

Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Advisory (IDEA) Committee Meeting  
July 14, 2021 - 7:30PM  
Medway Middle School  
Presentation Room - 45 Holliston Street

***Committee Members Present:*** John Foresto, Dan Kerls, Brian Sharkey, William Kingsbury, Marques Crosby, and Susan Dietrich

***Committee Members Absent:*** Judith Lane, Andrea Crow Henry, and Khalid Abdi

***Community Members Present:*** None

Call to Order: Mr. Kerls called the meeting to order at 7:30PM.

Public Comments: There were none at this time.

### **1. Status of Recording of Minutes**

Mr. Foresto spoke on this matter and shared that the meetings are currently being recorded. A night secretary was hired yesterday, who will be handling all future minutes.

### **2. Update on take-aways**

#### **a. Anonymous tip line**

Ms. Dietrich shared that she worked with Mr. Boucher on the IDEA community feedback form. She emphasized the ability for respondents to remain anonymous or provide contact information.

Mr. Kingsbury expressed concern about not being able to reach anonymous respondents in the case of receiving alarming information. Ms. Dietrich reiterated the need for anonymity, particularly due to the fact that respondents could be sharing personal, sensitive information.

Mr. Kerls inquired about the committee's plan for responding to the feedback form in a timely fashion. Ms. Dietrich suggested an automated email reply to confirm receipt. She also clarified that much of the information will be narrative feedback,

Mr. Crosby and Mr. Sharkey expressed the need for setting clear expectations about whether the forms will be reviewed and read versus actively responded to.

Mr. Crosby suggested a pop-up message for anonymous respondents, thanking them for their feedback and providing the IDEA email address if they have further information.

Mr. Kerls suggested adding feedback form review as a standing agenda item moving forward. Mr. Crosby expressed concern about maintaining anonymity with that approach; Ms. Dietrich suggested instead focusing on numbers and trends, rather than specific details. She also suggested notifying all form respondents that all IDEA correspondences are public record.

The committee also agreed to make "preferred method of contact" a required field on the feedback form.

Ms. Dietrich agreed to write the thank-you message for respondents on the feedback form. She also offered to reach out to Ms. Potter about the legal requirements of ensuring respondents are aware that the information is public record.

Mr. Sharkey inquired about the output of the feedback form; Ms. Dietrich responded that it is generated into a GoogleSheet, but could be reformatted into a more narrative format.

#### **b. Questionnaire for newcomers/ groups outside the norm**

Mr. Sharkey addressed this matter. He raised the issue of timing and was curious if the committee wanted to do the survey before or after the focus groups. His inclination was to do the survey after the focus groups; he felt this approach would allow the information gleaned from the focus groups to inform the content of the survey.

Mr. Crosby agreed that the survey should occur after the focus groups. He also shared that he agrees with the Master Plan Committee's approach to have the questionnaire be one open-ended question.

Ms. Dietrich reminded the committee that they must do two community forums as part of their charge.

Mr. Foresto agreed that the survey should take place after the focus groups. He suggested the committee includes themselves in the Master Plan, as it will be a skeleton for town proceedings in the future.

Ms. Dietrich suggested using the "meeting in a box" approach to expedite the process of finding commonalities and fruitful conversations. She offered this as an alternative to the survey. She also offered to share the Master Plan's materials with the committee as a helpful resource.

Mr. Kingsbury shared that he agrees with the approach to do the survey after the focus groups.

#### **c. Focus groups Who do we want to reach?**

##### **i. Identification of various champions in multiple demographics**

Mr. Foresto suggested reaching out to the main groups in town, such as the town, school, and police.

Ms. Dietrich suggested organizing the focus groups topically, followed by the first community forum. She felt this would help identify other individuals to participate in future focus groups.

Mr. Foresto suggested reaching out to social groups, including religious organizations.

Ms. Dietrich reminded the committee of the need to reach out to underrepresented individuals as additional focus groups, too.

Ms. Dietrich discussed that much of the Master Plan's consultant's success stemmed from the uniformity and consistency of the question. She also suggested sharing the question and shared language with respondents in advance.

Mr. Kerls asked if the IDEA committee members would be leading the focus groups; Ms. Dietrich responded that this would be the case. She also suggested having 2 members present to assist with notetaking.

Mr. Foresto suggested beginning with the town focus group, then schools, then police. He offered to handle the town focus group. Ms. Dietrich offered to handle the school focus group.

Ms. Dietrich also suggested having no more than 7 people in each focus group, as this was a successful approach with the Master Plan's focus group. She suggested reaching out to respective department heads of leaders for each group and inquiring about potential participants.

Mr. Sharkey asked how long the focus groups were; Ms. Dietrich replied that the maximum was one hour.

Ms. Dietrich shared that the Master Plan consultant condensed the focus groups into 2 weeks, which was a successful approach.

### **3. Discussion: Medway Master Plan**

Ms. Dietrich presented on this matter. She shared that there are 17 members who represent different boards and committees in the town, as well as a member at large. She shared that Jenn Goldson is the lead consultant, along with her team members, Barry Fradkin and Jamie Shalvey.

Next, Ms. Dietrich shared that the Master Plan is a policy document that focuses on physical evolution, as well as change over time. She emphasized the need for the goals to be long-term and visionary. The eight elements are land use, transportation, economic development, housing, natural resources, historic and cultural resources, open space and recreation, and public services and facilities.

Ms. Dietrich shared a diagram of community values, trends and issues, the overall vision, goals, strategy, and a timeline. In regard to the timeline, March through June was Phrase 1, which is the information gathering stage. She shared that this will be the focus for IDEA through the end of 2021. Beginning in January 2022, Phrase 2 will begin; the focus through April 2022 will be finalizing the plan and putting it forward for adoption.

Ms. Dietrich also mentioned that Jenn's team drove all over Medway in order to understand the community further, then mapped the data of their findings. They have also done interviews that are separate from the focus groups.

Ms. Dietrich also reviewed opportunities for remote and in-person engagement. Lastly, she mentioned that she will send the Master Plan's survey to the IDEA members and encouraged them to complete it.

#### **4. Discussion: Definitions of Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity**

Mr. Kerls suggested a facilitator aid the committee in finding shared language for inclusion, diversity, and equity. He mentioned that it could also be helpful to define the opposite of these terms.

Ms. Dietrich suggested looking at all of the terms in the committee's charter and ensuring that all committee members have a shared understanding of their meanings.

Ms. Dietrich and Mr. Kerls suggested finding a time when all committee members are available in order to find shared definitions of these terms.

The committee revisited the idea of finding a consultant to guide them in this process. They estimated that the duration of the conversation would be approximately 3 hours. Mr. Crosby shared that Mr. Sharkey's wife was an effective moderator for a Medway Marches event and suggested that she could fill a similar role in the aforementioned discussion.

#### **5. New Business**

The committee discussed meeting at least monthly on Tuesdays until the fall.

Mr. Crosby and Ms. Dietrich reviewed the need for training with the consultant, performing the focus groups, having 2 community forums, and preparing their findings and final report.

Ms. Dietrich suggested that the committee be ready with their findings at the end of September 2022, since the committee's end date is November 1, 2022.

Ms. Dietrich suggested that the committee complete the workshop by August 2021, as well as the definitions, then do an internal focus group in September 2021. She suggested doing the focus groups in October 2021. She also suggested doing the first community survey in January 2022 and the second one in May 2022.

Ms. Dietrich reminded the group of its charge: reporting back to the Select Board on or before November 1, 2022 with their findings and policy recommendations necessary to carry out the mission. She shared that the IDEA Committee is not charged with solving all existing problems; rather, their mission is to identify the current issues and offer suggestions.

Ms. Dietrich suggested meeting biweekly, starting in September. She stated that the first focus should be to prepare for the focus groups, assign who is handling which focus group, schedule them, and do them. She offered to draft a month-by-month schedule for the committee.

Mr. Crosby shared that he received a draft of the Shrewsbury Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force's deliverable: they shared recommendations, identified the problems they wish to solve, and shared the details of their data gathering process for each issue.

Mr. Kerls reiterated that he will share a spreadsheet later this week to determine availability for upcoming meetings

**Motion to Adjourn**: Ms. Dietrich offered a motion to adjourn at 9:06PM. Mr. Crosby seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. VOTE: 6-0.