**Franklin Cultural District Committee**

**PARTNERSHIP MEETING**

**Minutes of Meeting**

**June 19, 2018, 7:30 p.m.
Meeting held at Franklin Senior Center, Craft Room**

**10 Daniel McCahill Street, Franklin, MA**

Members Present: Christopher Brady, Stacey David, John LoPresti, Philip Regan, Tyler Warren.

Other Attendees: Bryan Taberner, Lisa Piana, Susan Sheridan, Jim Schultz, Kai Olsson, Sara Ahern, Chris Nayler, Carol Ann Tebbetts, Diane Plouffe, Peter Fasciano, Ken Norman, Karen Alves, Felicia Oti, Rick Duthe, Daniel Kozar, Brenna Johnson, Darren Marino, Kim Rezendes, Jon Mitchell, Deborah Pellegri, Jamie Hellen, Kris Russell, Gail Eckberg, Pam Warren, Caleigh Keating.

**7:39 PM Commencement**: Chairman Regan opened the meeting. He thanked everyone for coming and introduced himself. He requested attendees introduce themselves. He thanked everyone for their support and for the letters they provided. He stated a slideshow would be presented during the meeting.

Overview of the Franklin Cultural District initiative. David stated that Nancy Schoen was disappointed she could not attend tonight; a family member was hospitalized. David stated tonight’s meeting will cover what the Committee has envisioned for the District and how we can help you. She stated she is excited about what is happening. This is an economic driver for the town; this is helping us help you grow everything in the District. She thanked the original steering committee who did a lot of legwork prior to the formation of the Cultural District Committee.

Partnership Overview, Goals & Responsibilities, and Cross-Partnership Activities. David handed out and reviewed the three-page document “Franklin Cultural District Partnership, Overview, Goals & Responsibilities and Cross-Partnership Activities” of which the information was also part of the slideshow. She gave the partnership overview and discussed the partnership goals and responsibilities. She stated the point is to help us help you. She reviewed the list of current partners who signed letters of intent to carry out the goals and responsibilities of the FCD. She is happy to welcome others and would be happy to talk with them about a letter of intent. She discussed the difference between the Downtown Partnership and the Franklin Cultural District Committee. She discussed cross partnership activities. She mentioned the “Did you know” social media campaign and requested attendees who have not given the Committee information on their business/organization to please do so; we want all the partners represented.

Introduction to FCD Vision and Goals. Brady reviewed what is the Franklin Cultural District and what are the goals. He stated the Franklin Cultural District Committee will enhance current and future cultural endeavors--fine and performing arts, music, culinary, and educational in Franklin. He discussed the goals to encourage business development and stimulate economic activity, become a cultural destination, historic preservation, and arts and culture education. He noted that with respect to the goals, the state is going to ask what has been done to address these goals and what are the metrics for the goals. From time to time he will be sending out questionnaires to try to get some data for the state reports.

FCD Marketing Plan Overview. LoPresti stated the marketing perspective is to build awareness of the “new” Cultural District. He reviewed the marketing focus and the initial activities as presented on the slideshow. He noted that some of the initial activities are press releases and they will build followers through social media assets. He would like to have partners and the marketing subcommittee work together.

Question from attendee: will a high-quality logo be available to the partners? LoPresti said yes, and he will ask the partners to put the logo on their websites, as well. David said she would like to get a “tool kit” to all the partners with press releases, logo, pictures, etc. It is in the works.

Question from attendee: is the “Did you know” campaign ongoing and how do you want to receive the information? LoPresti said he thinks it should be ongoing; it is a way for everyone in town to get to know you and your business. David said she and Schoen will collect the information for this campaign and receive it any way the partners want to send it. It can even be in paragraph form and David/Schoen will be happy to chop down the information for you.

Question from attendee: where is this being marketed? David said on the website and social media, and possibly Franklin TV. Peter Fasciano, Franklin TV, said for the “Did you know” campaign, there should be three or four lines of words. He will run these little blurbs on Franklin TV. We can put them in a rotation. He said to think about audio and radio as well. We are growing. The goal of the radio station is to promote the town. Taberner said one of the problems they are having is the Franklin Cultural District versus Cultural Council.

Question from attendee: how is the calendar being worked out? LoPresti said that is where we are heading. David said it falls under marketing and noted the Committee has been given a grant to help fund the website; they are looking for something more useful than Google calendar. It is not up and running yet, but it will be.

David said the idea is getting all the partners to work together. LoPresti said they do want to cross promote events—market one another so all the partners have an opportunity to share. Cross promoting examples were discussed. The idea is to all help each other out. Regan said it is important to view the District as a platform for promoting. He stated we need your input and feedback; if you have ideas, questions, or concerns, please let us know. David stated we do not want to hinder anyone. We are trying to amplify the great work you are already doing and working with each other.

State of the FCD Application & Site Visit Information. Taberner stated the Cultural District Committee has regular meetings and everyone is invited. There will be quarterly partner meetings as well. He reviewed the Cultural District application process and noted it is a rolling application. There are several stages to the process including creating a map of the proposed district and submitting it to the MCC for review. He stated the online application was completed and submitted to MCC on June 7, 2018. Supplemental application documentation was submitted by mail. He showed and discussed the Franklin Cultural District map. He stated the MCC will take the application and supplemental documents and review them. They will then want to coordinate and conduct a site visit. The site visit has three distinct parts: meeting with chief elected official and other municipal representation, walking tour of the proposed district, and meeting with the cultural district partners and stakeholders. He stated the partners will get about two weeks notice; he hopes the partners will be available. The MCC would like a walking tour; the details must be worked out. MCC wants to meet with the actual partners in groups; they want to hear about why the partners think there should be a district and what are their goals. The partners have to work together, communicate, and put on a good show for that day. Then, the MCC will go back and review it. Partners should put some effort into this. He asked the partners to read and review his handout. He thinks this will be a great district. He noted the goals as a district need to be assessed every year. The town will need to submit a report annually. The state is going to want to look at data; the first year will be baseline data. He stated the partners will need to track visitors and building occupancy. They must track data that measures the impact of the district and reflects the district’s specific goals.

Question from attendee: what is the data for; is it for a renewal aspect? Taberner said this is a state sponsored district. If the town has a cultural district, it is good PR. Every five years we reapply to keep the designation. There is also some grant funding for promotion and marketing. If the town or its partners want to apply for a cultural facilities grant, then being in a cultural district is a plus. Jamie Hellen, Deputy Town Administrator, said that once certified, the state does some marketing for this; it can add to tourism. David said this is the way to put Franklin on the map and to be known as the center of culture. There is a story to tell.

Question from attendee: regarding the site visit date, will it be a problem that there will not be an art show or students at the high school in July and August? Taberner said the state will contact the town and move this forward; we do not really know when the site visit will be. They will visit some of the partners and the resources that the town wants to show off; they may not go to the high school if it is during those months. Regan said MCC knows there is stuff going on all year long from the application information.

Brainstorming for Cross-Promotional Partnership Activities. David discussed partnership ideas including cross-promotional offers, collaborative events within the District, and joint programs between FCD partners. Taberner stated one thing they want to see is collaboration; those kinds of things are very important.

Questions. David asked the attendees about a Franklin Entertainment book. She stated we want feedback from you. Is it helping to facilitate cross-partnership events? Caleigh Keating, Youth Services Librarian of Franklin Public Library, stated we could leverage apps that already exist and provided information on the self-guided history tour Clio app; maybe we could use this for a self-guided tour of the cultural district. David suggested maybe a history tour and if a person were to go on the tour on a certain day, they could get something out of it such as a coupon or points; this might be cheap and easy to get started. Jim Schultz, former FCD Steering Committee, said it should be looked at from a kid’s standpoint, so they will use the app as well. David asked if the schools would like something like this for the students to earn points. An attendee asked about a scavenger hunt. Daniel Kozar, Dean College, stated that students are involved in the Boston Ghost Tours to have productions at Mount Auburn Cemetery to do plays. David asked if maybe Dean College would be interested in putting something together for a production at the Franklin cemetery. One attendee stated the Franklin Art Association has many demonstrations and would like to have them broadcast on Franklin TV. One attendee discussed getting the high school art shows out of the high school and into the library for more viewing. David said there is so much talent, she would like to get more people in town seeing what all the schools are doing; the library has space for that. One attendee asked about signage. Regan said a minimum of two will be required by the state. Taberner disused possible signs and noted there are sign regulations. LoPresti asked about a historic trail to highlight some of the historical places. Jamie Hellen discussed how there are so many signs already; he liked the sign idea for the Freedom Trail. One attendee suggested every cultural designation be associated with a color or light to draw attention. Another attendee discussed the Franklin Art Association ladybugs that are being put outside on display. Warren said a lot of places in big cities have murals on the sides of buildings. David stated this is going to be an ongoing conversation. She noted there are strict banner laws in Franklin. She discussed event banners that could be located downtown that would hang across the street. She noted they would have to get approval from Town Council. She asked attendees if they think they would like a banner. Informally, attendees stated they liked the idea. Deborah Pellegri said the town used to have banners until a truck went through and pulled one down and sued. David said it would have to be a higher banner; she would battle the town over it. David said a person cannot help but read a banner; she mentioned there could be some constraints to have a banner such as being part of the cultural district. Lisa Piana, Franklin Downtown Partnership, said they had a long history of banners and signs; she is not sure if a banner is needed on top of all that is already there. Hellen, regarding a banner on the bridge area, stated the MBTA is difficult to work with and noted they are raising the parking rates by $2.00 at the Dean Station; putting a sign at the MBTA bridges will be difficult. He stated it is a logistical issue regarding banner signs in the downtown and reviewed some of the issues with banners including the cost of putting poles in the ground. He said we can work on these ideas, but he does not know; lots of legal issues. David said they will do more research on this.

David mentioned the tool kit and asked who would like to do this on a Google team drive. With only a few hands raised, she stated that initially it may be better to have them as downloadable items from the website, but not a Google drive thing at this time. She stated the new logo will be put on the website. As the press releases start going out, they will be posted. Peter Fasciano stated the radio station is coming online. David said maybe the radio or TV would want to make daily announcements. Fasciano said it would do random positions throughout the day for “Did you know” cultural district information. Anyone who would want to do a weekly show should talk to him; radio shows can be done very easily.

Regan said as it was 9:15 PM, he would conclude the meeting. He thanked everyone for attending and sharing their ideas. He stated we are here to help you.

With no further discussion, a motion was made by David to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Warren; voted and approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary