

## Great Barrington Economic Development Committee

### Minutes of Wednesday, June 26, 2019 meeting

Present: Michael Andelman (Citizen Member), Ian Bickford (Higher Ed), Tony Blair (Commercial R.E.), Leigh Davis (Selectboard), Jeremy Higa (Planning Board Alt.) Malcolm Fick (Planning Board), Tim Newman (Citizen Member), Anne O'Dwyer (Finance Alt.), Vivian Orlowski (Citizen Member), Steve Picheny (Entrepreneurship), Richard Ruth (Citizen Member), Karen W. Smith (Citizen Member), and Karin Watkins (Arts & Culture)  
Absent: Sean Flynn (K-12), Meredith O'Connor (Finance)

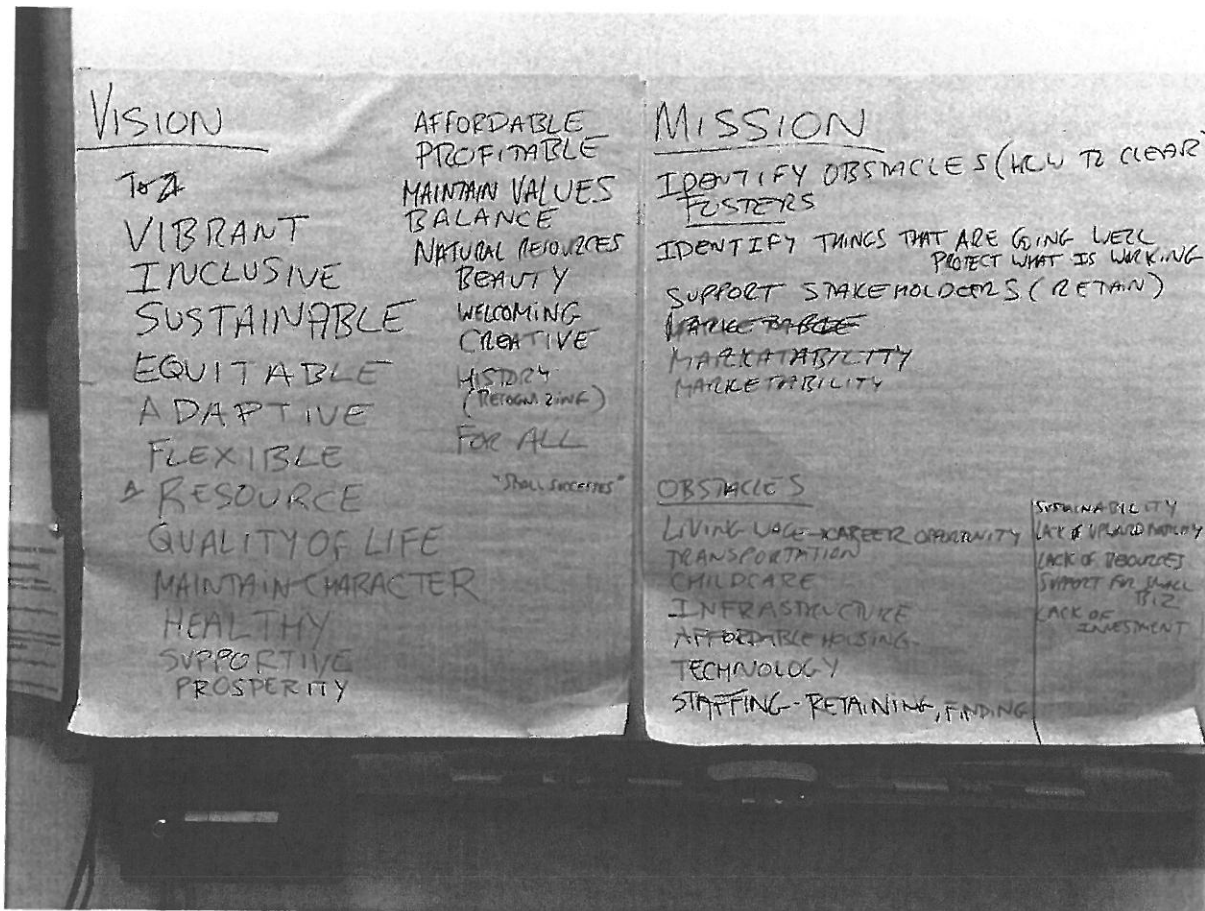
**Call to Order:** Chair Picheny called the meeting to order at 6:00.

**Minutes of June 12, 2019:** Smith moved to approve, Blair seconded, all were in favor.

**Discuss and Approve Vision Statement and Mission Statement:** Picheny asked Davis to lead the group through a brainstorming session. Davis said there is a difference between a Mission and Vision. A Vision is more of an overall guiding principle and aspirational statement, while a Mission is more action oriented.

Andelman noted that the Master Plan recommendation has a suggested Mission for this Committee, that it be a liaison between town government and the business community. He said that even though the Master Plan is 7 years old, that statement is still good. Picheny suggested this Committee take an even broader view, and incorporate quality of life concerns that will attract people here and help them to thrive here.

Davis took notes as members suggested terms for the Vision and Mission. The notes are inserted below:



Bickford suggested that the phrase "maintain character" could suggest to some that outsiders are not welcome; it sounds exclusive, not inclusive or welcoming.

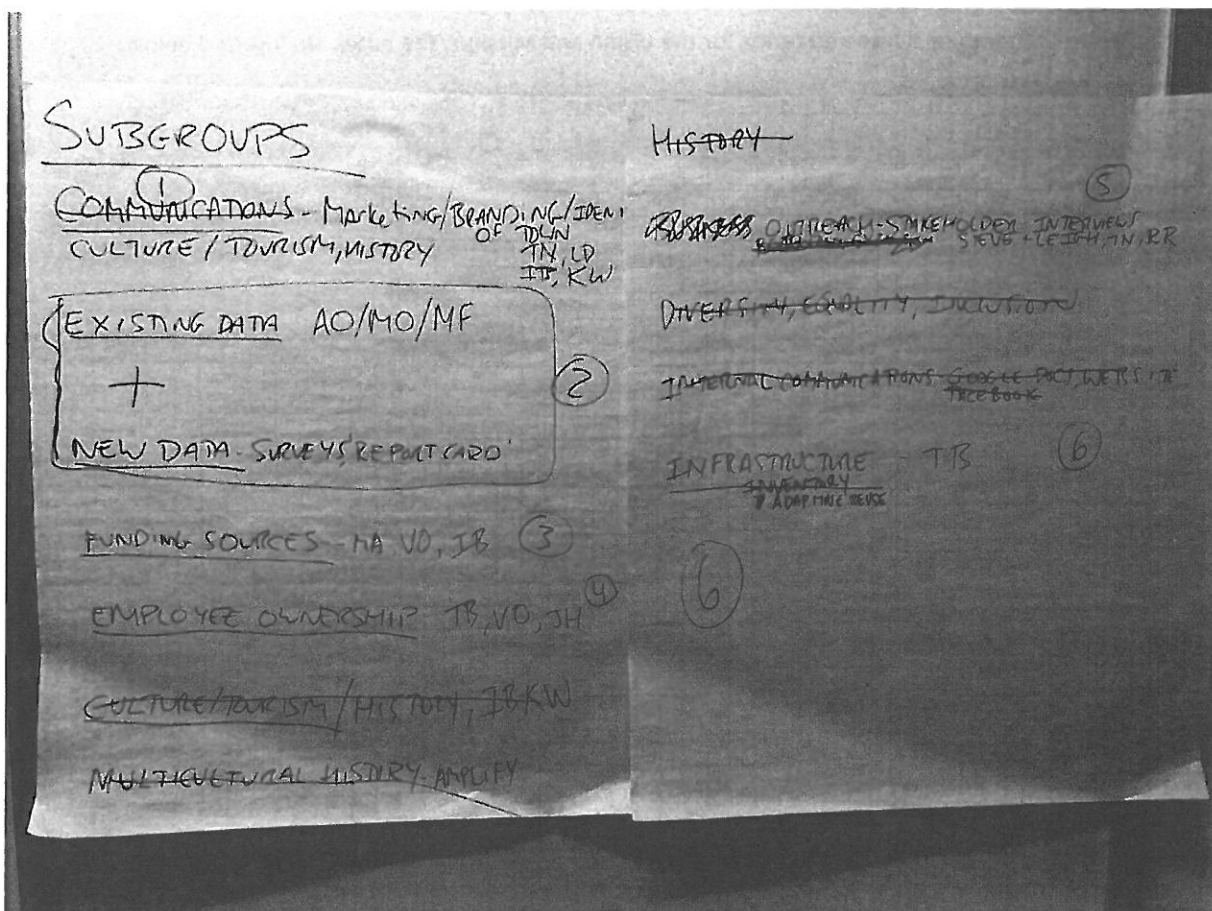
He also said that there seemed to be a low amount of investment in Great Barrington, according to the Berkshire Blueprint 2.0.

Orlowski suggested we turn negatives into positives. While access to child care may be a negative, the fact that we have a community that can help each other out and come up with solutions to the problem is a positive. Fick said there is a lot we are doing well, and we should not lose sight of that. Ruth said we need to identify and strengthen what is working.

There was a suggestion of talking to businesses to see what they need in order to be supported. Picheny said understanding business needs should be a high priority. Smith and Blair wondered if that should be this Committee's job, or if the Town Manager should have a more direct role instead of us.

O'Dwyer noted that it is just as important to hear what employees need and want, like wages and housing, as it is to understand business needs. Orlowski said there is a need for succession planning and possible employee ownership of businesses.

There was a discussion about Committee subgroups to achieve some of the mission tasks. Davis took notes, where are inserted below:



**Recommend Names for Stakeholder Interviews:** This was tabled until the next meeting.

**Citizen Speak Time:** None

**Upcoming Meetings:** July 17, 6:00

Hearing no further business, Picheny adjourned the meeting at 7:35 PM

Minutes prepared by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher R. Picheny", written over a horizontal line.

