

Memo To: Kim Reed, Rye Planning Board Administrator
From: Glenn Greenwood, Assistant Director Rockingham Planning Commission
Date: August 28, 2013
Subject: Comments of the draft Master Plan

The Rye Master Plan updated to 2013 as provided by the Town presents a great deal of effort and information regarding the vision present conditions and future plans for the Town. Much of the information is excellent. Below are my comments regarding areas that need additional effort from my perspective.

As a general note...many of the tables and figures in the document are very out-dated. Specifically,

Figures D 2-4 in chapter 2 reflect information from 1999 and 2000.

Table L-1 in chapter 3 reflects information only thru 1998.

Figure H-1 in chapter 4 reflect information from 1999

Home sales information, property valuation and equalized valuation in chapter 4-A reflects information from 2007 and 2008.

The table shown on page 8-5 (no table number) and repeated on page 9-23 provides no source information and I was unable to verify the population figures using US Census tables.

All the tables in chapter 9 regarding the schools provide information only thru 2006.

The age of this data makes it suspect for use in a 2013 update. The accompanying text for each of these tables and figures should be updated with current information.

In Chapter 3 – Land Use – the overview section detailing US Census information in a number of categories is unflattering to the Town. It would perhaps be helpful to relate this information for all the communities in proximity to Rye to display that Rye is very similar to its neighbors if not necessary the nation or the State of NH.

The Future Land Use section is very short and doesn't well represent the information detailed elsewhere in the Plan. Since this is one of the only required elements of a master plan in NH this section should be revised to incorporate all the findings and actions found in the other sections of the Plan. This is often the section most used by the general public and should clearly include the future development framework for the Town. Finding a way to incorporate the "Next Steps" information developed in nearly every other section will strengthen the future land use section considerably.

The Transportation section seems very underdeveloped. The RPC prepared a chapter on transportation for the community several years ago. Funding exists in our Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to update this information in a more comprehensive manner than the plan presently shows.

The section on natural resources has a great deal of information but it is really confusing to read. There does not seem to be a narrative balance as to how topics are discussed. This may be the result of more than one author of the section but the information is very important and the topic reflects importantly on the nature of the community. As a stylistic comment, the natural resources section should include the greatest diversity of map products. The Plan "story" about natural resources is greatly augmented by maps detailing the location and extent of the various topics covered in the section (e.g., wetlands, marsh areas, open space, existing wildlife corridors).

Chapter 8 on Civic Life should remain just that, a short chapter on civic engagement. The recreation information should be moved to the municipal services section in chapter nine where there already is some repeated information.

In chapter 9 there is great information on municipal services. The instances where budget information and future capital projects are referenced should be removed and kept in the Town's capital improvements plan.

The Planning Commission can assist the Planning Board with the preparation of all of the tables and figures detailed above as being out of date. With the preparation of these tables, the accompanying explanatory text could easily be developed by the master plan committee in order to save money. I don't think that the Planning Board wants the commission to revise the existing chapters as commented above. For the most part the Plan incorporates a good framework for information that is repeated in each chapter. The master plan committee is probably best suited to determine the relevance of my comments and make changes if they see fit.

I appreciate the opportunity to review the draft Plan and hope that you will contact me if you have any questions about any of the issues raised above.