



DOVER PLANNING REVIEW

AN UPDATE FROM THE OFFICE OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



March 5, 2021

Welcome from the Planning Director

This week's newsletter completes the three-part series on what city planners do by describing the Master Plan process.

The master planning work the community of Dover does is to help establish long-term goals and fosters guidance for how we want to move forward as a community. Dover has had a Master Plan since 1968, and it has grown from one 50-page text-only document to a detailed multi-page, multi-element with graphics, illustrations and videos. I hope that we can continue to evolve it to be a storybook using GIS technology to create an immersive and interactive guidebook.

Happy Reading,

Christopher G. Parker AICP

Assistant City Manager: Director of Planning and Strategic Initiatives

ON THE AGENDA

PLANNING BOARD

MARCH 9, 2021 MEETING
COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM, CITY HALL, 7 P.M.



Upcoming Meetings

Planning Board, 3/9/2021

The Planning Board meets for its first regular meeting of the month this Tuesday, March 9 at 7 p.m. [Click here](#) or the image above for a video preview of the meeting. At the meeting, the Planning Board is expected to:

- Review a request for site plan approval for 44 cottage-sized units at 54 Back River Road. The project requires a Conditional Use Permit to allow road and utility construction, stormwater treatment, and structures, including units and retaining walls, with steep slope impacts of 18,799 square feet. This item was tabled at the last Planning Board meeting.
- Review a request to subdivide 64 Littleworth Road to create a lot off Crosby Road.
- Continue a request for a lot line adjustment at 26 Bellamy Road to the March 23rd meeting.
- Review a request for a three-lot subdivision at 51 Bellamy Road

The workshop begins at 7 p.m. in the Council Conference Room at City Hall and is open to the public. The workshop will also be televised live on Channel 22 and streamed live from the City's website here: <https://dovernh.viebit.com/>.

The agenda can be [viewed here](#).

Conservation Commission, 3/8/2021

The Conservation Commission meets Monday, March 8, at 5:30 p.m. and is expected to:

- Review a Conditional Use Permit for Michael Runey of Portsmouth Christian Academy, which wants to remove and replace an existing drainage outfall within a 50-foot wetlands buffer, with an impact of 320 square feet to the wetlands buffer at 50 Seaborne Drive.

The meeting is open to the public and scheduled to be held in the Council Conference Room at City Hall. The agenda can be [viewed here](#).

Waterfront Tax Increment Finance Advisory Board, 3/11/2021

The Waterfront Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District meets on Thursday, March 11 at 5:30 p.m. to:

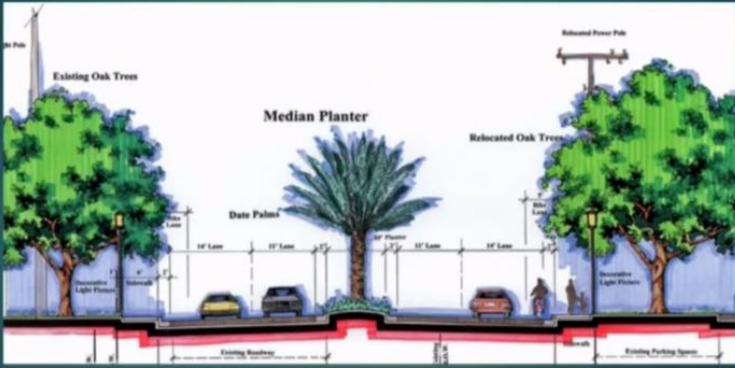
- Review an updated revenue and expenses for financial report
- Review the feasibility of adding parcels to the Waterfront TIF District.

The meeting is open to the public and is scheduled to be held in the Council Conference Room at City Hall. The agenda can be [viewed here](#).

Recording

Master Plan 101

Talking: Council Conference Room



CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
MARCH 3, 2021

DNV
channel 22

Results of Last Meetings

City Council workshop, 3/3/2021

At the City Council workshop this past Wednesday, I provided the City Council with an overview of the Master Plan and what updates to it the Planning Board and Planning Department are working on. You can watch the video by clicking the image above or by clicking [this link](#).

The meeting also entailed:

- Initiatives and strategies the Planning Board and Planning Department are pursuing to encourage affordable housing within the City of Dover.
 - Received an update from Cochecho Waterfront Development Advisory Board Chair Dana Lynch on the latest developments of the waterfront project planned on River Street.
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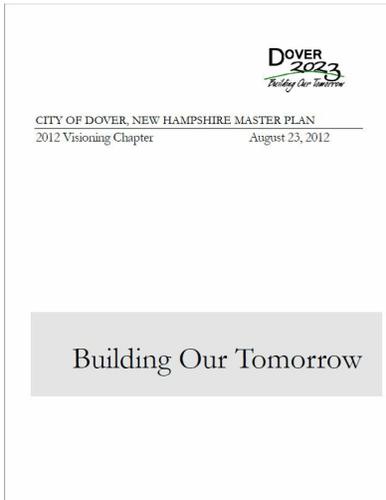
In-depth: Master Planning

Over the last two weeks, we have covered the [dos](#) and [don'ts](#) of planning. This third entry is focused on long-range or Master Plan work. This work is what all communities should be doing. Unfortunately, it can be an afterthought as many planning offices might have to focus on

reviewing plans and land use applications.

Dover's [Master Plan](#) is its strategic plan. This document is designed to help the community grow and evolve with an intent in mind. The Master Plan, in its various forms, is a guidebook. It doesn't include rules and regulations; instead, it forms the basis for developing rules and regulations, as well as providing direction for capital investment, which becomes part of a [Capital Improvements Program](#) (CIP).

Master Plan work takes time and is designed to be both timely and future thinking. The plan is designed to look out ten to twenty years and be reviewed every five to ten years. In Dover, this means every ten years or so, we ensure the Master Plan's chapters or elements have been reviewed and updated.

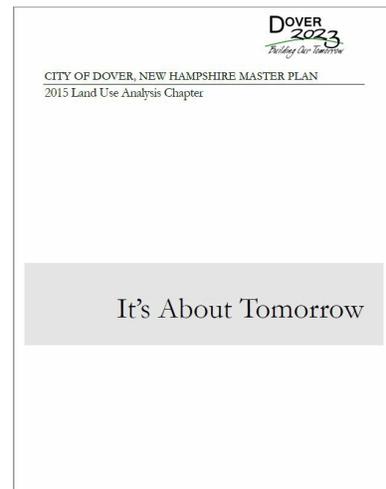


We start the Master Plan process with a [Visioning](#) chapter. Under state law, this is one of two required chapters. It is drafted with the idea that we set a vision, such as to be an urban community with a small-town feel, with theme elements that will be explored in detail in further chapters. You then take that vision and break it down to explore how to make that happen. In other words, what makes an urban place have a small-town feel?

In 2011, Dover began its latest vision process. We used an outside consultant to help us with community engagement, and we held small and large group meetings, interviewed stakeholders and had community members complete surveys. The idea behind our vision document was to look towards the City of Dover turning 400 in 2023.

Next, the City worked on a [Land Use Analysis](#) chapter. This is the second element that is required for a Master Plan. The land use element in Dover also includes housing and economic development aspects. For our 2014 plan, we also added an energy section. We later moved the energy section to the 2016 [Stewardship of Resources](#) chapter, which looks at natural, cultural and historic resources and the threats to those resources.

The land use chapter is the chapter most people probably think of when they hear "master planning" or "long-range planning." The intent is to lay out how we want to develop and grow from a density and use standpoint. It is an important chapter, but more and more, Dover and other communities are seeing how it is not a stand-alone element.



We have evolved to understand that things go hand in hand. You don't have good land use without understanding the impact and the effect land use and the environment have on each other. Similarly, you don't have land-use without improved transportation networks. These ideas have driven the way we now look at a Master Plan in Dover – from a holistic viewpoint. This idea is based in part on permaculture principles, a philosophy about land management that focuses on the interrelationships between various systems and the understanding that nothing is isolated. We now take the point of view in Dover that our long-range planning needs to follow this ethos. We design our [Recreation](#) chapter around the idea that it will interplay with our [Community Facilities and Utilities](#) chapter, which interacts with the [Land Use Analysis](#) chapter.

This style of strategic planning has served Dover well. We have developed land use and other policy decisions based upon public input and desire and take into account impacts on fiscal and physical environments. There is a clear understanding that what we do impacts how we do it, and by having a base plan to guide us, we know what direction we are going and how the road might look as we go.

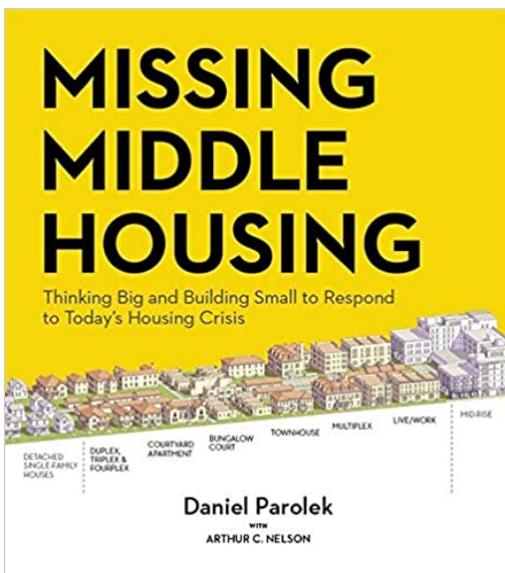
Currently, we are reviewing and



updating the [Community Facilities and Utilities](#) chapter and hope to finish it this spring. This chapter is looking at how we can manage and evolve our municipal buildings to be resilient and ready for climate adaptation. Next up, we'll work on our [Open Space Preservation](#) chapter, so we'll be seeking volunteers for a steering committee to oversee that work.

We always need help on this work, and we always seek input. I encourage you to [email me](#) if you are interested in being a volunteer on a committee. You can also read the Master Plan chapters at <https://www.dover.nh.gov/government/city-operations/planning/master-plan/>.

Book review: "Missing Middle"



The book "The Missing Middle: Thinking Big and Building Small to Respond to Today's Housing Crisis" by Daniel Parolek is probably better suited for professional planners or developers than the general public.

It lays out a thoughtful path to help people attain housing in a variety of formats. The Missing Middle is a term that has been developed to describe housing that is between a single-family home and a multi-family apartment complex. It includes two-family, three-family, four-family and smaller — let's say less than eight-unit buildings.

The book offers a good overview of a diverse typology of housing formats. Some are traditional in layout, and others are more modern. It provides calculations of density, floor area and general lot

layout dimensions for each style and gives some pros and cons. One aspect of note is the section looking at the way zoning and land use policies once promoted and encouraged this variety and how they have been tailored to eliminate them.

There is a very interesting section on the changing demographics in the country and the changing tastes for housing that exist today. The book makes the case that through understanding the trends and the tolerances people have, you can achieve a higher density of units by focusing on housing forms rather than density.

I purchased the electronic copy of the book, and I wish I had a paper copy because I think the layout and the images/illustrations are worth seeing on a bigger scale. While you can zoom in, the feeling isn't the same. Overall this is a very strong read and an intelligent and well-sourced look at the ways we can address housing affordability and diversity.

Planning Department updates: new Assistant City Planner

This past week, we finalized the selection of the new Assistant City Planner to focus on Zoning and other areas. After three rounds of interviews, we were able to choose a candidate for the position who will bring new skill sets to the community and a new perspective. She is from out of the region and will bring new energy to our team. We appreciate all the applications we received and the time people spent to make this hire.

