

AMPUp Advisory Committee

October 10, 2024

DRAFT Meeting Summary

Attending: Eugene Benson, Tristan Boyd, Angelique Bradford, Grant Cook, Rachel Dunham, Rebecca Gruber, Ann LeRoyer, Cheryl Miller, Stephen Revilak, Paul Selker.

Staff: Claire Ricker, Sarah Suarez.

Review Meeting Minutes

The Committee amends and adopts minutes from their September 12, 2024 meeting.

Discussion: RFP Responses

Ms. Ricker introduces Rebecca Gruber to the group. Pending confirmation by the Arlington Redevelopment Board, Ms. Gruber will replace Mr. Gowin on the Committee.

Ms. Ricker informs the Committee that we have received six proposals for the master plan update RFP. A few of the proposals were innovative, a few were for typical master plan processes, at least two recommended working with high school students, and one suggested devoting an entire chapter to climate change and sustainability.

Ms. Gruber is pleased to see six responses. It shows that organizations are interested in working with us, and that says a lot about Arlington as a community. Mr. Boyd noticed that one of the proposals mentions a 9/13 RFP addendum. He asks what that is. Ms. Ricker says she received a number of questions from one of the applications; the addendum contained answers to those questions. Mr. Boyd felt the submissions offered a wide range of hours. In general, he feels like the respondents are offering a range of solutions.

Ms. Miller noticed that MAPC's proposal had caveats about not carrying certain types of insurance. She asks if that's okay. Ms. Ricker says that MAPC is a quasi-public agency. Because of that status, a contract with them would have different details than one with a private agency. Ms. Miller says she was impressed with MAPC's diversity statement.

Ms. LeRoyer says that most of the firms have some sort of past connection to the town. Ms. LeRoyer says she can't make the time commitment for the selection process, but asks how the committee will work. Ms. Ricker says that selection committees have an odd number of people, typically five. For this task, she's considering a seven-member committee. Her initial thought was to include the two ARB members (Mr. Benson and Mr. Revilak), two staff (herself and Ms. Suarez), and three members of the

Advisory Committee. She is open to other configurations, though. The selection committee would evaluate the proposals according to the five questions set out in the RFP and conduct interviews.

Mr. Selker thinks Ms. Ricker's suggestion sounds reasonable. He asks if the selection committee could consider other things, like master plans the applicants have worked on in the past. Ms. Ricker says we can consider the applicant's past work, and there's nothing stopping us from reaching out to communities they've worked with. The selection committee isn't confined to looking at material in the proposal. She thinks one of the interesting elements is how different consultants worked with different kinds of communities. Some planning efforts involved larger cities, and some involved smaller towns.

Ms. Gruber asks about the extent to which the larger Arlington community can have input into and understanding of the selection process. Ms. Ricker says she's open to suggestions on how to do this. She notes that the selection process should be wrapped by November 30th or so. Ms. Bradford says she was under the impression that the AMPUp advisory committee would be acting as representatives of the public. Mr. Revilak says we could post the submissions on the town website and provide an email address for comment submissions. We might not get much feedback, given the volume of submissions, but we can provide an opportunity.

Mr. Boyd suggests putting out a statement after we've chosen the consultant. He'd prefer to emphasize the public engagement aspect after the consultant has been chosen. Mr. Cook agrees with Mr. Revilak. He thinks it's okay to post the submissions and provide a way for people to submit comments, noting that the submissions are likely public record. He thinks it's appropriate to make a statement after choosing a vendor. He thinks the committee's work should be open, and there will be time for more aggressive outreach later.

Ms. Miller is concerned that having a heavy presence of staff and board members could reduce diversity on the selection committee. She'd prefer more advisory committee members, and fewer staff and board members. She understands that experience is also a consideration and isn't sure how to square that circle. Mr. Benson points out that ARB members are also residents of the town.

Ms. Ricker says the ARB will have to adopt the master plan, so she felt it was important to include them in this process. The ARB is currently made up of three men and two women, and she thinks it's generally representative of Arlington. She says the Redevelopment Board was not vetted in the same way as this committee, but some of those seats require particular areas of expertise. Two ARB members are on the AMPUp Advisory Committee; the other three either didn't have time or weren't interested.

Ms. Ricker would like Mr. Boyd to be involved, as he's the chair of the Advisory Committee. She says that Ms. Hartman, Mr. Selker, and Ms. Bradford have also expressed interest. Mr. Boyd would like to understand the process between now and November 30th. He asks if we'll be reviewing the proposals and conducting six interviews. Ms. Ricker says the selection committee will rank each respondent. She was thinking of interviewing the top three firms, but we could interview all six if the selection committee felt that was important. Mr. Boyd asks if the interviews would be 60-90 minutes each. Ms.

Ricker thinks that's about right. Mr. Boyd asks if the selection committee would have group deliberations after the interviews. Ms. Ricker says that will probably be the case.

Ms. Gruber notes that any deliberation notes will probably be public record. Ms. Ricker agrees, as this is a public process. She wanted to come away from tonight's meeting with an understanding of who would be on the selection committee.

Ms. Bradford asks if the work could be divided up among committee members. Ms. Gruber thinks the selection process could proceed in two steps. A larger group might review the responses to identify the top three or four applicants, and a smaller group would do the interviews. Ms. Ricker hopes that other advisory committee members can look at the submissions, take notes, and provide suggestions to the selection committee. Ms. Gruber says she didn't want to lose the perspectives of the larger and more diverse group. Mr. Selker says that decision-making can be unwieldy in large committees. He hopes that individual opinions can make their way to Mr. Boyd and Ms. Ricker, for sharing with the selection committee. Ms. LeRoyer says she'd like the ability to comment but can't make the time commitment to serve on the selection committee. She hopes she'll be able to submit comments for the selection committee to take under advisement. Ms. Ricker says she'll email the RFP addendum, along with the selection rubric.

Mr. Revilak believes that November 30th will arrive more quickly than we expect, and he's heard enough interest to fill all of the selection committee seats. He makes a motion regarding the selection committee's composition: Ms. Ricker (from staff), Mr. Benson and himself (from the ARB), and Mr. Boyd, Ms. Gruber, Ms. Hartman, and Mr. Selker (from the Advisory Committee). Mr. Benson notes that Ms. Gruber hasn't been confirmed by the ARB, so her position on the selection committee would be contingent on ARB approval. The motion is adopted unanimously; the selection committee will consist of Ms. Ricker, Mr. Benson, Mr. Revilak, Mr. Boyd, Ms. Gruber, Ms. Hartman, and Mr. Selker.

Ms. Ricker asks if there are any objections to posting the consultant proposals on the town website. Mr. Benson suggests checking with Town Counsel, as the selection process is still open.

Meeting adjourned.