RESOLUTION PROMOTING BEST PRACTICES IN NORTHAMPTON DECISION-MAKING

Adopted by the Northampton City Council on December 6, 2007

WHEREAS, the City of Northampton City Council believes that effective citizen involvement is essential to good planning and governance; and

WHEREAS, the City's new draft master plan, *Sustainable Northampton*, contains a guiding principle for "Operating the city as a democratic enterprise responsive and responsible to the fiscal, economic, social, and environmental interests of its citizens;" and

WHEREAS, all citizens of Northampton share the common goals for policy and decision-making processes that are well-defined, transparent, accessible, and embedded with a continual focus on community outreach and stakeholder involvement; and

WHEREAS, these shared community goals are vital to every aspect of government from planning and budgeting to public safety and the public works to sustainable policies for energy, transportation, and economic development; and

WHEREAS, the Northampton City Council, as the people's elected legislature entrusted with both a lawmaking and oversight authority over all of these areas of government, must take a leadership role by creating a framework for positive community dialogue around these shared goals;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

The Northampton City Council orders the creation of a seven (7) person Ad Hoc Committee for Best Practices in Northampton Decision-Making (hereafter referred to as "The Committee"), comprised of three (3) members of the City Council to be appointed as part of its biennial reorganization in January 2008 by the City Council President and (4) members of the public to be elected each by a majority vote of the City Council following community outreach efforts encouraging citizen applications or nominations to be submitted to the Clerk of the Council by January 16, 2008.

The Committee shall create and oversee a public process for reviewing municipal decision-making in the City of Northampton and shall make recommendations to the City Council on ensuring the use of locally and nationally accepted best practices in our community.

The Committee's work will include the gathering of ideas and information from citizens, citizen organizations and groups, City boards and commissions, elected and appointed officials, and staff. It will also include the study of relevant decision-making best practices in other selected municipalities.

The Committee may establish sub-committees or working groups composed of Committee members and others to aid it in the acquisition of this information and in the formulation of its recommendations.

The Committee will deliver a progress report to the Northampton City Council no later than April 3, 2008. This progress report will include a preliminary work plan and a draft schedule for public forums and meetings with other groups.

The Committee will issue draft recommendations to the Northampton City Council no later than December 4, 2008 and will make a public presentation to the City Council on said draft recommendations on or before that date.

The Committee shall allow for a ninety (90) day public review period, to include community outreach and public hearings, before finalizing its recommendations.

The Committee shall present its Final Recommendations to the Northampton City Council no later than March 5, 2009.

Upon receipt of the Final Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee for Best Practices in Northampton Decision-Making, the Northampton City Council will refer to its various committees of jurisdiction the responsibility for reviewing said recommendations and drafting appropriate Orders, Ordinances or Resolutions for the City of Northampton.

Upon the request of the Committee, the City Council may grant reasonable extensions to any of the reporting deadlines contained in this resolution.

The Committee may make recommendations to the City Council at any time prior to the issuance of its final report.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision-Making, as appointed by the Northampton City Council in February 2007, has been charged with the responsibility to review the City's municipal decision-making practices and to review, consider and recommend practices that will foster democratic enterprise responsive and responsible to the fiscal, economic, social, and environmental interests of its citizens and to optimize citizen participation. We are committed to ensuring the fullest opportunity possible for members of the public to express their views, and have these views be carefully considered.

Our Committee goals:

- Emulate "best practices" by abiding by the Open Meeting Law, holding meetings in accessible locations, inviting media and having our meetings and communications documented and accessible to the public.

- Engage the extraordinary diversity of city residents in this process.

- Create and oversee a public process for reviewing municipal decision-making in the City of Northampton and make recommendations to the City Council, on or before January 16, 2009, on ensuring the use of locally and nationally accepted best practices in our community.

Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision-Making

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY

Good governance depends on public participation. The Committee urges interested citizens to attend and participate in all its meetings. A good faith effort will be made to post the agendas on the city's website (www.northamptonma.gov/bestpractices) and as widely as possible at least one week in advance of all meetings and on-site on the day of the meeting. The Committee's written rules of procedure will also be available online and at its meetings.

Each meeting will begin with time allotted for public comment. Agenda item-specific comment is encouraged and citizens are invited, to the extent possible, to join the Committee in discussion of any or all agenda items. All participants in these discussions are bound by the Committee's rules of procedure.

The Committee will also consider adding agenda items made in writing prior to the meeting or requested during the public comment period.

Approved March 27, 2008

Ground Rules and Committee Decision-Making Model for the Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision Making (Best Practices Committee)

Ground Rules

1. Only one person speaks at a time; no one will interrupt while someone is speaking.

2. Each person expresses their own views, rather than speaking for others at the table or attributing motives to them.

3. Avoid grandstanding (i.e., extended comments/speaking), so that every one has a fair chance to speak.

4. No personal attacks. Challenge ideas, not people.

5. Everybody agrees to make a strong effort to stay on track with the agenda and to move the deliberations forward.

6. Everybody will seek to focus on the merits of what is being said, making a good faith effort to understand the concerns of others. Questions of clarification are encouraged. Disparaging comments are discouraged.

7. Everybody will follow the "no surprises" rule. Concerns should be voiced when they arise, not later in the deliberations when a "surprise" objection is raised.

8. Each person will seek to identify options or proposals that represent shared interests, without minimizing legitimate disagreements. Each person agrees to do their best to take account of the interests of the group as a whole.

9. Each person reserves the right to disagree with any proposal and accepts responsibility for offering alternatives that accommodates their interests and the interests of others.

10. Each person who speaks to the media will speak only about their views. No member will speak on behalf of the group as a whole, without permission of the group as a whole.

Consensus Model for Decision-Making

The consensus process is a proven and effective model for group decision-making. It promotes group problem solving through creative consensus-building, and offers greater opportunities for the best possible agreements than the "majority rules" voting model (win-lose) of more traditional and formal rules.

Before the meeting:
The facilitator, or identified "point person" for a particular proposal should, when applicable, contact, or make themselves available for contact by, relevant stakeholders in order to devise a preliminary proposal that takes account of the concerns of the group.

Role of the facilitator: Keeps order, keeps the discussion on track, makes sure the discussion focuses on the merits of the arguments being made, summarizes the tentative agreements reached and tests for overwhelming agreement.

Meeting Rules: The Consensus Model shall be the preferred decision-making model for the Best Practices Committee. This does NOT preclude a request to "suspend the rules" and ask for a majority vote to utilize Robert's Rules of Order for part of, or the remainder of the meeting. The same procedure can be invoked for moving from Robert's Rules to the Consensus Model.

1. Someone presents an idea. It could be a formal proposal, but most of the time it's just an idea, not yet fully formed. It does NOT need to be in the form of a motion, nor seconded for discussion.

2. The idea is passed around and the pros and cons are discussed.

3. As a result of the discussion — the more input, the better — the idea can be modified.

4. If a general agreement seems to be emerging, the facilitator tests for consensus by re-stating the latest version of the idea or proposal to see if everybody agrees.

5. If anyone dissents, the facilitator returns to the discussion to see if the idea/proposal can be further modified in order to make it acceptable to everyone. The facilitator shall encourage expression and examination of the concerns of dissenters. The facilitator tests for support for modifications. This test could include a "straw vote".

6. The decision is "made" when the facilitator determines an "overwhelming majority" has been reached.

7. The facilitator, or a designee, shall write a summary highlighting points of agreement at the conclusion of the meeting.

Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision Making

PLAN OF ACTION

In order to accomplish its mission, the Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices In Northampton Decision-Making (herein after, Best Practices Committee, or The Committee) intends to follow this Plan of Action, which may be modified from time to time, to meet particular circumstances.

All meetings of the Committee shall be publicized and shall be open to the public. To the greatest extent possible, the Committee meetings will be televised.

The Committee embraces and enthusiastically supports the concept of inclusiveness in the decision-making process. To that end, in addition to widely publicizing all aspects of its proceedings, which members of the public are encouraged to attend, the Committee will reach out to groups and individuals who may not have felt included in the past.

An important component of the Committee's work will be to establish a model within which the legal obligations, rights and privileges of all parties will be recognized and respected.

STEP ONE: DISCOVERY:

The Committee, and its subcommittees shall conduct research into the decision-making procedures of various departments, boards and agencies of the City of Northampton, in order to determine how decisions are currently made, the types and categories of decisions each entity makes, and to determine to what extent public input would be appropriate regarding the various types of decisions. In addition, the Committee, or its subcommittees will research any legal requirements that must be accommodated in the decision-making process of each department, or agency, such as, but not limited to zoning ordinances, wetlands regulations, and local, state and federal laws.

Such research will include meeting with the City's department and agency heads. In addition, the Committee, or its subcommittees, will investigate the best practices procedures of other communities.

The Committee will also seek to learn how each entity advises the public of pending decisions which warrant public comment, and what procedures are used to provide for public participation.

The Committee will invite members of the public to appear before it at open meetings to express their concerns and ideas on how best to optimize public participation.

The Committee, or its sub-committees, shall conduct an outreach program, which may include members of the Committee or subcommittees meeting with citizen groups at various locations, such as, but not limited to, the facilities of agencies that service the various segments of the City's population, at public housing facilities, senior citizen centers, and cultural organizations.

STEP TWO: DELIBERATION:

In meetings opened to the public, the Committee will analyze the data obtained during the discovery process, and as a result of the individual research conducted by Committee members, or by subcommittees, as provided for in the enabling resolution. Based on those deliberations, a Report of Preliminary Findings shall be prepared by the Committee and submitted to the City Council and made available to the public.

STEP THREE: NINETY DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD:

The Committee shall present its preliminary findings to the Community, to seek its views and suggestions.

STEP FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINAL REPORT:

On March 5, 2009 the Committee shall present its final report to the City Council .

APPENDIX 7

Northampton, Massachusetts

Northampton Home | Calendar | Departments | City Services | About Northampton

- Home
- Mission Statement & Governing Policies
- 2007 City Council Resolution
- Current City/State Laws and Regulations
- Best Practice Links
- Public Meeting Review Form
- May 13, 2008 Public Forum Photo Archive
- Suggestion Box
- Meeting Minutes

Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision-Making

On December 6, 2007, the Northampton City Council adopted a resolution creating an "Ad Hoc Committee for Best Practices in Northampton Decision-Making" comprised of three City Councilors and four citizens.

The Committee's charge is to "create and oversee a public process for reviewing municipal decision-making in the City of Northampton and shall make recommendations to the City Council on ensuring the use of locally and nationally accepted best practices in our community"

MEMBERS

Michael Bardsley, Councilor-at-Large
50 Union Street, Northampton
michael.bardsley@verizon.net

Lisa DePiano
38 Henry Street, Northampton
dips@riseup.net

Wendy Foxmyn
105 Fairway Village, Leeds
wendyfoxmy@aol.com

Alex Ghiselin
164 Riverside Drive, Florence
aghiselin@comcast.net

David Narkewicz, Ward 4 Councilor
31 South Park Terrace, Northampton
dnarkewicz@comcast.net

NEXT MEETINGS

December 3, 2008
6:00 PM
Conference Room
Department of Public Works
125 Locust Street
Northampton, MA 01060

Best Practices Research Memo

Memorandum on research into decision-making best practices in other communities

Join the Best Practices Online Discussion

Google Groups

Northampton Best Practices

May 13, 2008 Public Forum Video

Watch extensive footage from the Committee's first

James Palermo
134 Spruce Hill Avenue, Florence
jimpalermo74@aol.com

Robert Reckman, Ward 3 Councilor
36 Fruit Street, Northampton
bobreckman@aol.com

public forum on Google Video here. Thank you to Adam Cohen of the North Street Association for filming and posting this video.

***best practice*: a technique or methodology that, through experience and research, has proven to reliably lead to a desired result. A commitment to using the best practices in any field is a commitment to using all the knowledge and technology at one's disposal to ensure success. The term is used frequently in the fields of health care, government administration, the education system, project management, hardware and software product development, and elsewhere.**

Compilation of Proposed Best Practice Recommendations

APPENDIX 8

Google Groups

Recently Visited Groups | Help | Sign in

Northampton Best Practices

Search this group | Search Groups

Home

New since last time: 1 message

Description: The Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision-Making has created this group as a supplement to its official website (http://www.northamptonma.gov/bestpractices) to promote greater public discussion and provide an online vehicle for citizens to share ideas and information.

Discussions 9 of 83 messages view all »

+ new post

Permit Applications - Visualizations Needed at the Start
By Adam Cohen - Nov 25 - 1 author - 0 replies

Volkmann: Public Hearings Should be Held Long Before Votes Are Taken
By AdamRCohen - Nov 21 - 1 author - 0 replies

[northamptonbestpractices] Status of Video from 11/19 Meeting
By Alex Ghiselin - Nov 21 - 2 authors - 1 reply

Parent Alludes to Difficulty with Attending Public Meetings
By onomonan...@aim.com - Nov 19 - 2 authors - 1 reply

Two Uses of Online Media for Public Information and Interaction
By Adam Cohen - Nov 18 - 1 author - 0 replies

thank you
By wfox...@gmail.com - Nov 17 - 1 author - 0 replies

Planning Board Dissatisfied with Decision-Making Processes
By AdamRCohen - Nov 16 - 1 author - 0 replies

Video: Best Practices Committee, 11/12/08
By AdamRCohen - Nov 15 - 1 author - 0 replies

Late Additions to the Agendas of Public Meetings
By AdamRCohen - Nov 14 - 1 author - 0 replies

XML Send email to this group: northamptonbestpractices@googlegroups.com

Home

Discussions

About this group

Join this group

Group info

Members: 17

Activity: Low activity

Language: English

Group categories:
Society > Government
Region: United States > Massacl

More group info »

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Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision-Making
Public Meeting Review Form

Committee/Board: _____ Observer(s): _____

Regular meeting or special meeting (e.g., public hearing)? _____

Date: _____ Meeting Site: _____

Board Members Present:
Chair: _____

_____

_____

Staff Members Present:

_____

_____

# of other official attendees: _____ # of public attendees: _____

Meeting scheduled to start: _____ Time Called to Order: _____
If started later than posted time, why?

_____

Were the board members and staff introduced to the attendees? _____ Were the attendees asked to introduce themselves at the beginning of the meeting? _____ and/or before they spoke? _____ Were they asked to "sign in"? _____ Was the room adequate to accommodate the attendees (size of room, # of chairs, sight lines, speakers could be heard, etc. – comment):

_____

_____

_____

Were agendas and other documents made available to the public – was the agenda reviewed aloud…were ground rules/rules of procedure explained? (Comment)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Was there a formal public comment period? _____ Were public attendees invited to participate/comment during the meeting? _____ If so, did this work well (i.e., were they listened to?); if not, did it appear the attendees were unhappy about not being permitted to speak? (Comment)

_____

_____

_____

Was there a reporter at the meeting? ___ Was the meeting cablecast or taped for cable viewing? ____

Did the attendees appear to understand the proceedings? _____ If not, could the Chair have done more to educate the public? _____ Comment: _____

Did the Chair/Committee "run" the meeting or did the staff "run" the meeting? _____

Did the Chair effectively facilitate discussion, among the members, staff and attendees? _____

Comment: _____

_____

_____

Overall, would you say this was a well-run meeting? (i.e., clear agenda, stayed on track, public participated appropriately, civility prevailed, etc.)? _____ Comment:

_____

_____

Other comments:

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU!

If you'd like to be added to our contact list, please complete (print) the following:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number(s): _____ Email: _____

Please return this form to:
Best Practices Committee
c/o Northampton City Council
City Hall
210 Main Street
Northampton, MA 01060.

Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision Making

May 13, 2008 Public Forum Synthesized Citizen Input Report

The Ad Hoc Committee hosted a well-attended public forum at J.F.K. Middle School on May 13, 2008. A facilitated large-group exercise was conducted where attendees were asked to silently spend 20 minutes writing thoughts and ideas about Northampton decision-making on butcher paper lining the walls of the JFK Community Room. Participants then broke up into small groups to discuss and develop these ideas with each group reporting back to the entire group at the end of the evening.

(A video of the forum can be viewed online here with thanks to Adam Cohen and the North Street Association)

The Committee transcribed all of the input gathered during the large and small group exercises and posted that document on its web site together with a photo archive of the original written comments.

A Committee working group analyzed, discussed, and synthesized all of that material into the following list of public recommendations organized under three main best practice issue areas:

Citizen Participation/Public Dialog

- Reinvigorate citizen advisory committee
- Share committee ideas with the public
- Hold meetings on issues, not process
- Small citizen meetings before large group meetings
- Limit number if boards on which a person may sit
- Meet after 5pm to accommodate people who work
- Open process for joining committees
- Public education on how city works
- Encourage neighborhood associations
- Volunteerism
- Review Planning board rules for public input
- Require regular ward meetings
- Restructure public hearings/public comment

- Respond to those who speak at public hearings
- Increase detail in agenda
- Open design process
- Create clear protocol for citizen involvement
- Early involvement of public how/when
- Train decision makers on class/race awareness
- Review Mayoral appointments
- Look at committee diversity
- Provide opportunity for committee member training
- Foster an atmosphere of respect

Communication/Outreach

- Advance notice of meetings in diverse ways: public bulletin board
- City website to get volunteers
- Notification of public works projects
- How does the city decide what to do with public land/buildings
- Build in systems for accountability
- Formalize NCTV/Blogs/Community Radio into City communication
- Make available contact information of public officials
- Look at citizens budget for Lawrence, MA

Governmental Procedures

- Restructure Public comment during council meetings
- Review process for committee appointments
- Provide independent legal advice
- Translate jargon into easy to understand terms and concepts
- Revisit City School program

Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision Making
Public Forum on the "Meadows Land Plan"
Aug. 25, 2008

The purpose of the forum was to create and record the narrative of a recent community problem solving process in the words of the people involved and to search that narrative for information useful to the Best practice Committee.

Maria Tymoczko-former Ward 3 councilor

Dr. Tymoczko detailed a long history of challenging and poorly resolved issues dating back more than 30 years in the Meadows section of Northampton (about 4000 acres mostly in the Conn. River flood plain) As a resident since 1971 she observed that much ill will was generated by the Fairgrounds, which could draw very large crowds that damaged the neighborhood. She also claimed that the area and most of Ward 3 was held in low esteem and that the city tried to dump its problems there in the form of social service programs and facilities that grew up as the Northampton State Hospital began to deinstitutionalize mentally ill patients. She also listed federal and state regulations that were created with little regard for residents as a continuing sore. Maria marked the beginning of improved conditions when the Fairgrounds agreed to regular open meetings with the neighborhood as part of an agreement worked out with City Council to allow Simulcast betting in 2003. She said that there needs to be a "level playing field" where all neighborhoods are treated equally and with respect. Stakeholder interests need to be acknowledged, people respected and led to feel "safe and heard". She also stated the community has legitimate interests in the activities of private organizations (e.g. Fair Association, Smith College, non-profits) ; that business decisions can have community impacts and that transparency and openness are an essential part of best practice.

Wayne Feiden- Director, Office of Planning and Development

Wayne agreed that this was the most controversial part of the city but saw the underlying turbulence growing from the "hodgepodge" of regulations imposed on this extraordinarily valuable area to protect it from change. " A lot of what I've been doing my last 20 years has been cleaning up what was created in the 1975 Comprehensive plan He said there was an ongoing battle between groups who saw the meadows as a priceless natural habitat to be left untouched and those living and working there who wanted the same rights as residents in the rest of the city. Wayne implied that the area drifted without a coherent plan for so long because leaders feared controversy and assumed they would pay a stiff political price for any solution. Finally in 2002 under increasing development pressure and supported by Federal financial incentives the city appointed a Flood Hazard Mitigation team to create a plan that would include recommendations for land use in the Meadows and lead to lower flood insurance rates. He said it was important to deal with controversy and that controversy could work for you because it got people's attention. Rumors always get generated..the challenge is to manage rumors.

Alex Ghiselin-former City Councilor and member of the Flood Hazard Mitigation team

Alex said that the team reviewed the record of past floods ,existing plans, and federal flood hazard mitigation literature. A draft report was prepared that reflected professional

input but almost no public outreach. The plan was presented at a public hearing where a loud and angry audience accused the city and the planning department of failing to address the needs of people living in and near the Meadows. The depth of feeling shocked many and seemed to confirm predictions that the issues were too hot to handle. This plan, stripped of land use and zoning recommendations, was accepted by Council in 2003. But as both Wayne and Gerry Budger said the "problems didn't go away".

Gerald Budger..chair of the Meadows Coalition; now chair of the Ward 3 Neighborhood Assoc.

Gerry said the Flood Mitigation hearing was the nastiest most contentious meeting he had ever attended. He came away convinced that the neighborhood needed an organization where residents could share information and work on common problems. He had been a member of the Simulcast committee that brokered the deal that led to regular meetings between the Fairgrounds and neighbors. Both Maria and he agree that this two way flow of information dramatically changed the relationship. Longstanding hostility was replaced by cooperation and transparency. Gerry went on to establish the (The Meadows Coalition) moistly aimed at preservation and at the same time worked to enlarge the idea of community problem solving. He emphasized that, "What made this work is we asked people what they thought we should do at the beginning of the process".

Marilyn Richards, Ward 3 Councilor 2004 to 08
Bob Reckman President of the Ward 3 Neighborhood Assoc, Ward 3 Councilor in 2008

Soon after she was elected, Marilyn was asked by Wayne to restart work on the land use Plan for the Meadows which had stalled after the angry response to the Flood Mitigation Plan. Marilyn, Gerry and Bob Reckmen had started to build the Ward 3 Neighborhood Association with Bob as its first President and hosting public meetings on the future of the Meadows became the Associations first project. They decided to hold a series public meetings that would target different stakeholders. The farmers, the business owners, the residents, environmentalists. They held the meetings in the neighborhood (a Barn, the airport)
Bob and Marilyn both said it was important to make clear to people at the beginning that there was no existing plan, and they would not start on a plan until they had listened to everybody. The city's Senior Planner Carolyn Misch transcribed ideas on large pads so the process was transparent and could be modified right away. Bob said a flyer was distributed to every household in the Ward. That there was good newspaper coverage and at least 350 people took part at one meeting or another. He said the first 5 meetings took place over six weeks "bang, bang, bang" that it was important to keep it moving. With Caroline's help they compiled a detailed report which they took back to a general meeting where it was corrected and a consensus formed. A process that was repeated at still another public meeting. He said the land use plan that resulted was a consensus document because it came from the ground up . He and Marilyn both emphasized the crucial help from the city in the person of Carolyn Misch who brought organizational

and planning skills that were central to the success of the project. Marilyn said she wished she had involved some constituencies (e.g. city, chamber,) earlier.

Carolyn Misch-Senior Planner for the city

She said she entered the process with some "trepidation" because what she called "misinformation" and rumors about the city's intentions. She said the pending sale of the airport added to peoples concerns. She agreed that once started the process was very productive. She said "the important part was passing information in both directions and then people began to understand each other". She credited the strong community connection provided by Marilyn, Bob, Gerry and the Ward 3 Neighborhood Association with getting people to participate which she said was always a challenge. She said that targeting different stake holders helped clarify the issues. That people who attended could hear that they mostly shared the same concerns "they wanted things to stay the same" and that they came to understand "that city rules and regulations could help them get there. She characterized the process as "basic planning exercise" done in partnership with Ward 3 not much different from others done in other parts of the city.

Bruce Hart –environmentalist/officer of the Broad Brook Coalition

While he "respected the process" he was critical of the outcome. He said the Meadows Coalition was very small and maybe influenced by the Ward 3 Association "an inappropriate blending of political and business interests" in the group supposed to be representing environmental interests. His harshest criticism was for changes made to the plan at the end to allow existing businesses to expand beyond what had originally been proposed and widely agreed upon. He said wildlife and habitat were not winners in this process.

Bob Bacon..owner of the Airport (spoke at Best Practices on 9/3)

He thought the process very good. He said that at the focus group for business, expansion was a major topic and that it was agreed that existing businesses would be allowed to build out to 5% of their land area. He said it was a shock to see a 1% limit in the final draft and felt that it was more a transcribing error which was fixed rather than a rewriting of the agreement. Both Caroline and Marilyn seemed to agree more or less but also agreed that it was a real glitch from which a lesson should be learned.

Lessons learned-

1. How and when to bring the public in to decision making is crucial. Bob, Marilyn and Gerry all said in this case it was important to start with a blank slate. Recording all the comments and opinions and then returning to make sure they had "gotten it right" before starting to work on a plan defused the historical anger and produced a near consensus
2. Although the city provided critical help it was (and was seen as) a community driven process.

3. Focusing on one stakeholder group at a time fostered a real conversation where information "was passed back and forth". The importance of this TWO WAY FLOW was repeated by almost everyone who agreed that it was central to correcting misinformation and building collaboration.
4. The process went quickly (five meetings in six weeks) with good press coverage attracting more than enough people to make the process legitimate in the eyes of the community (with the possible exception of environmentalists)
5. Helping the community solve its own problems empowers people. It builds confidence ands experience and pays a continuing dividend. The Simulcast committee led to a neighborhood Fairground Committee which led to The Meadows Coalition and the Ward 3 Association and arguably the most politically and civically active area in the city.
6. If neighborhood gets a reputation for being angry there may be a good reason and postponing action is not a solution.
7. Self interest needs to be acknowledged and articulated so that realistic conversation and compromise can begin. The Meadows process was successful to the extent that it brokered the changes necessary to preserve those qualities the city of Northampton says it values.
8. Using established neighborhood/community organizations to "get the word out" helps increase participation from the community as a whole.
9. Note. Planning process doesn't necessarily work for all decision making needs at the city level.

BOARD/COMMITTEE/COMMISSION SELF-REVIEW FORM

Ad-Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision-Making

City Hall, 210 Main Street, Room 18, Northampton, MA 01060-3199
www.northamptonma.gov/bestpractices

NAME OF BOARD/COMMITTEE/COMMISSION: _____

NAME OF PERSON COMPLETING FORM _____ (OPTIONAL)

MEMBERSHIP:

_____ *(CHAIR)* _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

STAFF/INTERNS (if applicable):

_____ _____

MEETING SCHEDULE: ❑ WEEKLY ❑ MONTHLY ❑ QUARTERLY ❑ OTHER _____

DAY: _____ TIME: _____ AVG. MEETING LENGTH: _____

MEETING SITE: _____ HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE: ❑ YES ❑ NO

MEETING AGENDAS (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY): ❑ NONE ❑ PREPARED IN ADVANCE OF EACH MEETING
❑ DISTRIBUTED TO MEMBERS PRIOR TO MEETING ❑ ACCESSIBLE TO PUBLIC PRIOR TO MEETING VIA INTERNET
❑ VIA LEGAL NOTICE ❑ COPIES AVAILABLE AT MEETINGS ❑ REVIEWED ALOUD PRIOR TO THE START OF MEETING

WRITTEN BY-LAWS, RULES OF PROCEDURE, MISSION STATEMENT, ETC.,: ❑ YES ❑ NO

IF "YES", LIST: _____

CHAIR REVIEWS MEETING FORMAT AND RULES FOR PUBLIC: ❑ YES ❑ NO

PUBLIC COMMENT (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY): ❑ NONE ❑ BEGINNING OF THE MEETING ❑ END OF THE MEETING
❑ ISSUE-SPECIFIC DURING MEETING ❑ QUESTION & ANSWER ❑ WRITTEN/E-MAIL COMMENTS ACKNOWLEDGED

❑ OTHER: _____

MEETING MINUTES (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY): ❑ NONE ❑ TAKEN BY BOARD MEMBER ❑ TAKEN BY STAFF ❑ DISTRIBUTED TO MEMBERS PRIOR TO MEETING ❑ ACCESSIBLE TO PUBLIC PRIOR TO MEETING ❑ AT MEETING ❑ CURRENT AND PRIOR MINUTES AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW OUTSIDE OF MEETINGS ❑ AVAILABLE ONLINE

❑ OTHER: _____

WEB SITE (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY): ❑ NONE ❑ PAGE ON CITY WEB SITE ❑ MAINTAINED BY STAFF ❑ MAINTAINED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ❑ LISTS ALL MEMBERS ❑ LISTS APPOINTED/ELECTED TERMS OF EACH MEMBER ❑ MEMBER CONTACT INFO ❑ STAFF CONTACT INFO (IF APPLICABLE) ❑ DESCRIPTION OF THE MISSION AND DUTIES OF THE BODY ❑ BYLAWS, RULES OF PROCEDURE, OR OTHER WRITTEN PROTOCOLS ❑ MEETING SCHEDULE ❑ MEETING MINUTES ❑ MEETING AGENDAS ❑ APPLICATIONS, FORMS, OR OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

❑ WEBSITE IS UPDATED FREQUENTLY (HOW OFTEN? _____)

DO NEW MEMBERS RECEIVE AN ORIENTATION AND/OR TRAINING: ❑ YES ❑ NO ❑ DON'T KNOW

IF "YES", EXPLAIN:_____

_____

ONGOING TRAINING AND/OR CONTINUING EDUCATION: ❑ YES ❑ NO ❑ DON'T KNOW

IF "YES", EXPLAIN:_____

_____

MEETINGS REGULARLY ATTENDED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: ❑ NO ❑ YES, AVG. # _____

ARE MEETINGS REGULARLY COVERED AND/OR REPORTED ON BY THE PRESS: ❑ YES ❑ NO

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE PUBLIC HAS A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR WORK: ❑ YES ❑ NO

IF "NO", EXPLAIN:_____

_____

HAVE YOU DEVELOPED PRACTICES/POLICIES THAT HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY SUCCESSFUL THAT COULD BE UTILIZED BY YOUR COLLEAGUES ON OTHER BOARDS/COMMITTEES/COMMISSIONS:

_____

_____

_____

_____

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ATTACH ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR IDEAS TO THIS FORM.

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SELF-REVIEW FORM IN ORDER TO HELP THE CITY OF NORTHAMPTON BETTER UNDERSTAND AND IMPROVE ITS POLICIES AND PRACTICES.

Ad-Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision-Making

City Hall, 210 Main Street, Room 18, Northampton, MA 01060-3199
www.northamptonma.gov/bestpractices

TO: Ad Hoc Committee
FROM: Lisa DePiano, Wendy Foxmyn, and David Narkewicz
DATE: November 5, 2008
RE: Inreach Committee Report

The City Council resolution creating the Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision-Making stipulated that our work should include the gathering of ideas and information from "City boards and commissions, elected and appointed officials, and staff." Our committee was formed to conduct this "inreach" component and we divided our efforts into two parts: (1) a written survey to City boards, committees, and commissions, (2) personal interviews with key elected and appointed officials, and staff. We have summarized the results of our work below.

WRITTEN SURVEY TO CITY BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

The Inreach Committee developed a two-page "Board/Committee/Commission Self-Review Form" to gather data about the current policies, procedures, and decision-making processes of the many appointed administrative and advisory bodies that comprise our government.

The form (attached) requested basic information on membership, staffing, scheduling, agendas, by-laws, rules of procedure, meeting format, public comment, minutes, web presence, orientation and training, public turnout, and press coverage. The form also asked for information on successful practices and policies that could be replicated citywide and any other comments or ideas that could help the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices.

Upon approval by the full Committee, the forms were distributed to all city boards, committees and commissions through a combination of e-mail and snail mail with the assistance of Corrine Phillipides in the Mayor's office. All members of each body received a form allowing for diverse input from multiple members of a committee.

Completed surveys were received from members of the following 15 boards, commission, and committees:

Agricultural Commission
Board of Public Works
Board of Registrars
Cable Advisory Committee
Central Business Architecture Committee
Committee on Disabilities
Community Preservation Committee
Conservation Commission
Council on Aging
Elm Street Historic District
Historical Commission
Northampton State Hospital Citizens Advisory Committee
Transportation and Parking Commission
Tree Committee
Trust Fund Committee

Below is a summary of the information and ideas gathered:

MEETING AGENDAS	
None	0 (0%)
Prepared in advance of each meeting	15 (100%)
Distributed to members prior to meeting	15 (100%)
Accessible to public prior to meeting via internet	8 (53%)
Accessible to public prior to meeting via legal notice	5 (33%)
Copies available at meetings	11 (73%)
Reviewed aloud prior to start of meeting	6 (40%)

PUBLIC COMMENT	
None	0 (0%)
Beginning of the meeting	5 (33%)
End of the meeting	1 (7%)
Issue-specific during meeting	10 (75%)
Question and answer	6 (40%)
Written/e-mail comments acknowledged	8 (53%)
Other	3 (20%)
No response	1 (7%)

MEETING MINUTES	
None	0 (0%)
Taken by board member	3 (20%)
Taken by staff	12 (80%)
Distributed to members prior to meeting	14 (93%)
Accessible to public prior to meeting	10 (75%)
Accessible to public at meetings	9 (60%)
Current/prior available for review outside of meetings	12 (80%)
Current/prior available online	5 (33%)

WEB SITE	
None	3 (20%)
Page on city web site	12 (80%)
Maintained by staff	9 (60%)
Maintained by committee members	1 (7%)
Lists all members	11 (73%)
Lists appointed/elected terms of each member	2 (13%)
Member contact info	2 (13%)
Staff contact info (if applicable)	6 (40%)
Description of the mission and duties of the body	7 (47%)
Bylaws, rules of procedure, or other written protocols	0 (0%)
Meeting schedule	4 (27%)
Meeting minutes	3 (20%)
Meeting agendas	3 (20%)
Applications, forms, or other relevant information	4 (27%)
No Response	1 (7%)

OTHER QUESTIONS	YES	NO
Do new members receive an orientation and/or training?	11 (73%)	4 (27%)
Do members receive ongoing training and/or continuing education?	8 (53%)	7 (47%)
Meetings regularly attended by members of the public?	8 (53%)	7 (47%)
Are meetings regularly covered and/or reported on by the press?	3 (20%)	12 (80%)
Do you believe the public has a good understanding of your work?	6 (40%)	9 (60%)

Do you believe that the public has a good understanding of your work?

- "More so since our new site (Senior Center)."
- "Some people think that our power is greater than it is; others think our power is too great."

- "General public – no. Segment of population that follows cable access – yes."
- "Not general public, but those that follow NSH development – yes."
- "Public takes interest in meetings only when they are directly affected. Therefore, they seldom have in-depth knowledge of background, issues, procedures."
- "The press doesn't cover our regular meetings."
- "This committee advises the Treasurer on the issues surrounding the investment of the City's trust fund monies. I'm not certain many people in the community even know the City has trust funds!!!"

Practices/policies that have been particularly successful that could be utilized by your colleagues on other boards/committees/commissions?

- "Our policies are pretty specific for the defined tasks of our committee. While they might not be useful content-wise, I do think they could serve as a model for other boards/committees that need to put key operating policies and procedures into written form."
- "The materials developed for our committee could be useful for other groups having investment oversight responsibilities."
- "Patience at meetings."
- "CAC role on large development project is in and of itself a good model, especially an expanded CAC beyond the legislative appointments to include neighborhood representation."
- "Series of public hearings helped to gather information/needs, generate interest in cable contract, and mitigate controversy. Also targeted meetings with seniors, youth. Op-ed pieces to inform communitiy."
- "We have standard conditions that cover common conditions at new constuction sites. Issuing these saves time. We also make site visits – which is very useful."
- "The Commission's public input model has evolved from a standard, comment at beginning of meeting format to allow issue-specific input if applicable throughout the meeting."
- "New traffic calming manual lays out a detailed, public-driven process for addressing/prioritizing decision-making around traffic calming."
- "Created by-laws and rules of procedure in one document."
- "We limit our use of paper, but we use the projector to display a variety of documents during meetings."
- "Draft minutes published ASAP, then final voted on."

INTERVIEWS WITH KEY ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS

The Inreach Committee, with the approval of the full Ad-Hoc Committee, initiated personal interviews with nine key elected and appointed officials. Interviewees were asked about their departmental work, the decisions they make, the decision-making process, involvement of the public in the decision-making process, decisions they were proud of, decisions that could have "been better", and recommendations and ideas they might have for "best practices for decision-making" for the City of Northampton.

Clare Higgins
Mayor of Northampton

The City of Northampton has a "strong mayor" form of government where the Mayor proposes and the City Council disposes. The Mayor proposes budget, many committee appointments, ordinances and the council can vote up or down on them. She does most of the hiring and firing including negotiating collective bargaining agreements with the unions. She decides on day-to-day running of the city what are the hours of operations, holidays etc. Elected officials do not get vacation or sick time. She consults with department head, citizens, and people in the supermarket. She takes input in all the time. She signs every contract for goods and services. She meets with Council President to set the agenda for the council meetings.

She is proud of the Meadowbrook decision to keep it as affordable housing. With hotel decision the council could have been involved earlier. Doesn't like the hard line of public/private voices in decision-making. State and federal laws often times impedes what the local government can do.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- Get word out the public earlier in creative ways
- Communication issue - we can't just depend on the newspapers to get information out to the public
- Has email newsletter from the Mayor's office
- She knows a lot of people are not on the Internet to get their news -- need other ways to get out info
- More on cable television to reach those who get information that way
- City School to educate citizens about how government works
- Interactive information gathering

- Going out to the public with the "budget road show" on how the budget works

- Recognize what the city is already doing with committee appointments. City Council Appointments and Evaluation Committee interviews people -- before they just got appointed

- Integrate committees with citizens and staff like transportation and parking

- We have "more want than wallet" - need more people resources

Wendy Mazza
City Clerk

Doesn't make any major decisions herself – guided by state and federal laws. She mainly deals with voter registration, dog licenses, recommends appeals. She fields a lot of calls and visits from the public who do not know who to talk to.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- City Hall needs info kiosk when people walk in to direct people to where they need to go.

- Improve signage in city hall i.e. elevator

- Have a city web calendar online with all of the meeting dates and times. Have each department/committee update these

- More interdepartmental communication

- She has a customer service survey in her office and encourages people to fill them out. (The City Clerk provided the Inreach Committee with a copy of the survey form after her interview)

- She always has a person answer the phone

- Have each department trained in how to update their websites/check email

Edward Huntley
Director, Department of Public Works

The DPW does projects around the public health and safety for the citizens of Northampton-clean water, wastewater, and landfill management. Delivery snow removal, traffic signals, pavement markers,

He works directly for the Mayor and with the BPW (seven member committee appointed by Mayor) they make contract and policy decisions. He writes Standard Operating Procedures, makes recommendations to the board and decides how to use the resources they have. He makes global decisions and leaves other decisions to the superintendents that make day-to-day decisions (i.e. potholes today or fix something else).

Chairman of BPW has regular conversations with the Mayor; the head of the DPW has direct conversations with the Mayor. Has monthly meetings with the City Council - they used to be more independent. He deals with citizens who don't have all of the correct information. They try to get information out through the Gazette and other newspapers. A good example of getting info out to the public is what they do with snow and ice emergencies. They put out information to email lists, including Smith. They also have a snow and ice hotline. They have worked with Smith College on a project for Ridgewood terrace. They had input from the citizens who lived there they told them what they wanted them to do. They have also done public meetings about sidewalks.

They have constants on maintaining existing infrastructure- do not have enough people power. They have lost 14 or 15 people and haven't been able to replace them. He would like to have meetings and public input but doesn't have the time to do it. He thinks they do a good job with letting the public know. Thinks that people do not engage themselves until after the project has gone through. How can they better publicize the meetings they do have? He wants to ask the press to do more, agenda for meetings--grows until right before the meeting.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- They could have protocol for public input on decisions
- Wants to have the department accredited by the American Association for Public Works
- More inner communication within the department
- Have citizens get involved earlier on
- Make it easier for public to access info-website

- Televising BPW meetings on public access/independent journalist

- Hold meetings in a more pleasant place

Wayne Feiden
Director, Office of Planning and Development

Described the staff and work of his office (supervises 8) and the committees his staff supports. He works directly with: open space acq., bike paths, affordable housing and other special projects. OPD provides recommendations and/or "findings of fact" to: Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Commisison, CDBG recommendations to Mayor. Office staff provides permit applicants information about what applicants need to do to "get a positive staff recommendation". All applications are now posted on OPD website. Council Chambers podium is now hooked into computer to enable applicants (now required) to have PowerPoint presentations.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- Encourage neighborhood groups and utilize them for outreach and work with Ward Councilor on identifying stakeholders (esp. going forward with revising the Comprehensive Plan).

- Cablecasting of Planning Board meetings (better tech, i.e., camera, mics, etc. is needed in Council Chambers)

- Could have had better outreach around hotel project

- Make legal ads more descriptive

- Better adherence to policy for use of city land (provided Inreach Committee with a copy of the policy after his interview) .

Isabelina Rodriguez
Superintendent of Schools

Decisions "centered around students"; fiscal, programmatic, employees are a focal point, as well as food and transportation. "I don't work in isolation; work as a team…administrative team: Central Office (Business Manager, Special Ed/Pupil Services Director, Technology Director (meet weekly). Director Of Teaching and Learning, grant-funded, was cut after one year, was part of Administrative Team. Solicits feedback from school principals. Makes decision after consultation with above players.

Supported pursuing a Strategic Plan several years ago, along with School Committee member Kathy Foote-Newman. Works closely with SC Vice Chair (Lucy Hartry). Mayor is Chair. Agenda setting meeting with Mayor, Business Director, Vice Chair. Meets with school councils (required under ed. Reform). Strategic Planning underway -- over 140 expected to participate in focus groups by end of December.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- Find ways to have city and schools work more collaboratively; "city side needs to respect the schools' policies and procedures".

- Better communication – when asked she did not know about the City School project or the James House project.

Christopher Pile
Finance Director

Supervises and/or provides staff support: Auditor, Treasurer, Collector, Assessors, Finance Committee, and Capital Improvements Committee. Discretionary authority to delegate responsibilities.

Decisions are mostly prescribed by law and made in concert with Mayor. Posts city audits on website. Believes committees he works with (Finance Committee and Capital Improvements Committee) are responsive to the public, allow a dialogue with the public at meetings. Always surprised when the public thinks items before the City Council are being discussed/aired for the first time.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- Lack of public civic education/government procedures is the biggest problem.

Teri Anderson
Economic Development Director, Office of the Mayor

Does not make decisions, but facilitates them by developing recommendations for the Mayor, City Council, and City boards. Works with City Council Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and Land Use to advise on economic development policies. Public didn't use to attend those meetings, but have begun to more on an issue-specific basis. Does background work on tax incentive financing (TIF) applications, but Mayor and Council make final decisions within a public process.

She was closely involved in the development of the Sustainable Northampton Comprehensive Plan and thought their process was an excellent model for soliciting public participation through its use of a broad variety and number of input methods (e.g. public meetings, targeted focus groups, written/e-mail input, etc.). All of that input was documented, summarized, and compiled into common themes that were incorporated into final document. Multiple feedback sessions were held on Draft Sustainable Northampton plan to ensure that people had more than one chance to review and make sure we got it right. Grant funding from multiple sources paid for the resources needed to carry out process, including consultant that helped write the final report.

Also works with State Hospital Citizens Advisory Committee (which was formed by state legislation) and was involved in cable contract renewal process and the development of the city web site. Web site gets upgrades on a priority and resource availablility ($$$) basis

Recommendations/Ideas:

- Look at State Hospital Citizen Advisory Committee as a model for development-specific public process that involves stakeholders affected by a project.

- Sometimes doing less is more. Downtown motorcycle parking on Bart's block was one of the first controversial issues she was involved in and she created an elaborate, multi-party mediation process to find a settlement that satisfied everyone. Process was vulnerable to manipulation and undermining and in retrospect "quiet shuttle diplomacy" may have been more effective.

- Current public hearing structure encourages conflict. Should be restructured to educate people about project or application, allow for questions and answers, and then take general public input (as opposed to dividing comments into pro and con). A more flexible process would encourage problem-solving. (Teri also forwarded to the Inreach Committee several reference documents about some of these process issues after her interview which are available for review)

- Informal meetings before a public hearing so people can get information and ask questions outside of the formal, legal process. Probably can't be the decision-making body, but the developer or staff could facilitate.

- Allow more time for public process and provide multiple opportunities for input

James Dostal
City Councilor At-Large and Council President

President makes City Council committee appointments, presides over meetings and the City when Mayor isn't absent, and works with the Mayor to develop the Council meeting agendas. Much of the City Council work happens at the subcommittee meetings, so he has tried to raise more awareness of what happens at those meetings by amending the rules to include reports from committee chairs about what they are working on as part of the agenda.

The City makes an effort to get the word out about city meetings (e.g. legal ads, meeting listings in the Gazette, etc.), but we have to do a better job of catching the attention of the public. There were lots of meetings and newspaper articles about the proposed downtown hotel project, but it wasn't until people saw a photo rendering that they engaged in the process. The Police Station project is an example of how to do that: get the artists rendering out to the public in the paper and online, have informational meetings, and allow people to react and give feedback.

When he still worked for the City at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, they had an important neighborhood constituency that it was important for them to communicate with. He had an open-door policy and developed an odor reporting form with a mailbox at the plant gates that was checked every morning. Important for developing trust with the neighborhood that concerns would be responded to. City should seek input from citizens on how to do better do our work and solve problems.

Recommendations/Ideas:

- Get artists rendering of major development projects out to the public early and before the formal decision making process commences.

- Develop better rapport with media outlets to ensure that important info gets communicated to the public. New Gazette "Daybook" feature on page 3 is an excellent step in that direction with listings of important meetings and issues.

- Educate public on how the City works and decisions that are made. Many people raise questions about decisions of the Planning Board, but very few understand how it is established under state law and the legal jurisdiction it has on issues/projects.

- He would like to develop a series on public access television about how each department works. He would love to see a documentary on the Department of Public Works and all of the various responsibilities it has.

- City also has to better communicate the costs of government and delivering the services that people demand. Northampton citizen demand a "bare roads" snow-policy" – roads plowed bare within 8 hours of a snow storm with regard to snow-plowing, but that comes at a high cost in manpower, overtime, etc.

- Complaints should be analyzed. Is there substance to them and can they be addressed. Instead of telling people we've tried everything and the problem can't be solved we should be saying "we've tried that and we've done this, but how would you suggest we solve it?"

Lucy Hartry
School Committee Member At-Large and Vice Chair

School Committee has three primary areas of responsibility: 1) school budget; 2) policy development; 3) Hiring/evaluating the Superintendent and Business Manager. They have three subcommittees: Rules and Policy, Budget and Property, Curriculum. School Committee members also serve on outside committees like Capital Improvements and the Council Conference Committee as well as two non-profit organizations: Hampshire Educational Collaborative (HEC) and the Northampton Education Foundation (NEF).

The Vice Chair is elected by the School Committee and assigns members to the committees comparable to the Council President. She also presides over meetings if/when the Mayor is not present. Public comment period is limited to the beginning of the meeting – committee meetings are less formal and generally allow more public give and take. School Committee rules require both a first and second reading on issues to ensure major issues have time for public review and input.

BOARD/COMMITTEE/COMMISSION SELF-REVIEW FORM

Ad-Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision-Making

City Hall, 210 Main Street, Room 18, Northampton, MA 01060-3199
www.northamptonma.gov/bestpractices

NAME OF BOARD/COMMITTEE/COMMISSION: _____

NAME OF PERSON COMPLETING FORM _____ (OPTIONAL)

MEMBERSHIP:

_____ (CHAIR) _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

STAFF/INTERNS (if applicable):

_____ _____

MEETING SCHEDULE: ❑ WEEKLY ❑ MONTHLY ❑ QUARTERLY ❑ OTHER _____

DAY: _____ TIME: _____ AVG. MEETING LENGTH: _____

MEETING SITE: _____ HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE: ❑ YES ❑ NO

MEETING AGENDAS (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY): ❑ NONE ❑ PREPARED IN ADVANCE OF EACH MEETING
❑ DISTRIBUTED TO MEMBERS PRIOR TO MEETING ❑ ACCESSIBLE TO PUBLIC PRIOR TO MEETING VIA INTERNET
❑ VIA LEGAL NOTICE ❑ COPIES AVAILABLE AT MEETINGS ❑ REVIEWED ALOUD PRIOR TO THE START OF MEETING

WRITTEN BY-LAWS, RULES OF PROCEDURE, MISSION STATEMENT, ETC.,: ❑ YES ❑ NO

IF "YES", LIST: _____

CHAIR REVIEWS MEETING FORMAT AND RULES FOR PUBLIC: ❑ YES ❑ NO

PUBLIC COMMENT (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY): ❑ NONE ❑ BEGINNING OF THE MEETING ❑ END OF THE MEETING
❑ ISSUE-SPECIFIC DURING MEETING ❑ QUESTION & ANSWER ❑ WRITTEN/E-MAIL COMMENTS ACKNOWLEDGED

❑ OTHER: _____

MEETING MINUTES (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY): ❑ NONE ❑ TAKEN BY BOARD MEMBER ❑ TAKEN BY STAFF ❑ DISTRIBUTED TO MEMBERS PRIOR TO MEETING ❑ ACCESSIBLE TO PUBLIC PRIOR TO MEETING ❑ AT MEETING ❑ CURRENT AND PRIOR MINUTES AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW OUTSIDE OF MEETINGS ❑ AVAILABLE ONLINE

❑ OTHER: _____

WEB SITE (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY): ❑ NONE ❑ PAGE ON CITY WEB SITE ❑ MAINTAINED BY STAFF ❑ MAINTAINED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ❑ LISTS ALL MEMBERS ❑ LISTS APPOINTED/ELECTED TERMS OF EACH MEMBER ❑ MEMBER CONTACT INFO ❑ STAFF CONTACT INFO (IF APPLICABLE) ❑ DESCRIPTION OF THE MISSION AND DUTIES OF THE BODY ❑ BYLAWS, RULES OF PROCEDURE, OR OTHER WRITTEN PROTOCOLS ❑ MEETING SCHEDULE ❑ MEETING MINUTES ❑ MEETING AGENDAS ❑ APPLICATIONS, FORMS, OR OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

❑ WEBSITE IS UPDATED FREQUENTLY (HOW OFTEN? _____)

DO NEW MEMBERS RECEIVE AN ORIENTATION AND/OR TRAINING: ❑ YES ❑ NO ❑ DON'T KNOW

IF "YES", EXPLAIN:_____

_____

ONGOING TRAINING AND/OR CONTINUING EDUCATION: ❑ YES ❑ NO ❑ DON'T KNOW

IF "YES", EXPLAIN:_____

_____

MEETINGS REGULARLY ATTENDED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: ❑ NO ❑ YES, AVG. # _____

ARE MEETINGS REGULARLY COVERED AND/OR REPORTED ON BY THE PRESS: ❑ YES ❑ NO

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE PUBLIC HAS A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR WORK: ❑ YES ❑ NO

IF "NO", EXPLAIN:_____

_____

HAVE YOU DEVELOPED PRACTICES/POLICIES THAT HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY SUCCESSFUL THAT COULD BE UTILIZED BY YOUR COLLEAGUES ON OTHER BOARDS/COMMITTEES/COMMISSIONS:

_____

_____

_____

_____

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ATTACH ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR IDEAS TO THIS FORM.

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SELF-REVIEW FORM IN ORDER TO HELP THE CITY OF NORTHAMPTON BETTER UNDERSTAND AND IMPROVE ITS POLICIES AND PRACTICES.

References/Websites

1. http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/values.htm
Values of municipal governance

2. http://city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/planning/pubinvolveguide/pirjly99.htm
"Public Involvement Review"

3. http://mrsc.org/Subjects/Governance/legislative/communication.aspx
"Effective Public Participation and Communication"

4. http://mrsc.org/Subjects/Management/bestpractices.asp
"Best Practices in Local Government"

5. http://pdx.edu/media/i/m/ims_bestpractices.pdf (see pp 22-24)
"Improving Public Involvement in Local Government"

6. http://placematters.org/
Decision support, public engagement, and sustainable design

7. ParksAndRec_PI.doc
(general website is http://www.portlandparks.org)
"Public Involvement Procedure for Capital and Policy Development Projects and Planning Initiatives"
See also: http://www.portlandonline.com/parks/

8. policyconsensus.org/publications/reports/consensus_building_tools.html
"Consensus Building Tools for New Challenges at the State and Local Levels"

9. smarte.org – SMARTe – Public Involvement Techniques.
More than 50 public involvement techniques listed

10. smartgrowth.org/about/principles/principles.asp?prin=10
"Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration"

11. smartgrowthtools.org/TCDDM/HOME2.htm
Software, etc. for community design and decision making;
Planning Process Road Map

12 PortlandPubInvolve.pdf. (attached with this document)
Portland's Principles of Public Involvement
http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=84201

Additional websites of interest:

http://www.cpn.org/topics/community/kernels.html

http://www.nlc.org/
see Demographic Governance Resource List, 2005

http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=84435
Public Participation Manual, Portland Development Commission

http://www.portlandonline.com/oni/index.cfm?c=37423

http://www.cambridgema.gov/cdd/cp/tg/index.html
Town Gown Planning Board

http://www.vcn.bc.ca/citizens-handbook/
A Guide to Building Community/Vancouver Citizen's Committee

http://vancouver.ca/getinvolved/pdf/PIRStatus060405.pdf

http://www.vcn.bc.ca/citizens-handbook/participation_toolbox.pdf

http://www.vcn.bc.ca/citizens-handbook/

http://www.seattle.gov/

Many interesting and exciting ideas about public involvement can be found by looking at websites from different cities: Cambridge, MA (especially for Town Gown relations); Portland, OR; Seattle, WA; and Vancouver BC, Canada are but a few.

Ad-Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision-Making

City Hall, 210 Main Street, Room 18, Northampton, MA 01060-3199
www.northamptonma.gov/bestpractices

TO: Ad Hoc Committee
FROM: Bob Reckman & David Narkewicz
DATE: August 28, 2008
RE: Research on Best Practices in other communities

The City Council resolution creating the Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices in Northampton Decision-Making stipulated that our work must "include the study of relevant decision-making best practices in other selected municipalities."

Our research of best practices in other municipalities is divided into three sections:

(I) Comprehensive efforts to improve municipal decision-making and public participation;
(II) Decision-making practices from other communities;
(III) Links to additional research and resources on governmental best practices.

SECTION I. COMPREHENSIVE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE MUNICIPAL DECISION-MAKING AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

Portland, Oregon

The Portland City Council adopted a resolution on February 7, 1996 that reads:

As elected officials and staff of the City of Portland, we believe that effective citizen involvement is essential to good governance. We believe a respectful and informed exchange of ideas between the City and citizens will result in the best policies and decisions for all of Portland. To this end, the City of Portland commits itself to promote and sustain an environment that creates and responds to citizen involvement.

We hold that the success of citizen involvement depends on:

- *Mutual respect of all parties;*
- *Broad-based outreach to inform and involve citizens;*
- *Commitment and skills to effectively facilitate, receive, and respond to citizen input and involvement;*
- *Coordination of outreach and involvement efforts of all City bureaus.*

To carry out our commitment, we adopt these guiding principles of citizen involvement:

- *Value civic involvement as essential to the health of the city.*
- *Promote on-going dialogue with citizens by maintaining relationships with neighborhood and community groups.*
- *Respect and encourage citizen participation by ensuring that City communications and processes are understandable.*
- *Reach out to all our communities to encourage participation which reflects Portland's rich diversity.*
- *Think creatively and plan wisely, using citizen involvement processes and techniques to best fit the goals of the particular project.*
- *Seek early involvement of citizens in planning, projects, and policy development.*
- *Consider and respond to citizen input in a timely manner, respecting all perspectives and insights.*
- *Commit to coordinate City bureaus' outreach and involvement activities to make the best use of citizens' time and efforts.*
- *Evaluate and report on the effectiveness of City outreach efforts to achieve the quality of City/citizen collaboration critical to good governance.*
- *Promote education of citizens in neighborhood and community groups, and City officials and staff in community organizing, networking, and collaboration.*
- *Provide financial and technical support to Portland's neighborhood association network as the primary channel for citizen input and involvement.*

The Portland Development Commission (PDC) subsequently prepared an 80 page "Public Participation Manual" that is downloadable at www.pdc.us. The manual addresses questions such as why public participation is important and when it should happen. The manual has checklists that can be used to determine what types of projects require what levels of public participation and provide guidelines for public officials to identify different stakeholder groups and how best to involve them early on in the process.

The manual includes guidelines to determine levels of public interest and what level of public participation is necessary. There are also guidelines to identify public participation tools, roles and responsibilities of all parties and to evaluate the success of public participation. There are also extensive meeting/event planning and logistics suggestions and a bibliography. Below is the full table of contents of the manual:

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More recently, the Portland City Council voted in February 2008 to establish a "Public Involvement Advisory Committee" to continue the City's efforts to improve citywide public participation. The City also adopted a "Five Year Plan to Increase Community Involvement", a comprehensive roadmap to strengthen Portland's civic life by increasing the number and diversity of people involved in their communities, strengthening community capacity, and increasing community impact on public decisions.

Committee member Bob Reckman spoke with Affifa Ahmed-Shafi in Portland, which is a City of about 550,000. She is very central in their public involvement process. Ms. Ahmed-Shafi indicated that this issue came to the fore in the 1970s around citizen opposition to some new freeways. The City has now adopted a model set of procedures to solicit community input. There are 95 different community groups in Portland that have opportunities to weigh in on public issues. They have a workbook that helps City employees decide what level of community input is appropriate for particular decisions and suggests ways to achieve this input. The City of Portland also pays about $2,000,000 to provide support services to 7 regional groups into which the City is divided. In Portland, public participation is mandated by the state for planning decisions but not on other matters. They have continued to develop their public input process and have recently issued several new sets of guidelines for this. Ms. Ahmed-Shafi is sure that soliciting public input results in better public decisions.

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

The City of Vancouver initiated a Public Involvement Review process in 1998 to enhance public participation in City government and decision-making. A 19-page Policy Report on the process was created in July 1999 and is available online at: http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/planning/pubinvolveguide/pirjly99.htm.

The report begins by reiterating Vancouver's goals of improving public participation at both the citywide and department levels. It notes the importance of cooperation and communication between City departments, Boards and Service Groups. Since some departments have more resources and experience in effectively fostering public participation their skills should be shared with departments that lack such expertise. The report has sections dealing with Individual Department Improvements, Developing a Corporate Framework for Public Involvement, Improving City Public Involvement Skills, Improving Community Contact, Creating Better Civic Awareness and Understanding of How the City Works, and creating a Multicultural Outreach and Translation Strategy.

There are a dozen "Directions for Improvement" and a set of 6 Guiding Principles for Public Involvement: 1) Mandating the process; 2) Resourcing the Process; 3) Process Participants; 4) Communication Strategies; 5) Involvement Strategies; and 6) Closure. The report includes a series of charts that tie together the 6 sections with the 12 directions.

Finally, there is a section on Evaluation Criteria. This sets out specific questions to be answered about each of the 6 sections listed above. It also includes some overarching criteria. These are "Did the process contribute to the development of long term relationships between the participants and the proponent?" and "Are there some types of municipal issues which normally do not have public involvement components but which should?"

Committee member Bob Reckman spoke with Janice MacKenzie, who is Director of Public Access and Council Services for the City of Vancouver. The City of Vancouver has a population of about 600,000. Metro Vancouver is about 2 million. Vancouver has a very diverse population. This means that outreach and translation requirements are more difficult that in a location with a more homogeneous population. Public outreach and involvement is so embedded in their regular operations that Ms. MacKenzie was unable to guess how much money they spend on this. She said that when they began many years ago some departments were better at this than others, especially planning. Now even the new civil engineers understand the importance of soliciting public input early in the process. Even their budget has a public comment component. Like her counterpart in Portland, Ms. MacKenzie is a strong supporter of broad and effective public participation.

SECTION II: DECISION-MAKING PRACTICES FROM OTHER COMMUNITIES

Public Comment Procedures at City Council Meetings

- **West Springfield, MA**: City Council meetings include a "Public Speak Out" session with a 5-minute time limit on citizen comments. Separate public hearings are also conducted later in the agenda for consideration of ordinances that also allow opportunity for public comment.

- **South Portland, ME**: Two "citizen discussion" periods at City Council meetings allow the opportunity for citizens to comment on items on or off the agenda. The item is divided between into two times at the beginning and end of regular business for the convenience of the public. Any member of the public may speak once during either segment but not both.

- **Alamo-Heights, TX**: There are several ways for citizens to be heard by the City Council during regular Council meetings. Agenda item "Citizens to be Heard" provides the opportunity for any member of the public to speak on any topic that is not on the posted meeting agenda. There is also an opportunity to speak on specific agenda and public hearing items as those items are announced. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes unless extended by the Mayor/Presiding Officer.

- **Tacoma, WA**: When the City Council suspends its rules to include a new resolution or ordinance on the agenda, public comment will be taken at the time the Council considers the resolution or ordinance. Where an ordinance has been substantially changed at its final reading, subject to the consent of the Council, a person may speak to the changes.

- **Missoula, MT**: City Council Rule 15, Citizen Participation in Decision-Making. Before the consideration of any final action at a City Council meeting, committee meeting or subcommittee meeting, a reasonable opportunity for public comment shall be provided. The Presiding Officer may reasonably limit audience participation at any time. After public comment has been heard, and an appropriate motion has been made, the Council shall debate the action

Responsiveness to Citizen Questions and Input

- **West Springfield, MA**: In addition to allowing public comment at Town Council meetings, citizens may also submit written questions on a form provided for that purpose. The Council President reviews the questions and assigns a Councilor to follow up with a response in a timely manner.

- **Somerville, MA**: The City of Somerville was the first community in the nation to implement a "311" Constituent Service telephone system allowing residents and visitors to dial one number to make service requests, obtain valuable information about City or neighborhood services, or be connected with a specific department.

- **Arlington, MA**: Maintains an online "Request/Answer Center" on the city's web site that allows citizens to ask questions, make requests for service, and search a database of frequently asked questions. Users of the system can create an online account to check on the status of their requests.

- **Vancouver, Washington**: The City employs a Citizen Advocate/City Ombudsman to address complaints and improve the responsiveness to those complaints. The Citizen Advocate specializes in handling unusual and complicated grievances, often coordinating the efforts of several City departments to find a solution.

- **North Andover, MA**: Employs a "Permitting Ombudsman" to mediate problems and disputes between permit applicants and City agencies.

<u>Methods for Communicating Information to Citizens</u>

- **Longmeadow, MA**: Provides an electronic "Community Bulletin Board" on its website with separate calendars for town government meetings, school meetings, and community/civic organizations.

- **Concord, MA**: One of several cities and towns in Massachusetts that regularly post all meeting notices on both its Town Hall Bulletin Board (as required under MA Open Meeting Law) and an online "Meeting Calendar" for official town meetings.

- **Kingston, MA**: One of several cities and towns in Massachusetts to implement a *Connect*-CTY® telephone system that allows city officials to notify residents about public emergencies (e.g. flooding, snow emergencies, power outages, etc.) as well as perform community outreach (town meeting announcements, interactive surveys.)

- **Lowell, MA**: One of several cities and towns with a government-sponsored blog designed to provide ongoing information about City programs and policies written by the Town Manager. Citizens may post comments to the blog.

<u>Appointment Processes for City Boards and Commissions</u>

- **Worcester, MA:** Created a "Citizen Advisory Council" to publicize, as widely as possible throughout the community, vacancies on many municipal boards,

commissions and advisory committees. The Council actively recruits nominees for these boards, accepts all applications, and submits recommendations for appointments to the City Manager, the appointing authority for the City of Worcester. The Council seeks at all times to open up the process of appointment to all social, economic, racial and ethnic groups residing in the community.

- **Fall River, MA:** The City Council enacted an ordinance in December 2007 requiring the Mayor to fill any terms on city boards or commissions within six (6) months of their expiration.

- **Chelsea, MA**: The City's web site features an application for appointment to boards and commissions that can be filled out and submitted online.

- **Minneapolis, MN**: The City uses an "open appointment" process to insure a fair and unbiased selection for citizen participation on the City's Boards and Commissions. When an opening occurs on a board or commission, a vacancy notice is published on the City's website. Process includes outreach to neighborhood organizations, recruitment, and public notification Applications to these boards and commissions are accepted by the City Clerk's Office.

- **Pittsburgh, PA**: The City Council adopted a "Fair Representation in Appointments to Boards, Authorities, and Commissions" ordinance outlining a set of informational and procedural requirements for ensuring more openness and diversity in appointments to decision-making bodies. Also requires an annual reporting of demographic information (gender, age, race, etc.) about applicants and appointees.

<u>Educating Citizens About Governmental Decision-Making Processes</u>

- **Barnstable, MA**: "Inside Barnstable Town Government: A Citizen's Leadership Academy" is an 11-week course with the goal of educating the citizens of Barnstable about the operations of their town government, while also obtaining valuable feedback and participation from those citizens. Topics includes history of town government, regulatory services, finance department, etc.

- **Chelsea, MA**: Published an 8-page "Guide to Public Participation in the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board Process" to "provide greater opportunities for including the voices of citizens in decision making".

- **Vancouver, British Columbia:** The City created a "Newcomer's Guide To Vancouver" and a "How To Participate In City Processes Guide". Both guides were created as part of Vancouver's Public Involvement Review Initiative cited in Section I.

- **Franklin, MA**: The Town developed a 9-page "Best Development Practices Guidebook" to provide citizens, businesses, developers and project reviewers with a clear set of guidelines to improve the quality of development in Franklin.

Municipal Budgeting and Financial Management

- **Newton, MA:** The City of Newton appointed a Blue Ribbon Commission in 2006 of citizens skilled in management and finance to review to all aspects of Newton's projected financial resources and expenses so that citizens and officials alike may have a better idea of what to expect in the next few years. A final report was presented to the Mayor and Board of Alderman.

- **Lawrence, MA**: Lawrence Community Works (LCW) initiated a resident-led campaign to catalyze community participation in the City of Lawrence budget process and to change the way decisions are made about local resource allocation. The effort led to the publication in 2005 of "*Our Money, Our Future, Our Right to Know: The People's Guide to the Lawrence City Budget*", a 72-page bilingual publication that sheds light on the city's budget, where the money comes from, what it funds, who decides how it's spent and what opportunities there are for residents to get involved.

- **Somerville, MA**: The City of Somerville implemented a "program based" budgeting system that links costs and revenues to the service delivery activities and goals of departments. It also launched the "SomerStat" program to assess service delivery, determine opportunities for improvement, and institutionalize communication among decision-makers to identify and address problems. "ResiStat" brings residents into the conversation

- **Easton, MA**: The Town's "Smart Budget Dollars Program" provided municipal employees in Easton with a formal system to suggest ideas that will save money or increase productivity, and to receive a cash award for those ideas. The program was credited with generating more than $250,000 in savings during its first year. The City of **Fall River, MA** recently launched a similar program based on Easton's model that is underwritten by private business sponsors.

Procurement and RFP Processes

- **Westfield, MA**: The City's web site features a "Solicitation Center" page providing information on requests for procurement bids and quotes, including copies of the solicitations, issue dates, due dates, and status (open or closed).

- **Needham, MA**: The Town's web site includes a "Bid and Contract Opportunities" page that provides searchable information about municipal

bidding and contracting with online access to RFPs and information on number of bids, deadlines, etc.

- **Cambridge, MA**: The City created a 10-page downloadable guide entitled, "How To Do Business With The City of Cambridge" that includes information about the bidding and procurement process for potential contract businesses and vendors.

Town/Gown Relations

- **Cambridge, MA**: In 1991, a Mayor's Committee on University-Community Relationships issued a report addressing the relationship between the Cambridge community and the educational institutions that play an important role in the City's landscape and economy. One of the Committee's adopted recommendations was that the Planning Board conducts an "annual joint review of university and community needs and plans." Every year each school submits a Town Gown Annual Report, followed by a presentation to the Cambridge Planning Board.

- **Blacksburg, VA**: A "Town Gown Community Relations Committee" was formed in 1999 consisting of representatives from the Town of Blacksburg, Virginia Tech University, university neighbors, business, and community service organizations. The group meets monthly and maintains a web site at www.towngown.net.

- **Mansfield, CT**: Maintains a "Town/University Relations Committee" with a mission to promote and sustain positive relations between the University of Connecticut and the larger Mansfield community. The committee is comprised of representatives from both the Town and the University, and is co-chaired by the Mayor and the Special Assistant to the University President. Members of the public are encouraged to attend the meetings, which include an opportunity for public comment.

SECTION III: LINKS TO ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND RESEARCH ON GOVERNMENTAL BEST PRACTICES

- America*Speaks*; Engaging Citizens in Governance (http://www.americaspeaks.org)
- Animating Democracy (http://www.artsusa.org/animatingdemocracy)
- Best Practices Database, U.S. Conference of Mayors (http://www.usmayors.org/bestpractices)
- Best Practices in Local Government, Municipal Research Services Center of

Washington (http://www.mrsc.org/Subjects/Management/bestpractices.aspx)

- Center for Best Practices, National Governors Association (http://www.nga.org/portal/site/nga/menuitem.50aeae5ff70b817ae8ebb856a11010a0/?vgnextoid=e0dcaf4def7d0010VgnVCM1000001a01010aRCRD)
- Community Involvement Techniques, SMARTe.org (http://www.smarte.org/smarte/resource/sn-community.xml;jsessionid=hjil8q40idpl)
- The Community Problem- Solving Project @ M.I.T. (http://www.community-problem-solving.net)
- Consensus Building Tools for New Challenges at the State and Local Levels, National Policy Consensus Center (http://www.policyconsensus.org/publications/reports/consensus_building_tools.html)
- Council for Excellence in Government (http://www.excelgov.org/)
- deliberative-democracy.net (http://www.deliberative-democracy.net/)
- Effective Public Participation and Communication, Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington (http://mrsc.org/Subjects/Governance/legislative/communication.aspx)
- Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration, SmartGrowth.org (http://www.smartgrowth.org/about/principles/principles.asp?prin=10&res=1024
- Five Year Plan to Increase Public Participation in Portland (http://www.portlandonline.com/mayor/index.cfm?c=46442)
- Governmental Best Practices, Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies (http://pdx.edu/media/i/m/ims_bestpractices.pdf)
- Government Innovators Network (http://www.innovations.harvard.edu/)
- Guiding Principles for Public Involvement, Vanncouver, British Columbia, Canada (http://city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/planning/pubinvolveguide/pirjly99.htm#Guiding%20Principles%20for%20Public%20Involvement)
- Innovation Awards, Massachusetts Municipal Association (http://www.mma.org/?option=com_content&task=view&id=1279&Itemid=230)
- National Issues Forums (http://www.nifi.org)
- New Tools for Community Design and Decision Making (http://www.smartgrowthtools.org/TCDDM/HOME2.htm)
- PortsmouthListens (http://portsmouthlistens.org)
- PlaceMatters (http://placematters.org)

- Public Involvement Advisory Council, Portland, OR (http://www.portlandonline.com/oni/index.cfm?a=199111&c=25967)
- Public Pariticipation Manual, Portland Development Commission (http://www.pdc.us/pubs/inv_detail.asp?id=820&ty=57)
- Townboard.org (http://www.townboard.org/index.html)
- Town Gown Relations, Cambridge, MA (http://www.cambridgema.gov/cdd/cp/tg/index.html)
- Working Smarter in Community Development, MIT Dept. of Urban Studies (http://web.mit.edu/workingsmarter)