Members present: David Wheeler, Robert Pelaggi, Gary Keith, Reggie Thomas and Craig Pina.

Also present: Rob May, Director, Shane O’Brien, Staff Planner, Secretary Pamela Gurley, Steve Cecil and Jennifer Sciciliano, Harriman Group.

Rob May began the presentation by saying that this process began last summer with a series of listening sessions; sessions were held at each junior high and the council on aging. He said this is the first plan since 1998. He said Brockton has changed a lot since 1998 and they wanted to make sure that they received public feedback and this was a participatory process. He said that the community needs to be involved to accept the plan as its own. He said his office shared information through Facebook, local cable and the newspaper. There is a state requirement that the planning board adopts the plan. He said he would also like the City Council to adopt the plan as a policy piece.

He explained that the city held meetings, working groups and workshops asking for public input; there was a leadership committee made up by experts from the city; each councilor was asked to have person representing them (the ward) and there were advocates for seniors, the immigrant community and youth, etc.

Rob May said we are Brockton…we need to take responsibility and ownership for our community. He said at the May 2nd planning board meeting they made the first draft available for comment; the 30 day public comment period began then. He said that the next step is implementation. If the planning board adopts the plan it will them be sent to the Department of Housing.

A slide presentation was presented by Harriman Group.

David Wheeler said this plan is a great step forward for Brockton. Bob Pelaggi said it was well prepared and it was a well delivered presentation. Reggie Thomas asked how long it will take to develop a capital improvement plan. He was told that the DPW and IT are evaluating GIS systems and that it will take a better part of a year to gather information. Craig Pina asked about proposed high density developments and Rob May said that they are currently looking at the Westgate Mall, Good Samaritan Campus and the Coweeset Brook area (VA to Easton town line along Belmont) analyzing how create more jobs (no displacement of people).

Gary Keith asked about capital budget funding…where is money coming from. Rob May said the city will have to develop a capital budget as to how to spend its money; a portion of the the sewer and water fees could be held for capital improvements, funding from the federal government; the city council will need to budget that money.

Bob Pelaggi asked about the slide of Good Sam/Westgate Mall area and asked about a more balanced mix of residential/commercial/high density development; he said the example had more of a mixed use. Rob May said that was an initial conceptual drawing; he said there are
four-five major property owners in that area and working together will be able to accomplish more.

Craig Pina said this is a transit oriented community and a lot of the projects before the board have parking issues; he asked how that will be addressed. Rob May said we need to do master plans for each district. He said we are starting planning process for Campello. We need to adjust zoning for each of those districts; we need to right size zoning to allow for development. He said that the City Council has asked him for a zoning amendment addressing parking.

Noting that the public comment period had closed, the chair asked those residents in attendance if anyone present wished to make a statement:

Grisel Quiones asked about any plans for the north west side of Brockton; what will happen to housing; what are the plans for Ash St. park. Rob May said that the purpose of a capital plan is to know what needs to be taken care of and as a community it makes the decision as to what gets funded. He said they apply for state grant funding and CBDG funding from the BRA for one playground a year. He said they just finished the final design on Walkers Playground after several community meetings and came out with a great plan. He said Walkers will be under construct this fiscal year.

Councillor Anne Beauregard recommended that everyone read the plan; she said changing downtown is by practice; she said she has seen some positives and said people need to be vocal and know that your ideas matter.

Jeanne Holmes said it might be helpful for the residents to know what the cost was of the paper plan. She said she read through plan after it was written and many of the things that were discussed at the table she was at were not included in the plan. She said although this plan is a wonderful thing on paper she wanted to know what was in it for the City of Brockton. She said dreams do not always come true….that we hear promises every day….we need to know what is real and tangible in our life time. She said someone needs to enforce what is on paper now….the laws not are enforced by the police department. She asked if this plan was built on a solid foundation and said she does not believe it is. She said if you build on a plot of quicksand it goes away because you don’t have a foundation. She said people don’t use the train from Brockton to Boston because it does not run on a schedule. She said here in Brockton people use cars and this is just a pretty picture.

Bob Pelaggi asked Ms. Holmes what comments were not implemented. She told him did not bring the information with her but will send him her comments. He said he thought she might be ready to share her issues since she brought it up.

Lynne Smith said when she installed the “little library’s” they said it will never last….she said the Douglas Garden outdoor area is still standing….she said 200 kids show up for a history walk….they held a pop up village in Campello. She said “we are still standing”.

Ms. Smith said that when MLK made his I have a dream speech he didn’t say I have a plan….she said this is our dream. She said she hopes that the planning board and city council implement this plan. She said if we believe we can get this done. She said with every project there is always a change order and it is our job as citizens to hold our public officials accountable. She thanked everyone for their work.
Ellie Wentworth said she is seeing the dream come true. She said she loves the plan… we are ready to grow. She said she just took the train to Boston and was in there in an hour; she uses the public transportation… we need to have a positive attitude. She said we are not broken…. we are champions. These are new ideas and we need to move along with them.

Decision: Motion to accept and endorse the plan.
Motion: Keith
Second: Pina
In favor: 5
Opposed: 0

7:42