1. **Welcome and Introductions.** Nancy Buffone and David Ziomek welcomed the committee, thanked them for their participation and then the committee members each introduced themselves.

2. **Charge to the Committee.** Kumble Subbaswamy and John Musante presented the charge to the committee. Chancellor Subbaswamy questioned how other college towns address shared needs, such as student and affordable housing, master planning, economic development, and indicated that those questions were in part the impetus for hiring a consultant. John Musante noted that we need specific and actionable recommendations for both the short term and the long term. Chancellor Subbaswamy also noted that some qualifications on the draft Request for Proposals (RFP) might be better as “preferred” qualifications in order to expand the pool of potential consultants.

   Stephanie O’Keeffe stressed the importance of having the University and the Town on the same planning page and saw this as a great opportunity to do so.

3. **Presentation of Master Plans.** Dennis Swinford presented the current master plan (MP) for UMass, noting that this was the first such plan in 30 years and that the town and university need to jointly create a culture of planning. Dennis mentioned that the university made the conscious decision to focus only on the campus and not the larger community, although community members did attend the public meetings held throughout the process. The University’s MP stresses the importance of creating a compact urban environment given the limited space available for building, which would be based on having an active mixed-use core supported by a legible system of pedestrian corridors, expanded bikeways (connected to the town system), and the use of parking structures to support moving the main roadways to the outer edge of campus. The overall goal is to build a campus, not just buildings. Focus is put on the areas where campus meets the town, principally Massachusetts Ave, which would change from a boulevard/barrier road to a more friendly transition into town with the addition of new graduate student housing. Dennis Swinford noted that the University is the third largest residential campus in terms of the sheer numbers of students who live on campus. Overall, the plan anticipates the growth of campus by 3,000 students by 2020 (note: the campus is about halfway to meeting this goal) and plans to keep the same percentage of students who live on campus the same as the current percentage.

   Jonathan Tucker presented the Town of Amherst’s MP, noting that the town had done a plan 30 years ago as well (called the SCOG plan) which stressed the importance of concentrating growth in the village centers, preserving farmland, and connecting the two with responsible transportation. Jonathan noted that the town was successful in the preservation aspect but faced roadblocks with new development and growth, opting to phase the issuance of building permits over time. When this became illegal in 2004, the town started another master planning process. The draft of this new MP went to the planning committee in September 2008, and was adopted by the town in February 2010. The new plan puts emphasis on the village centers with preference on growing the existing centers, as well as preserving open lands while balancing the need for new housing. Jonathan mentioned that the key directions of the plan are that it reflects community ideals, and preserves the best of what the town has while allowing the new growth to be the best of what it can be.

   Dennis Swinford stressed that the attitude of both plans focuses on growth of the mixed-use cores and preservation of open space. Ken Rosenthal mentioned that growth in the last 40 years of both the town and university has not been mutually exclusive, and that the 20,000 additional heads at the university meant an equal burden on the town.

   Savannah Van Leuvan-Smith asked how these plans address student housing in the town, and Jonathan Tucker answered that while this was not originally addressed, it has since been considered in the Town’s new MP.

   Phil Jackson commented that the UMass plan makes campus seem “prettier” which is something that hasn’t been said often in the past, and suggested that the Town of Amherst add visual elements to their MP versus showing zoning and discussing bylaws, giving the example of Kuhn Riddle Architect’s plan for North Amherst.
Rolf Karlstrom asked if a traffic study was part of the Amherst plan, and Dennis answered that UMass Campus Planning did that and presented it to the town. Jonathan added that the town asked UMass to include the key town/campus intersections in their study. Neils la Cour mentioned that the study has shown mostly good news, save for some consideration of the Triangle Street/East Pleasant intersection.

David Ziomek stated that this study should feed into the work of the future consultant, and Stephanie O’Keeffe mentioned that the study should be added to the “links” section of the committee information.

4. Discussion of RFP. Nancy Buffone introduced the RFP, noting that the document is intended to make clear expectations for the hiring of the consultant, and for the work that is expected as a result, with focus being on deliverables: action steps that are recommendations for the town and campus.

Edits to the requirements for the consultant included labeling numbers 2, 3, and 4 as “musts” while the rest were considered “desirable” and including the consultants fee of $60,000 somewhere in the document. Also, it was agreed upon that the timeline for the deliverables as stated in the RFP was acceptable.

Sandy Pooler and Phil Jackson both proposed that public safety be addressed in the RFP, suggesting that an expectation of the end deliverable would be to identify the common points of relevance between the university code of student conduct and the town by-laws. In the same vein, Dennis said that the RFP should include soft programming that leveraged student capacity to help the town (i.e. tutoring).

Stephanie O’Keeffe expressed that the deliverables in the RFP should be very specific; the consultant should, for example, highlight specific parcels of land that are ideal for housing development both on and off campus. The committee generally agreed that housing should be an area of focus (student, faculty/staff, affordable, etc.). David Ziomek and John Kennedy brought up the idea of expanding economic development through development of recreational/commercial facilities both on and off campus, and asked how all of this would impact existing infrastructure, services, and neighborhoods. Phil Jackson asked about the impact ongoing operational structures, and whether there would be checks in place every so often. Referring to the inquiry about student housing, Rolf Kolstrom asked how any proposed developments in the new plan would impact existing neighborhoods, and raised the question as to how much direct impact the community can absorb. David Webber suggested lessening this impact through the option of growing the town, making students a lesser percentage of the community (currently 77%).

John Kennedy suggested looking at other universities and their communities to determine how unique UMass and Amherst actually are.

There was discussion on whether additional public process was needed or intended. Neils la Cour pointed out that public process costs money and that this should be about data and facts. Enku Gelaye stressed the importance of public process initiated as a venture between the town and university. Both Sandy Pooler and Dennis Swinford suggested that the town and university leverage their ability to do public process (hold open meetings, etc.), alleviating this cost from the consultant fee. Stephanie O’Keeffe suggested that the facts and data gathered determine where public process fits in to the overall plan, rather than the other way around. Stephanie also asked the committee to consider how a plan made now will relate to the community in the future, and to the nature of education 20 years down the road.

In addition to housing (both student and non-student) there was discussion about what other joint endeavors the town and university could do that would be mutually beneficial. Andy Churchill suggested expanding taxable housing (not on-campus dorms) that would be for students but that also would generate revenue for the town, and identifying/expanding the economic areas that generate the most business. Phil Jackson noted that a lot of university projects don’t financially benefit Amherst, and that focus needs to steer towards things that make the cost of living in Amherst more tolerable. Stephanie suggested asking the consultant what steps we can take to make key university areas benefit the town, while Rolf Karlstrom suggested looking at the real cost vs. real benefit of such projects, and also looking at ways to increase tax revenues.

Concerning the deliverables expected from the consultant, John Kennedy strongly suggested the expectation would be in the form of a concrete plan the committee can fully endorse, keeping the ideas strategic rather than tactical. Ken Rosenthal suggested that tactical solutions might not be a bad idea, and Phil Jackson said we need to expect three to five finite, concrete recommendations from the consultant. Stephanie O’Keeffe agreed, saying we should be focusing on the “what’s” and letting the “how’s” stem from there, utilizing town/university resources at the latter point. Stephanie asked the question “what would our communities be disappointed by if we didn’t do?”
Sandy Pooler suggested looking into the future of technology in the downtown area, noting that Google has begun incorporating their network into Google Towns. Amilcar Shabazz stressed the importance of using the current demographics of the town to inform the focus of any future studies and recommendations.

David Ziomek stated that the committee should have a revised draft of the RFP by the next meeting, and Nancy Buffone suggested that any questions, edits, or additions be submitted by email by Friday 11/1 for inclusion in the new draft on 11/12.

5. **Review of Timeline.** Sandy Pooler asked if the procurement process (of the consultant) has the same guidelines and timeline for the town and the university. This is being looked into.

6. **Public Comments.** Sarah la Cour noted this was a unique opportunity for Amherst and that the focus should be on economic development, not just housing. Alisa Brewer mentioned that the Amherst Select Board will need to see the RFP.

7. **Next Meeting.** A second draft of the RFP will be prepared for the next meeting on November 12, 2013 form 4 – 6 pm in the Community Room of the UMass Police Department on East Pleasant Street.