



Public Kick-Off Meeting #1 : Scribe Notes – Room 1

Nov 15th, 2021

Name of Scribe: Gregg Cademartori

Name of Facilitators: Taskina Tareen Katie Kahl

Date: 11/15/2021

Number of people in group:12

Names and backgrounds of participants:

Amanda Madeira

Cara Hutchins

Catherine Bayliss

Chad Johnson (Assistant Harbormaster)

Christopher Griffith

David Rosen (Planning Board Member)

Ellen Leaman

Greg Verga (Mayor Elect)

Jody Sundquist

Linda Brayton (Clean Energy Commission)

Mary Ann Boucher

Stephen Sacca

Steve Sienkiewicz

Discussion One: Harbor strengths, weaknesses, opportunities

Taskina Tareen introduced Social Point exercise, co-facilitator Katie Kahl, and scribe Gregg Cademartori. Participants were asked to share their thoughts on strengths, weaknesses and opportunities supported by the mapping tool that can be found on the project website at:

<https://harborplan.gloucester-ma.gov/>

Individual comments:

Cara Hutchins: made two general comments that Rogers Street presents a real opportunity, as someone that comes up and visits a lot from Beverly for recreational activities and work, thinks Roger Street should be made more pedestrian friendly and key linkages should be made. There

are opportunities to bring people to see the working waterfront to see the fishing industry like the harborwalk.

Ellen Leaman: is concerned about the environmental impact and resilience and adaptation that must be incorporated into any planning for the harbor and how it is going to be impacted, particularly as it relates to flood risk. She also wondered how all the private businesses can be influenced to take resilience measures.

Steve Sienkiewicz: one of the things he would like to see is if there is a way to do something on the city-owned I4-C2, maybe with a carve out in the regulator framework to come up with a mix-used civic or cultural center and tie in the Blue Economy work and the fishing heritage and moorings for guest and resident. The site could be used to connect the community to the harbor in a different way. He understands that there are a lot of restrictions on water dependent uses, but there should be consideration for a civic center but also be consistent with what is needed to be compliant with the regulatory framework. He thinks there could be a conference center that would enhance Rogers Street that could still be true to our fishing heritage.

Greg Verga: wanted to address the previous comment, he believes something has to happen on I4-C2 and this should be worked on in a parallel track with the harbor plan. A parking lot is not an allowable use and is not a sustainable way to key this parcel. This will be a focus of his administration in January, with public input every step of the way.

Steve Sienkiewicz: had more of a question: given all of the private ownership in East Gloucester will the harbor plan's economic development address how we can help current property owners to be better capitalized to expand opportunities. He thinks that part of East Gloucester could be re-thought to expand economic development in the area.

Taskina Tareen responded that harbor plans typically have frameworks and economic strategies for the DPA and the harbor planning areas, but also considers impact areas such as East Gloucester. East Gloucester may need a further economic development strategy.

Christopher Griffith: wondered whether businesses that are responding to climate change might be appropriate for the harbor area? If these businesses are working to solve the impacts of climate change would it make sense to allow them to invest in this area?

Taskina Tareen clarified that it would depend on how they are categorized and if they are water dependent uses consistent with the current regulations. Marine research is an allowable use, climate change research or response and how that impacts other marine research may be something that can be looked at.

Christopher Griffith thinks as a community that is trying to address climate change this area should be one that is invested in by innovative companies trying to do the same.

Ellen Leaman asked if there is funding for businesses that want to respond to climate change or help solve climate change issues. Is there money in the harbor plan for that? Additionally she believes the harbor area needs more signage and wayfinding.

Taskina Tareen responded that the plan may direct where investment is needed but will not supply funds.

Linda Brayton: she is excited about academic presence on the harbor and in the city like GMGI and the biotech academy. She is not as excited about tourism in general, but more education vacations and learning about the harbor.

Steve Sienkiewics: looking at the opportunities and strength that folks are putting on the Social Point a couple of things come to mind, and seeing the great recent work on the Blue Economy by UMASS he hopes there is an opportunity to realize some of that potential on the harbor, like GMGI and the associated companies there. A couple of the comments address the amount of land that Americold and Gorton's take up, and there are different opinions on that, they are a great anchor. But how can we bring opportunities to connect our future with our past in a tangible, visible way will be very important?

David Rosen: asked is the underlying assumption about the harbor plan reviving or not? The fishing industry and fish are not here, and the harbor has been based on fishing, so it changes the way we may look at the harbor? Is the premise that the fishing industry is stable and the harbor is going to remain a work harbor, or not?

Taskina Tareen: reported that the planning group has been looking at a sector analysis of the different elements of the economy, and this is a critical aspect to understand, and the prospect for the harbor can change depending on this information.

David Rosen: clarified that he would like to see it remain a working harbor, but he does not know the science, and if it indicates otherwise we may have to change our thinking about the harbor.

Katie Kahl: commented that there are members on the committee that are very aware and focused on these issues. You asked if the baseline assumption is "the fish are not here", and that is not the assumption. We are trying to look at all the factors that can affect the industries here and opportunities as well. We are trying to get to a baseline understanding of all these issues, and this first meeting is more aspirational to find out where everyone's values are and no one will win out.

Steve Sienkiewicz: he has the sense that the fishing industry is at a point where it may need to shift depending on the science of groundfishing and lobstering. He believes the harbor is an opportunity for economic development and not necessarily based on the economies that were built up over the last century. The wish that he would have is that the desire to protect the fishing industry doesn't inhibit or block or stall other kinds of economic opportunities and expand

our tax base and jobs, but he is hearing the water dependent use is a big deal, so we are going to have to figure out how to work with, or around, or carve out a solution. We need more economic development in Gloucester and it's not all going to be fishing. So he asks the committee to consider the options to allow that to happen even though it might not be supported by the fishing industry.

Ellen Leaman we need to create jobs with a living wage, Gloucester is becoming a bedroom community with high real estate costs, we need year round jobs, so that people that live here can stay here.

Mary Ann Boucher: born and raised in Gloucester, spent most of her life in East Gloucester. She worries that if we give up the harbor to other uses it will create a domino effect with condominiums. She is also concerned about I4-C2 and what is being considered to go there. We need to think about the impacts of traffic in our downtown, she sees a lot of problems. She knows that change is inevitable, but she is concerned that once we start it will create a domino effect and we will lose the thing that makes Gloucester so unique and special.

Jody Sundquist: wanted to say that Portland is doing an amazing job with its waterfront. When she says working waterfront it has to be for working people not just the land it sits on. Portland has done some really great things, and asks everyone to think how it is working for them and how it can work for use. It is not being developed as a commercial area is more about the environment in which it is and whose there and to support the people that live there.

Part II - Summary: 2-3 key harbor priorities

Katie Kahl thought maybe we should talk about challenges, sounds like one of them is the concern of doing anything because of what it might lead to and turn Gloucester into anytown USA. So maybe we can hear more about weaknesses that we can be addressing and move to priorities for the plan?

Linda Brayton reiterated that sea level rise and climate change needs to be considered and an underlying factor of everything we talk about. It should be part of the mission of the waterfront.

Gregg Cademartori: indicated it was time to start to summarize priorities to report back to the larger group. From reviewing his notes he heard a lot of points about the backbone of this process is to understand where we are. A lot of that is a deep dive into the current economic condition of the harbor, what it is doing for jobs, how the land is being used, what opportunities there are for additional uses, and what those uses should be? There also appears to be tension that uses are appropriately scaled given what is there now and opportunities for traditional industries, with what other uses might fill some of that space. It does seem that there are two dividing opinions 1) are the traditional industries sustainable and if not can other uses be considered and 2) if you start to shift you will never see a return if those uses are displaced. The one very big priority from the challenges is the environmental condition and the changing

environmental condition and what it means for these properties as they look to invest or reinvest them, that they must consider climate change.

Christopher Griffith agreed with the summary, but also wanted to include tourism and art and culture are also a big part of the economy and must be considered as well.