

**Franklin Cultural District Committee**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Thursday, September 20, 2018**  
**10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

TOWN OF FRANKLIN  
TOWN CLERK  
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The purpose of the September 20, 2018 Cultural District Committee meeting was to provide Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) an opportunity to formally visit the proposed Franklin Cultural District and assess the District's readiness to obtain state designation. The Site Visit is central to the designation process.

**Massachusetts Cultural District Initiative Site Visit**

The Cultural District Committee Meeting / MCC Site Visit consisted of three parts, each located at different locations within the proposed Franklin Cultural District: 1.) Round table with Municipal Leaders; 2.) Tour of District; and 3.) Round table with Partnering Organizations & Stakeholders. A general description of the MCC Site Visit follows:

In Attendance

The following individuals were in attendance for the whole Cultural District Committee Meeting / MCC Site Visit: Cultural District Committee. Phillip Regan, Chair; John LoPresti, Vice Chair & Marketing Subcommittee Chair; Nancy Schoen, Clerk & Partnership Subcommittee Chair; Kit Brady, Goals Subcommittee Chair; Tyler Warren, Social Media, and Stacey David. Massachusetts Cultural Council. Executive Director Anita Walker, Meri Jenkins, Luis Cotto, Lisa Simmons, Mina Kim, Charlotte Cutter, Arreen Andrews, Justina Crawford, and Miranda Cook. Also attending for MCC was Cultural District Site Advisor Anita Lauricella. Others: Planning & Community Development Director Bryan Taberner.

**1. Round table with Municipal Leaders**

The first part of the MCC Site Visit was held in the Ben Franklin Meeting Room at Franklin Public Library, 118 Main Street. Franklin officials in attendance for the Municipal Leaders portion of the MCC Site Visit (in addition to those listed above) included the following: Town Council. Tom Mercer, Vice Chair & Econ. Dev. Subcommittee Chair; Deborah Pellegri. Administration. Jeffrey Nutting, Town Administrator; Jamie Hellen, Deputy Town Administrator. Others. Mary Olsson, Historical Commission Chair; Dr. Sara Ahern, School Superintendent; Library Director Felicia Oti, and Planner Amy Love. Representative Jeffrey Roy joined the meeting at roughly 11:00 a.m.

Chairman Regan opened the meeting at 10:30 a.m. and introduced Anita Walker, MCC Executive Director. Walker asked all participants to introduce themselves, and then provided some background on the Massachusetts Cultural District Initiative. Walker then introduced Anita Lauricella, the Cultural District Site Advisor chosen for Franklin's project. Lauricella asked municipal leaders a variety of questions related to District management, expected benefits to having a Cultural District, district goals, and general plan of action. The Municipal Leaders roundtable discussion ended at 11:15 a.m.

**2. Tour of District**

In attendance for all, or at least most, of the District Tour (in addition to those participating in the whole Site Visit) were the following: Tom Mercer, Deborah Pellegri, Jeffrey Nutting, Jamie Hellen, and Jeffrey Roy. Other individuals joined the Tour Group for portions of the Tour. A map of the District Tour is attached.

The District Tour began at 11:20 a.m. with a tour of Franklin Public Library. Director Felicia Oti and Youth Services Librarian Caleigh Keating provided a quick overview of the Library's historic

significance, recent improvements, and programming. The Tour continued on to School and Main streets where Jeffrey Nutting and Representative Roy took the leads as Tour Guides. The Group headed north Towards the Town Common. Various revitalization initiatives were discussed, as well as mention of Franklin's two National Register Historic Districts. At the Common the Farmers Market, Concerts on the Common, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration, veterans monuments and other events and resources were discussed, as well as Ben Franklin Classical Charter School, the Brick School House, and various recently constructed or planned improvements. The planned Tour route changed slightly by taking a shortcut from the Town Common directly up Oak Street, instead of taking Main Street to Church Street to Oak Street. The Tour Group walked up Oak Street, past O'Reagan Early Childhood Center, Oak Street Elementary School, Horace Mann Middle School to Franklin High School. At roughly 12:00 p.m., Dr. Ahern and several other School Department personnel, including Dr. Joyce Edwards, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning, Paul Peri, Franklin High School Principal, Diane Plouffe, K-12 Director of Music, and Brenna Johnson, Franklin High art teacher, provided the Group with a Tour of the High School, highlighting the facility's arts related resources.

From the High School the Tour Group took Oak Street to the Franklin Senior Center; Director Alves provided the Tour Group with an overview of the facility and programming. The Group continued south down Oak Street onto Union Street past the Town Common and to the corner of Union and West Central Streets. Various Town resources were discussed including the Davis Thayer School, Dean College, Ray Memorial Cemetery, Moseley Mill, and potential redevelopment of the former CCMC Property. The Group headed east on West Central Street to near the corner of Emmons and West Central Streets, where additional Town resources and recent development projects were highlighted.

At Dean College's Campus Center the Group met with following: College President Dr. Paula Rooney; Paul Resten, Dean of School of Continuing Studies, Assoc. VP of Business Development; Tracy Lane, Assistant to the Dean, Palladino School of Dance & School of the Arts; and John Rooke, Director, Center for Business, Entertainment & Sport Management. The Group was given a tour of the Main Stage and the Guidrey Center. At 1:00 p.m. the Group broke for lunch at Dining Hall in Dean College's Campus Center.

At 1:45 p.m. the Tour continued northerly through the Campus Center to Main Street near Dean Hall and the older portion of the campus. At this location two representatives from the Franklin Downtown Partnership, President Roberta Trahan and Executive Director Lisa Piana, joined the Tour Group. Heading south on Main Street the Group discussed a variety of Downtown revitalization efforts including the streetscape improvements, streetlight banners, and the ability to close Main Street for annual or special events.

The Group was given a tour of Franklin School for the Performing Arts by Founder and Director Raye Lynn Mercer.

Continuing south on Main Street the Group stopped for visits at Teddy Gallagher's Irish Pub, Emma's Quilt Cupboard and Sewing Center, and The Little Shop of Olive Oils. Issues discussed included culinary arts, Downtown Franklin's many restaurants, new developments on Dean and East Central Street, the Commuter Rail Station, and transit orientated development.

By 2:10 p.m. the Group was at Franklin Downtown Partnership's office on East Central Street, and then headed up West Central Street to the THE BLACK BOX where it was met by Director of Advancement Alan Mercer, and Executive Director Raye Lynn Mercer. The District Tour continued westerly on West Central Street ending at Franklin Historical Museum.

### **3. Round table with Partnering Organizations & Stakeholders**

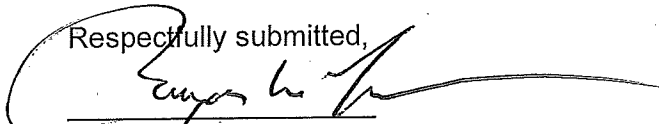
The third part of the MCC Site Visit, Round table with Partnering Organizations & Stakeholders, was held at the Franklin Historical Museum, 80 West Central Street. In attendance (in addition to those participating in the whole Site Visit) were the following: Rep. Jeffrey Roy; Roberta Trahan; Lisa Piana; Paul Resten; Raye Lynn Mercer; Alan Mercer; Mary Olsson; Karen Alves; Felicia Oti; Caleigh Keating; Dr. Sara Ahern; Brenna Johnson; Diane Plouffe; Dr. Joyce Edwards; Christopher Nayler, FPS Director of Lifelong Learning Institute; Pandora Carlucci, Franklin Downtown Partnership; Susan Sheridan and Peg Munson, Franklin Art Association; Ken Norman, Franklin TV-Franklin Radio and Council on Aging; Phil Hall, Live ARTS; Kai Olsson, Franklin Historical Museum; Peter Fasciano, Franklin TV-Franklin Radio; Jim Schultz, Franklin Resident and Folk Alliance International, and Mark Plukas, Circle of Friends Coffeehouse.

MCC Executive Director Walker kicked off the last part of the MCC Site Visit at 2:40 p.m. by providing the Partnering organizations with background on the Massachusetts Cultural District Initiative and an update on the Town's Cultural District application status, and asking all participants to introduce themselves. Walker then introduced Anita Lauricella, who asked the Partners a variety of questions related to participation with other organizations, and reasons for and benefits of having a Cultural District in Franklin.

Walker gave a summary of next steps in the application process. For the next few weeks communications between the Town and MCC would quiet. Anita Lauricella would develop a site visit report based on the information obtained during the Site Visit. Lauricella or MCC staff may contact the Town or its Partners for additional information. The completed report will be reviewed by MCC staff and the MCC Board, and a copy sent to the Town. The Town will be notified of the outcome of its application following a MCC Board meeting in February 2019.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Bryan Taberner



Proposed Franklin Cultural District  
MCC Site Visit, September 20, 2018

Tour of District

