown. And I think that is what has been going on and Matt is nodding.

Commissioner Plante

I agree.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

I think since the beginning we have gone back and forth on this.

Commissioner Plante

I am happy to see that the downtown is the center and I think there is some value to that. And for the longest time I thought why do those people get such preferential treatment. Where are all the others?

Alderman Wilshire

It shouldn't be just a focus on downtown. It should be ...

Commissioner Plante

But the downtown is the heart of it. You know what I mean? You need that.

Alderman Wilshire

It is, it is.

Commissioner Plante

Without the downtown it would just be all these other things that are there without the heart and soul of the City.

Mr. Guarino

You have to have a community identity. Yeah.

Alderman Wilshire

Yes but you can't just focus on that.

Commissioner Plante

No I agree, but all the others focus on everything else. This one says we will focus on something.

Alderman Dowd

Anybody that has ever studied urban studies knows that the center of activity in any town, city, metropolitan area is the central downtown.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

I think you know Matt you and I have talked about this, we have all talked about this, I think it is that balancing of if you don't have a lot of residents downtown, it is very easy to not put resources downtown because all of your residents in the other areas want resources directed towards them. So it is kind of balancing all of those needs but understanding that you downtown is your identity, I think we as a Board of Aldermen and many of the groups in the City that we collaborate with, feel like we need to promote Nashua as a destination.

I think this is how we ended up with this as being a stand-alone goal to make sure that there were some resources directed towards downtown and I think what we saw happening with the parking fees; you know like we are going to dedicate towards it downtown. I think that was an off-shoot of what happened before, like we need to have some money for downtown. I am comfortable with this and I don't know if we want to leave it, change wording.

Commissioner Plante

I like it the way it is; I think it is fine the way it is.

Alderman Wilshire

I just didn't want to leave out like Exit 1, the Flatleys. I didn't want to leave that out. I definitely agree that downtown should be, we should make it our identity as a City.

Commissioner Plante

Those guys take care of themselves though don't they? The Pheasant Lane Mall sign and Flatley and all those guys, they've got it all figured out. I think that in town there's more of a, there are more individuals and it takes a City to hold it all together.

Alderman Dowd

What if we took out the word "downtown" and just leave urban center?

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

I think it has a totally different flavor.

Mr. Guarino

I think just say downtown, I don't see why you can't have downtown. It is a history, it is Nashua history so a lot of people have memories of downtown being different than what it was so it is part of them.

Alderman Dowd

The other thing that I had a little problem with is the word "ensure". It sounds like we are guaranteeing, I think we can steps to facilitate that but I'm not sure we can ensure that it is going to happen.

Ms. Marchant

We can promote, we've used that words a bunch of times.

Alderman Dowd

Promote.

Commissioner Plante

We've got a familiar theme with you tonight. I get it.

Alderman Dowd

Every time I hear the word "ensure" I see Budget Committee getting a whack with something – we said we were going to ensure and we can't do it if we don't spend \$2 million dollars, from where?

Ms. Marchant

So do you want to change it, do you want to keep it?

Commissioner Plante

That's another word.

Mr. Guarino

Promote a downtown that ...

Alderman Dowd

Promote says we are going to do everything we can to make it happen; ensure says that we are going to guarantee it happens.

Mr. Guarino

Nothing in life is guaranteed, right?

Alderman Dowd

Except taxes.

Alderman Wilshire

Even downtown.

Mr. Guarino

Except taxes, that's right.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

I guess I see us promoting the arts and recreation, it seems to have kind of a marketing, like we are promoting that, but promoting downtown as being safe, clean, attractive and accessible.

Commissioner Plante

Sounds like the marketing department, not us.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Yes.

Alderman Dowd

Well this is the upper level, the lower level things will get into the ensure.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

I want to make sure that we give them wording that will drive their thought the way we want it to go because “promote” someone might say – OK promoting downtown is just signage or marketing.

Alderman Dowd

If I were the BPW and it came into my budget I’d say – you said “ensure” we can’t ensure it unless we do this, this, this, and this.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

This year our priority ...

Alderman Dowd

And then we are going to say “no” and then what does that do to the goal and out the window.

Ms. Marchant

Well no it is not about the single over year, it is about the long-term.

Alderman Dowd

That’s why I am trying to say is you use “promote” then we can budget it out in other years if we have to.

Mr. Guarino

How about “maintain a downtown”.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Yes maintain works.

Mr. Guarino

“Shall maintain a downtown that is safe, clean, attractive and accessible”.

Commissioner Plante

I think it sounds like we pick up the trash. That’s easy.

Ms. Marchant

That's a good point, we are. You'd think, it isn't always easy.

Ms. Kleiner

But I think all those objectives underneath it we are doing.

Commissioner Plante

We've got to give him some layups here, right?

Ms. Marchant

Sometimes it is harder to keep doing things well than it is to start doing things.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Right, right. I think we all know of those one times – we are going to do this. But then to work that into your annual cycle or semi-annual cycle of updating it or – OK this was meeting our need two years ago, does this still meet our need, no it doesn't, we need to up what we're doing or not invest as many resources. And I think that gets back to – where are we, where do we want to be, what do we really need?

One night we had a conversation about how all of this really requires people to semi-annually, at a minimum, review what they are doing and what the response is for where they are putting their investments towards goals. And it is as the needs of the City change and we have all certainly seen that in 10 years. And certainly with all of the housing coming in downtown, what is that going to do in terms of our needs downtown as well as across the City.

I see some of this, I am thinking of some of the things we talked about at NRPC, I mean some of these things are going to be the City reaching out to those other partners and looking at the 10 year traffic plan and working with them on the household hazardous waste and all those things that we do as we are becoming more of a regional hub also for things that are happening through NRPC.

Ms. Marchant

So I can clean these up and get them back to Sue to get to you.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Yes.

Ms. Marchant

And then do you want to see them all cleaned up, talk about it and then send some kind of a cover to go to the full Board?

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Do we want – what if we have Sarah clean them up, get them back to us, give everyone like a week to review them. If we don't hear anything, I don't hear anything about a need to get together to discuss, we will sent it to the full Board?

Alderman Dowd

I would say provide comments back. If they are minor things we don't need to get together.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Right, ok, but if it is a discussion then we need to meet because we shouldn't be doing that via e-mail. If it goes to the full Board, my thought is that it is going to get referred to PEDC, we will talk about it there and then it will come back to the full Board. And probably also in that process there will be something set up for citizen input. I am thinking citizen input, PEDC meeting, roll it up, send it back to the full Board.

Alderman Wilshire

Sure that sounds good.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Sarah and I were talking about just one evening for citizen input and talk to the Telegraph, get some press out there about this is what we are doing.

Ms. Marchant

Before PEDC meets?

Alderman Dowd

How does this fit into the Master Plan which we are hoping is budgeted this year.

Ms. Marchant

I will not talk about the budgeting piece of it yet because that is not my decision. But all of these things fit into the Master Plan, all of these goals. And what it does it helps provide a backbone for us to start from. Because if this is the direction that the Board wants and that the Board has clearly stated – you've given us these goals, and I think one of the most challenging things about Master Planning is not having – the reason why they tend to sit on shelves is because there is no backbone to start from, right.

Nashua does it a little bit differently and a little bit better, but if you just go from a planning land view side, it doesn't get you all the other larger pieces in that larger context to focus, so this will be helpful in getting that going.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Alright, do you have any other questions?

Ms. Marchant

I don't at the moment.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Anyone have any other thoughts/comments?

PUBLIC COMMENT

Elizabeth Lu My name is Elizabeth Lu, I am 17 Roby Street and I just wanted to offer a couple of thoughts as you went through this. I have a few things I wanted to mention. In Goal 1 I just thought maybe you are looking for increase civic engagement, I don't know if that is the wording that you might want to go with. I think it is really important to consider mentioning a way to reach citizens that don't use the internet. I think really the biggest thing here in the discussion that hit me is I don't see a lot of wording about "we want to either solicit or engage or get the needs from the individuals". Like we talk about addressing the individuals but we don't talk about a commitment to finding out what their needs are.

I don't know it just seems worth mention and I thought your idea about the clean and sustainability is really important. I would love to see us state or to be something in here about "we believe that we are stewards of these hundreds of acres" or whatever it is, "miles". Oh I wondered for Goal 3 where it talks about the quality of life-long education whether the Library is included in there? I realize that is an objective.

So in Goal 4 you talk a lot about promoting community, let's just say, let me go to Goal 6 and I don't understand why a goal of the City has to be to promote, to purposely promote arts, culture and recreation. It does seem like something that makes human life, if we have a good City that is going to be part of what the community will be involved in, if we can make a good City. But I think over in Goal 4 there is an objective that talks about the coordination of the City Departments and the Community Agencies and I just think over there in Goal 4 you could really achieve the same thing by saying that – we will promote whatever any community initiated efforts at you know anything – arts, cultural, recreational. But to put it more on we will promote what this citizenry is, whatever. I just don't understand, I don't know. I know it is a big deal, people usually do want the arts, culture and recreation to be overtly supported but I just think that sometimes it is more important to find out what the needs and interests are. To have a really stated process for finding out what everyone wants, maybe that is always what they want, I don't know.

But I'm not sure there is enough outreach to all the citizens, like the marginalized and I think that should be addressed. That's all.

Chairwoman Melizzi-Golja

Thank you. Anyone else? Any comments from members of the Committee?

REMARKS BY MEMBERS - None

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN DOWD TO ADJOURN  
MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was declared closed at 8:08 p.m.

Alderman Michael B. O'Brien  
Committee Clerk