

Master Plan Update Committee 2023

Meeting Minutes

June 14, 2023, 6:30 PM

Town Council Chambers

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 Glenn Jones; Vice Chair Cobi Frongillo; Clerk Melanie Hamblen; Rick Power; Meghann Hagen; Jennifer Williams; Bruce Hunchard; Kenneth Elmore; Erin Gallagher; Joe Halligan; Ginelle Lang; Eric Steltzer; Gino Carlucci

Committee Members Absent:

Others in Attendance: Nancy Danello, Town Clerk; Bryan Taberner, Director of Planning and Community Development; Amy Love, Town Planner; Jeff Maxtutis, BETA Group, Inc.; Jill Slankas, Barrett Consulting

Chair Glenn Jones called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM.

Swearing in of Master Plan Update Committee members-by Town Clerk Nancy Danello

Town Clerk Nancy Danello performed the swearing in ceremony of the present members of the 2023 Master Plan Committee. Chair Jones told absent and remote members that they could visit the Town Hall later in the week to be formally sworn in to the Committee at the Town Clerk's Office.

Introductions

Chair Jones introduced Town Councilor Cobi Frongillo acting as Vice Chair for the Committee. Town Councilor Melanie Hamblen then introduced herself acting as Clerk for the Committee. The remaining present members of the Committee then introduced themselves: Planning Board members Jennifer Williams and Rick Power; Zoning Board of Appeals Chair Bruce Hunchard; Conservation Commission member Meghann Hagen; Kenneth Elmore of Dean College; and Franklin residents Erin Gallagher, Joe Halligan, Ginelle Lang, Eric Steltzer, and Gino Carlucci. Non-members who would be consulting the Committee were then introduced, including members of the Franklin Planning Department as well as consultants from Barrett Consulting and BETA Group, Inc. Chair Jones then introduced himself as Chair of the Committee.

Rules, Policies, and Procedures

Chair Jones and Town Planner Amy Love explained how in-house communications regarding the Master Plan and Master Plan Update Committee would be handled, followed by an explanation of the rules and procedures to be followed in the Committee's meetings. The Committee members agreed upon the details of how they expected Committee meeting discussions to be

carried out, with subcommittees being able to set their own rules for how their meetings and discussions will go.

Chair Jones called for a vote in favor of approving the Committee meeting procedures as discussed by its members and consultants. There was unanimous agreement in favor, and the vote to implement the meeting procedures passed.

Chair Jones then continued by advising the Committee members on how to follow the State Open Meeting Law and the importance of knowing what could constitute as deliberation. He then briefed everyone on the plan to form the Master Plan Subcommittees at the next meeting. The Committee was then also briefed on the State Master Plans Law. Chair Jones then read a briefing about Master Plans to the rest of the Committee.

Current 2013 Master Plan Document

Planning Director Bryan Taberner presented an overview of the 2013 Master Plan to the Committee. He told the Committee that BETA, Inc. would be providing most of the updates on existing conditions for them. Mr. Taberner also told the Committee that the Master Plan document would have to be voted on and approved by the Planning Board, and then by the Town Council, once it is finished being put together by the Committee.

Member Bruce Hunchard asked about the time frame for when the new Master Plan would receive final approval, commenting that any changes to zoning would likely add an additional year to the process in addition to the 2 years already anticipated to be needed for it. Mr. Taberner answered that he anticipated the public process and production of a draft document would not take longer than a year to do.

Member Hunchard then followed up by asking how long it would take before the Committee could obtain the Existing Conditions Plan. Mr. Maxtutis answered that it would take approximately 6 months to complete the inventory process.

Member Eric Steltzer asked for clarification on how public feedback would contribute to the process. Mr. Taberner answered with an explanation of the process, along with how and when public feedback would be included into meetings and decisions, and that it would likely reflect the public feedback process of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Member Erin Gallagher asked if there would be a schedule established to track whether or not goals and milestones were being met at their planned dates. Mr. Taberner responded that there would be a project timeline with all of the goals to be followed along with during the process.

Member Rick Powers inquired about how the Master Plan would be made available to the public once it went live, and how it would be implemented as it is usually a huge document and difficult to read. Chair Jones responded that he had also been thinking about the difficulty that the average person might experience in trying to understand the key takeaways from a Master Plan. Member Powers then asked how the Committee could make sure that it is on track with its Master Plan. Mr. Taberner answered Mr. Powers' first question by stating that reading the "Goals and Policies" section along with the "Implementation Plan" section would be reading enough to understand the Master Plan. Mr. Taberner then answered the second question by saying that he gives the Town Administration an update every 2 years on the progress of

carrying out the Master Plans. He added that the Town can establish a Master Plan Implementation Committee if it is concerned that it is not being successfully implemented. Chair Jones then continued his own explanation of implementing the previous Master Plan as well as the process of putting together a new Master Plan.

Member Halligan asked how deep BETA would be going into reviewing existing conditions, as he has found that previous reports do not have accurate enough details to clearly describe the status of projects and development. Mr. Maxtutis answered that BETA would be able to provide whatever data is available. Member Halligan responded that he wants bottom line figures that succinctly show information, like the remaining amount of developable industrial-zoned land, because that is information he believes the Committee can act upon.

Member Gallagher asked how current the demographic data available for the process would be, and was answered by Mr. Taberner that the 2020 Census data would be the most recent. Member Steltzer asked if there would be the capability to change some of the assumptions on data analysis to the densities, in order to assess different outcomes from the buildout. Mr. Taberner answered that it is a lot of work to experiment with seeing what could happen to areas if dimensional regulations were to be changed, and it would depend on whether or not the Land Use and Zoning Subcommittee wants to get into that much detail.

Committee Charge

Chair Jones explained the responsibilities that Subcommittee Members would have in relation to the Master Plan Committee and its Consultants. Mr. Maxtutis provided a summary of the Charges that BETA would be responsible for. Chair Jones then reviewed the goals of the previous Master Plan, as well as how they were organized.

Member Ginelle Lang asked about prioritization of recommendations that might come out of the study, and whether or not the Subcommittees would be putting together rough orders of estimates for the implementation strategies of those goals. Mr. Maxtutis answered that the cost estimates are general unless they have already received a cost estimate. Chair Jones also briefed the Committee on a request from Marketing and Communications Specialist Lily Rivera's request that the Committee come up with a tagline or brand to their Master Plan Proposal, similar to how there had been Franklin For All, but added that it is not something that they have to do.

Chair Jones then resumed the discussion of Subcommittees, goals, and charges, which he added would continue to be developed over the next several meetings. Afterwards, Chair Jones announced the Committee Members who would be part of each Subcommittee;

- Land Use & Zoning Subcommittee: Ginelle Lang (Chair), Joe Halligan, Bruce Hunchard, Jennifer Williams, Gino Carlucci, and Erin Gallagher.
- Housing & Economic Development Subcommittee: Kenneth Elmore (Chair), Rick Power, and Cobi Frongillo.
- Community Services, Facilities & Circulation Subcommittee: Cobi Frongillo (Chair), Kenneth Elmore, Erin Gallagher, and Ginelle Lang.
- Sustainability Subcommittee: Gino Carlucci (Chair), Melanie Hamblen, Eric Steltzer

- Open Space & Recreation & Natural, Cultural, and Historic Resources Subcommittee:
Meghann Hagen (Chair), Glenn Jones, Rick Power, and Melanie Hamblen.

Member Williams asked for clarification on the purpose of the Sustainability Subcommittee, as it originally was part of a specific goal for each content area. Mr. Taberner answered that Sustainability is dealing with economics, the environment, equity, and climate change. However, the Committee can decide on whether it should be its own Subcommittee or if it should go back to being an element of every other Subcommittee's goals.

Next Meetings

June 20, 2023 at 6:30 PM

Adjourn Meeting

Chair Jones motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Clerk Hamblen. There was a unanimous vote in favor of adjourning. Meeting adjourned at 8:23 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tyler Paslaski

Administrative Assistant

--Master Plan Update Committee approved minutes at October 25, 2023 meeting