

**Middlesex Town Meeting Solutions Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**June 2, 2009**

Present: Susan Clark, Tim Murphy, Chris Reilly, Lauri Scharf, Dave Shepard, Barb Whitchurch, Greg Whitchurch

**1. Interim Webmaster**

With the impending departure of Tim for a National Guard tour of duty there will be need of an interim webmaster. Chris volunteered to take on this task.

**2. Review of Committee Accomplishments and Potential Future Tasks**

The to-do list for the Town Meeting Solutions Committee (TMSC) from 2007 was reviewed. It was noted that many of the tasks on the list have been completed.

**3. PLACE**

Susan gave an overview of a University of Vermont program called Place-based Landscape Analysis and Community Education (PLACE). Some interest has been expressed in exploring the potential for Middlesex to apply to this program as it might provide a means to build community. PLACE brings UVM students to a town to help the town explore the natural and cultural history of their towns landscape. The program typically includes a vision to action forum although this component could be done as a stand alone effort.

Some concern was expressed about whether PLACE would lead to tangible results as there was an impression that some past efforts have resulted in reports that didn't lead to actual implementation. There was also some concern that a project that is natural resources based could be divisive and raise concerns about land use regulation. Could PLACE be adaptable to incorporating aspects of town that are not natural resource related? Other possibilities for community engagement were mentioned including:

- voting on the school budget during Town Meeting vs. Australian Ballot
- choosing an issue that most residents would likely agree is important but is not a "hot button" item; examples might be food or energy issues
- TMSC could identify issues that are central to our charge such as affordability

The suggestion was made to check with some towns that have done PLACE and see what their outcomes were and if it engaged people from different aspects of the town. Several members indicated willingness to contact other towns: Chris, Tim, Lauri, Barb and Dave.

Next meeting: September 15<sup>th</sup>

Minutes recorded by Dave Shepard

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