



Proposed Process for Updating and Adopting the Master Plan in Accordance with Charter Sec. 9.8

1. The Town Council delay adopting the Amherst Master Plan until after it is updated.
2. The Town Council requests the Town Manager and Planning Board, per Charter Section 9.8(c), review the Master Plan to determine revisions, amendments, and additions that are necessary and obvious and that the Planning Board attempt to propose revisions to the Master Plan and vote to approve them within 9 months.

The Council expects that the Planning Board will consult and utilize Town staff to identify and draft what updates are necessary and obvious and undertake this process with the understanding that the Council is not asking for extensive revisions to the Master Plan.

The Council asks that the Planning Board involve the public in this process through holding at least 1 working session, in accordance with Charter Sec. 9.8(e), it does not ask, nor does it expect, that the process for involving the public be as extensive as the process that led up to the 2010 approval of the Master Plan.

It is CRC's understanding that Town staff has been compiling a list of potential revisions that may fall into this "necessary and obvious" category but recognizes that it is entirely within the purview of the Planning Board to make the final decisions. CRC's definition of "necessary and obvious" includes revisions such as those to reflect the change in form of government, the Council's adoption of Climate Action Goals, , and Town adoption of plans and initiatives (including the Transportation Plan, updated Flood Mapping, Housing Market Study, Housing Production Plan, Open Space & Recreation Plan, etc.) that have occurred since the Planning Board approved the Master Plan.

3. During the Planning Board's discussions regarding the necessary and obvious revisions, the Town Council requests that the Planning Board regularly inform the CRC of its work, with the Planning Board Chair and CRC Chair deciding how best to accomplish this request. The Chairs may determine that CRC members should be asked to attend meetings of the Planning Board, public hearings, and/or the Charter-required working session, in order to stay informed of the Planning Board's progress, revisions being discussed, and public comments. CRC, through reports to the Council, shall keep the Council informed of the progress and revisions being discussed.
4. When the Planning Board publishes a "Final Draft Master Plan" for the purposes of public, staff, and committee comments, the Planning Board shall forward the Final Draft to the Council, who shall refer it to the CRC. The CRC shall review the Master Plan in accordance with its charge, to determine whether to recommend adoption, with or without amendments, by the Council. It

shall accomplish this review within 45 days of referral, unless extended by the Council. This is the step in the process that the Council will be able to provide feedback to the Planning Board.

5. After the Council receives the report from CRC on its recommendation, the Council shall vote to send feedback, comments, and/or suggested amendments to the Planning Board. The Planning Board shall not vote to approve the updated Master Plan until it receives the formal feedback from the Council.
6. Once the Planning Board approves the updated Master Plan in accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws and Charter Section 9.8(c), the Master Plan shall be submitted to the Town Manager, who shall submit it to the Town Council for adoption, per Charter Section 9.8(b).
7. Once the Council receives the updated, approved Master Plan, the Council shall hold a public hearing in accordance with Charter Section 9.8(b). Referral to CRC should not be necessary at this stage, since CRC will have already reviewed the revisions and made its recommendation to the Council on those revisions, and the entire Master Plan.
8. After the required Public Hearing, the Council shall vote to adopt the Master Plan per Charter Sec. 9.8(b).

The Council shall consider the Master Plan at two meetings prior to voting to adopt it, in accordance with Council Rules of Procedure.

If, after the Planning Board approves the amended Master Plan in accordance with Massachusetts Law and the Charter, the Town Council seeks amendments, the Council shall forward all proposed amendments to the Planning Board for Planning Board consideration and additional approval prior to the Council voting on the amended Master Plan. The goal is to avoid the Town Council adopting a Master Plan that has not been approved by the Planning Board, since the Planning Board-approved Master Plan, by state law, is the Master Plan that governs the Town.