



**TOWN OF
BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**P.O. BOX 360 – 1 Main Street
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<http://www.brooklinenh.us>

**Minutes
School & Town Services Study Committee (STSSC)
May 27th, 2021 at 7:00pm**

Present:

Peter D'Agostino, Chair (voting)
Colleen Micavich, Vice Chair (voting)
Scott Grenier, Secretary, Planning Board Representative (voting)
Charlie Corey, Town Services representative (voting)
Steve Russo, Select Board Representative (voting)
Ken Haag, School Board Representative (voting)
Michele Decoteau, Member (voting)

Scott called the meeting to order and noted that they are meeting remotely under the governor's Executive Order 2020-04 and Executive Orders #12 and #23. In following with these orders, he asked each Board member to state where they are, why they are there and who, if anyone, is in the room with them. All members responded.

The Meeting Started with Member introductions.

Election of Chair

Colleen made a motion to elect Peter D'Agostino as Committee Chair. Ken seconded. Roll call vote Charlie, Steve, Ken, Scott, Michele, Colleen and Peter all voted yes.

Election of Vice-Chair

Peter made a motion to elect Colleen Micavich as Committee Vice Chair. Ken seconded. Roll call vote Charlie, Steve, Ken, Scott, Michele, Colleen and Peter all voted yes.

Election of Secretary

Ken made a motion to elect Scott Grenier as Secretary. Colleen seconded. Roll call vote Charlie, Steve, Ken, Scott, Michele, Colleen and Peter all voted yes.

Review charter and timeline

Peter led the discussion regarding the charter. The committee was established by the planning board based on the Planning board findings based on a communication received from the superintendent about the lack of capacity for the school district to take on additional students in the next few years. The Planning board make a recommendation to the town meeting to establish a moratorium and to establish this committee. The Moratorium expires March of next year, 365 days from the 2020 Special Town Meeting vote. Subsequently the planning board established this committee based on their findings. Group discussed what the charter means to us and what areas we'd like to see as priorities for the group to research. **Peter** stated the charter gives us broad discretion to evaluate zoning bylaws and ordinances in town.

Future Meeting Schedule

Peter stated he has worked with the select board chair to determine our meeting capabilities. We can meet whenever we want remotely. Working with the Town administrator to find out when town meeting spaces will be available for in-person meetings. Noted that the day with the best availability on the town calendar is Thursday. **Peter** proposed meetings on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month, noting the planning board also meets on the 3rd Thursday making planning board updates or joint meetings easier. No objections from the group.

It was agreed that meetings will be held at 6pm on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month.

Peter asked if there were any objections to meeting in person when it is available. No objections from the group.

Review and Discuss Planning Board Findings

Peter asked for discussion on the Planning board findings. Findings were primarily based on School capacity. **Peter** Asked **Ken** for an update on the School board Facilities study.

Ken mentioned the Facilities committee began before the moratorium and was focused on modernizing the facilities and better utilize energy at RMMS. Based on the proposed development and seeing the NESDEC Growth projections showing steady growth continuing. Committee expanded to include CSDA and to look at School Capacity. Board has engaged a firm to review the layout of the buildings, and Architect will provide recommendations to Layout changes to the buildings to better utilize the existing space. Appears capacity can be increased by internal movement and rearranging the existing facilities. At CSDA there are two Portable classrooms that have been "Mothballed" for several years. Those classrooms are being evaluated to see if they can be used, and either used or removed if they cannot be. Expecting some feedback and bond votes for the next warrant article session.

Peter stated that information will be critical for this committee, he is aware that alternatives are available, as we saw in Covid some dedicated specials spaces were converted to classrooms to allow more distancing. If the committee determines we need a new facility or how quickly the schools can adapt to increased students will drive what the planning recommendations look like.

Peter has spoken to the Fire and Police chiefs the DPW and the town administration about how to determine what additional resources they will need for an increase in population, Departments have responded that they need to know how many additional calls they should expect and they can determine what they need to respond to those calls.

Colleen asked about the NESDEC numbers and what information was included in the projections. **Ken** stated that the projections are town specific and include information like new home starts and Move in and Move outs. Both have impacted the projections as there is no limit on development in Brookline, as well as an increase in move in move outs this year and projected for next year. School expect to need to add a K and 1st grade teacher. OK for capacity for next year but need to add teachers.

Steve asked if **Ken** could share the NESDEC projections in a future meeting. **Ken** said he would send them out to the group.

Colleen asked if the group could start a Google drive to store all the information we will need to review as a group. Group discussed how other committees share information with their members, mostly provided packets before each meeting. **Michele** confirmed the Wilton Planning board has a google drive, only the staff members have edit access to the drive, members of the group cannot add or edit documents so conversations cannot occur in the google drive. **Peter** agreed to set up the google drive and provide access to the group. **Michele** has a document for the group that outlines the process of Growth Management and some background information from a regional planning agency that recently hosted a session focused on housing.

Peter shared a summary of the NESDEC projections showing continued expected growth of student population by grade size showing the expected increase continuing for several years. Agreed to post the charter, Planning Board findings and town meeting vote results on the committee website.

Colleen asked if **Ken** could provide more information about how NESDEC projections are calculated. Do we need to validate the projections? **Peter** stated they are based on historical home sales and new home construction and the market. He learned from the superintendent that covid and the move to remote work has driven the market up in Brookline.

Charlie asked if there was data that showed that families moving in are larger than families moving out. **Ken** stated the board has no hard data, but they see the move outs and move ins summary each month and anecdotally they see smaller families moving out and larger families moving in. **Ken** stated that the NESDEC is an industry standard model that has the backing of many school systems in new England.

Priority Items and next steps

Peter reminded the group that we owe our findings back to the Planning board by September 30th to ensure the Planning board has time to take action on zoning ordinance changes, holding statutory hearings and having findings reviewed by lawyers well ahead of town meeting.

Peter asked the group for priorities items for the group to work on before the next meeting.

Michele suggested we research how to determine how population growth related to increase in Emergency Service needs.

Charlie asked if we can go back through department calls for the past 5 – 10 years to see how the number of calls has increased in town.

Colleen suggested finding how many building permits have been issued in Brookline each year since the Growth management ordinance sunset.

Michele mentioned the increase in Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) that allows residents to expand the size of their home to accommodate additional residents. **Peter** mentioned a law passed in 2017 stating that anywhere a single-family dwelling is allowed, you must allow ADU's but they can be regulated.

Peter has the Service Call information from the Ambulance Department that shows and increase in calls, he will share with the group.

Charlie noted that when people move from areas that provide more services, they may tend to call for things that long term residents would not call for.

Colleen suggested capturing some type of data on the water issues that people have been discussing. **Michele** stated that data exists for all the wells in town, **Peter** mentioned there is a state website that indicates the depth and flow rate of each well in the state. **Steve** mentioned that not all wells in town are listed.

Peter asked **Colleen** to engage with the Well water study committee to get information on their findings and plans for this year.

Charlie stated that the water issues have existed for many years in certain areas of town, while other areas of town have always had plenty of water. Suggested contacting Jay Crystal regarding how to determine the amount of water required for different size developments. Potentially suggest a requirement that developments prove they can meet the water requirements.

Scott asked if we need to review our existing Workforce housing supply to determine what size of a development we may need to support. **Peter** stated that the Planning board had hired a consultant to determine the existing supply of workforce housing. But this committee is focused just on overall growth and what the town can support not a specific type of growth.

Discuss and potentially select Members to engage with the following entities

- a. SAU41 – **Ken**
- b. Brookline Departments
 - i. Police – **Charlie, Colleen**
 - ii. Fire - **Charlie, Colleen**
 - iii. Ambulance - **Charlie, Colleen**
 - iv. Brookline Public Works - **Peter**
 - v. Administration – **Peter, Scott**
 - vi. Well and Water – **Colleen**

Other data to review

- NRPC Regional Planning report.
- 2020 Census results (Available in August)

Discuss Assignment of Priority Items for next meeting discussion

- a) Review Population growth related to emergency service needs. - **Charlie, Colleen**
 - Number of calls by dept in town report
- b) Regulation of ADU's and number of new home builds - **Peter, Scott**
 - Reach out to Kristen
- c) Data on Water issues – **Colleen, Peter, Michele**
 - Reach out to Well and Water committee and Jay Crystal

Discuss and potentially select Members to begin review of Brookline's prior growth management process under RSA 674:22.

Michele agreed to review how the RSA works and what were the steps Brookline took to adopting the growth management ordinance in the past when other towns in the area did not. Noted we still have impact fees but no limit on new homes. **Peter** stated that the growth ordinance went in to place when RMMS ran out of room and we came out of it when CSDA was built.

Michele suggested trying to identify clues that will help identify when we are approaching capacity to avoid the need for time sensitive decisions being presented to the town.

Scott offered to assist in the RSA process review.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday June 3rd at 6pm

Charlie Motioned to adjourn, Colleen Seconded. Roll call vote Charlie, Steve, Ken, Scott, Michele, Colleen and Peter all voted yes.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:30pm