



**City of St. Marys
Master Plan Steering Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 27, 2017**

MPSC Attendees:

Joe Antao
Tanya Glazebrook
Joe Holler
Elaine Powierski
Jon Preble
Michael Rich
Lee Walker

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 pm without a quorum present. Mike Rich announced that until a quorum was reached, the Committee would take public comment. Les Warner stated that he understood there would be a suggestion that St. Marys should seek a three-year membership on the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH). He recommended against taking such action. He is a housing consultant and has worked extensively in and out of government. He does not feel that participating in the GICH is meaningful if it's only volunteers who participate or even if city staff is included. He feels that the city has to do its own internal study and can more effectively determine what its needs are and how to meet those needs without committing to the GICH program.

A quorum was reached at 6:18 PM. Upon motion made by Joe Holler and seconded by Tanya Glazebrook, the revised agenda posted on February 27, 2017 was approved.

With regard to the minutes of the meeting of February 9th, Tanya Glazebrook raised a question about the reference to the statement that the Needs and Opportunities matrix include workplan items relating to Orange Hall and a recommendation that the city apply for a three-year membership in the GICH. Mike Rich noted that since the matrix was in draft form, modifications to the form and the adoption of the form would not be completed until the Committee approved the final version of the Master Plan. Mike suggested that the minutes of the last meeting be modified to reflect that "the inclusion of GICH and Orange Hall in the Needs and Opportunities matrix was discussed without a decision on whether to include those items in the matrix pending the distribution of the draft of the plan from EPG." Upon motion made by Joe Holler and seconded by Joe Antao, the minutes of the meeting of February 9, 2017 were approved as amended.

Item 3 on the agenda relating to the needs and opportunities matrix was deferred.

With respect to item 4 on the agenda, Mike Rich noted that a proposed mission statement had been emailed to the Committee members for review prior to the meeting and that while the Committee can recommend the adoption of the mission, the City Council would have the final say on the wording of the mission statement. Upon motion made by Tanya Glazebrook and seconded by Joe Holler, the proposed mission statement was unanimously approved and will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration.

DRAFT

With respect to item 5 on the agenda, Mike Rich noted that Courtney Reich had provided a draft document at the last meeting that set out the vision, mission, values and goals and principles as they would appear in the Plan for the Committee's review and comment. Mike further noted that, with input from Elaine Powerski, Tanya Glazebrook, Joe Holler and himself, a proposed revision was emailed to the full Committee on February 22nd. He noted the significant changes that were made and, with the consensus of the Committee, the revisions would be provided to EPG for inclusion in the Plan. A copy of the revised document is attached to these minutes.

Jeff Adams noted that EPG had prepared a Community Workplan that had been distributed to the full committee in an email from Jeff earlier in the day. The Community Workplan took the workplan items from the Needs and Opportunities matrix and inserted them into an excel workbook that included columns for prioritization, responsible party to accomplish the item and estimated costs. Mike Rich noted that the Committee was now in the stage of the process that would require a significant time commitment to review the plan draft and the various appendices that would be included in the final version of the plan. He asked that the committee members review the Community Workplan and send any comments or proposed revisions to Jeff Adams as soon as possible.

Item 6 on the agenda was deferred since Courtney Reich was unable to attend the meeting. Mike Rich noted that while the Committee was charged with reviewing and approving the Master Plan and the proposed new zoning code, the two items were mutually exclusive and that the zoning code would be a separate and distinct item for approval from the Master Plan. Jeff Adams noted that the Master Plan and the zoning code would first go the city's Planning Commission for review before going to the Council for approval and that there would be public hearings by the Planning Commission and Council prior to a vote to adopt the Master Plan and the zoning code.

The floor was opened for public comment. George Beaver stated that he had heard that buildable lots would be reduced to 9100 square feet or possibly even fewer square feet in the historic district. Jeff Adams noted that 9100 square feet was correct. It was also noted that the proposed new zoning code would allow for form based zoning in discreet areas of the city. Unlike traditional zoning which covers the use of the property, a property in the form based section would not apply for a particular use but would rather have to meet the form requirements in the code which could include such things as the amount of glass that would have to be in street facing side of the building.

Since the Committee is waiting to receive drafts of the zoning code and the Master Plan, it was the consensus of the Committee that regular meetings in on the first Thursdays of March and April be suspended and the meeting was adjourned to the call of the chair.

City of St. Marys Master Plan

Vision

One St. Marys. One Vision. One Future.

We are a vibrant, welcoming and friendly coastal community where our residents play an essential role in our success;

We cherish our environment, our heritage and our role as the Gateway to Cumberland Island National Park;

We proudly support our nation's security by maintaining a strong relationship with the military forces who are our neighbors;

We believe that all residents should have access to a safe neighborhood, job opportunities, quality education, and community services;

We envision a resilient community with a thriving and diverse economy, mobility, and recreational and cultural activities for all citizens;

We are One St Marys.

Values

We value:

- ⇒ Our people
- ⇒ Our small-town ambiance
- ⇒ Our peaceful and safe environment
- ⇒ Our gateway to Cumberland Island

We respect:

- ⇒ Our rivers, marshes, wildlife and coastal environment
- ⇒ Our diversity and individual differences
- ⇒ Our rich history

We strive for:

- ⇒ Prosperity for all citizens
- ⇒ Protection of our unique natural environment
- ⇒ Inclusiveness
- ⇒ Exceptional educational experiences
- ⇒ A mutually beneficial relationship with the Submarine Base
- ⇒ A balanced tax base to adequately finance city services

We envision a St Marys where:

- ⇒ All lives are respected
- ⇒ All voices are heard
- ⇒ All families can thrive
- ⇒ All neighborhoods are vibrant and inviting
- ⇒ All individuals have adequate economic opportunities
- ⇒ All businesses have the opportunity to prosper

Mission Statement

The mission of the St. Marys city government is to implement the City's vision in a fair, open and responsive manner through services and programs that will benefit its residents and businesses.

Goals & Principles

The Master Plan Steering Committee has identified the goals as the guiding framework for the City to realize the Vision set forth in this Master Plan. The Principles listed below each goal are intended to provide direction to City officials, staff, and appointees as they make decisions and work towards achieving these goals.

Economic Prosperity

Support the development and expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community, generate employment opportunities, and contribute to the vitality of the local, regional and national economy.

Principles:

- Use economic incentives to both attract new businesses and industry and to encourage the expansion of existing business and industry.
- Encourage the redevelopment and enhancement of existing commercial and industrial areas within our community, including vacant or underutilized sites or buildings.
- Support increases in residential density in downtown St. Marys and adjacent to the Osborne commercial corridor in order to create a neighborhood residential base to support local retail businesses.
- Promote continued improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of processes for permits and licenses.
- Undertake the annexation of unincorporated land both inside the City as well as land to the east of the City to extend and complete the natural uninterrupted boundaries of the City.

Community Health

Promote public policies that enable all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, to have access to quality goods and services for a healthy and vital lifestyle.

Principles

- Create new partnerships and work with existing resources to improve and build parks and trails, recreational facilities and related programs.
- Encourage the creation of walkable, safe, and attractive neighborhoods throughout the community, where people have easy access to schools, parks, and necessary services (i.e. grocery store, drug store) without having to travel by car.
- Consider the needs of all age groups and families when developing and/or promoting cultural and programs and recreational activities.

Sense of Place

Protect, enhance, and promote the City's signature qualities including the marshes and waterfront, access to Cumberland Island, and the warm, hospitable and friendly nature of the people of St. Marys.

Principles:

- Encourage the revitalization of downtown and the waterfront as a vibrant gathering location for the community and its visitors that adds to the quality of life for all.
- Encourage the aesthetic improvement of the City's commercial corridors.
- Encourage redevelopment of the mid-town area as a vibrant commercial center.

Resource Management

Protect and promote the efficient and effective use of our community's natural, cultural and human resources.

Principles:

- Consider impacts on infrastructure, environmentally sensitive areas and valuable historic, archaeological or cultural resources when making decisions regarding improvements for existing buildings as well as for new economic development projects.
- Encourage low impact development that preserves riparian buffers, the floodplain, natural topography, and existing vegetation of development sites.
- Ensure that residents, businesses and developers undertake improvements or new projects that are physically and visually consistent with the City's commitment to protection from floods or other natural disasters.
- Improve use of technology and technological upgrades for the provision of City services and the security of City records.
- Improve City processes to achieve efficiency, simplification and a sense of service to the public.

- Support programs for the training and development of City staff in order to reduce the expense incurred through the use of external consultants.

Efficient Land Use

Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community.

Principles:

- Extend infrastructure or provide City services to development outside of City limits only when a customer base would support such extension.
- Annex all areas currently served or easily capable of being served by City water and sewer ensuring policies are in place that will promote return on investment for current and future facilities.
- Protect existing infrastructure investments by encouraging infill redevelopment, and compact development patterns
- New land uses should protect the environment, preserve historical and cultural resources, and conserve meaningful open space.
- Assure that City owned land and buildings are used for the optimal benefit of the community from both a service and financial aspect.

Local Preparedness

Identify and implement the necessary improvements and programs to achieve St. Marys' Vision including infrastructure maintenance, regulations to appropriately manage growth, resiliency planning and leadership training for City Council and staff.

Principles:

- Plan and prepare for natural disasters and the recovery thereof from hazards including hurricanes, tornados, storm surge, and sea level rise.
- Make appropriate, proactive infrastructure investments to accommodate planned growth, and address the impact storm surges and sea level rise.

Regional Cooperation

Foster an atmosphere of cooperation with neighboring jurisdictions as well as regional, State and Federal agencies to address shared needs through adequate funding, legislation and technical assistance.

Principles:

- Seek opportunities to share services and facilities with neighboring jurisdictions when mutually beneficial.
- Work jointly with neighboring jurisdictions to develop solutions for shared regional issues.
- Pursue joint processes for collaborative planning and decision-making with neighboring jurisdictions.
- Consult with the Navy and other public entities in our area when making decisions that are likely to impact them.
- Provide input to other public entities in our area when they are making decision that are likely to have an impact on our community or our plans for future development.

Housing Opportunities

Promote a healthy range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing that meets the needs of all residents of the City.

Principles:

- Encourage development of Housing options that include affordable housing, assisted living and aging in place living.
- Incentivize infill housing development in neighborhoods where appropriate.
- Consider access to alternative modes of transportation when considering new residential development.
- Accommodate a diverse population by encouraging a compatible mixture of housing types, densities and costs in new neighborhoods.
- Encourage innovative yet visually consistent building options such as attached, semi-attached and detached buildings as well as mixed-use buildings.

Transportation Options

Promote multi-modal transportation methodology; safe, reliable, and accessible sidewalks; and public vehicular and nautical transit options that can safely and efficiently accommodate the variety of vehicles and vessels in use by residents and visitors.

Principles:

- Improve and maintain a transportation system that will implement the “Complete Streets” policy and minimize detrimental environmental impacts.
- Promote connectivity of the City’s road network by fostering a grid network of streets and multiple connections between subdivisions and commercial developments.
- Develop golf cart rules and regulations to insure their safe use on City streets.
- Support and invest in opportunities to provide alternative modes of transportation, including public transit, for the City’s residents.
- Ensure safe and secure dockage and facilities for intercoastal and water trail transportation in partnership with nautical related businesses and other governmental authorities.
- Consider the impact on traffic flow for all new development or business, neighborhood expansions.