

Master Plan 2023
Housing & Economic Development
Meeting Minutes
August 21, 2023, 5:00
Room 205, 2nd Floor
355 East Central Street

This meeting was available to be attended in person by all citizens. The meeting was also live-streamed by Franklin TV and shown on Comcast Channel 11 and Verizon Channel 29.

Recordings have been made available on Franklin TV's "Franklin Town Hall TV" YouTube channel. Additionally, citizens were able to participate remotely via phone and Zoom.

Committee Members in Attendance: Chair Kenneth Elmore; Rick Power; Cobi Frongillo
Others in Attendance: Master Plan Chairman Glenn Jones

Meeting called to order by Chair Kenneth Elmore at 5:10 PM.

Review of 2013 Master Plan Housing section

Chair Elmore asked the group what Housing topics should be addressed at time. Member Frongillo discussed that goals are on topic and progressive: transportation and low- and middle-income groups. Discussion of looking at barriers of growth to evaluate concerning permits. Chair Elmore suggested to deconstruct mission and goals; as to what outcomes do we want and focus on for who we serve. Member Power said a Housing Action Plan was developed last year and does address all of this. Chair Elmore suggested group look at Housing Plan as homework to see if we have met these goals. The group agreed.

Attendee Chair Glenn Jones then described the six specific goals in the 2013 Master Plan:

1. Provide appropriate mix of housing alternatives to meet Franklin employment needs.
2. Support development of affordable housing opportunities for low, moderate, and middle households.
3. Assure residential developments requiring special permits are in areas with sufficient utilities not impacting roadways.
4. Inquire, rezone and support housing needs for future demographic goals.
5. Encourage future housing developments to use public transportation.
6. Sustainability development. (The group agreed to discuss this one further)

Member Frongillo then discussed the Aims of the Housing Strategy as Strength in Diversity to welcome all backgrounds and abilities. Also, to bring in other services that people want and corporate support to attract business.

Chair Elmore then asked the group what is Franklin's advantage, outcomes we see needed. The group agreed that we ask those questions. Answers should come in public hearings twice or three times a year. Also, to have the Bennett Consulting group update demographic data since age groups, at home versus travel to work outside Franklin has changed.

The group then discussed other communities that have made positive changes to bring in more population like Mansfield and Hudson with changes to zoning and taking advantage of state grants.

Review of 2013 Master Plan Economic Development section

Chair Elmore started this topic asking the question of what is missing and how to develop new information because Massachusetts employment has changed. Attendee Chair Glenn Jones stated the online town website MACP Urban Study should be looked at and to have the Bennett Consulting group re-evaluate the data. The group agreed.

Member Frongillo discussed the necessary data points of having Franklin; a weekend destination to draw more visitors; attracting key industries of Life Sciences and Clean Energy and to look at any state data; and finally look at a business improvement district like Hudson did successfully. The group then discussed issues of transportation (large warehouse issues); commuting to work change from travel to work-at-home; and zoning topics.

Chair Elmore asked the group to review the goals before the next meeting.

Future Items and Topics

Chair Elmore outlined at the end of each section what will be addressed next time and what homework he would like them all to do. Also, what training, benchmarking, and groups they want to see.

Adjourn Meeting

Attendee Chair Glenn Jones motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Chair Elmore. There was a unanimous vote in favor of adjourning. Meeting adjourned at 6:04 PM.