

Master Plan Update Committee 2023

Meeting Minutes

August 23, 2023, 6:30 PM

Third Floor Training Room

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; Meghann Hagen; Jennifer Williams; Kenneth Elmore; Joe Halligan; Ginelle Lang; Eric Steltzer; Gino Carlucci; Bruce Hunchard; Rick Power; Erin Gallagher

Committee Members Absent:

Others in Attendance: Bryan Taberner, Director of Planning and Community Development; Amy Love, Town Planner; Stephen Sherlock, Franklin Matters

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

Prior to discussion of the agenda items, Chair Jones asked to have the Chairs of each subcommittee provide subcommittee reports from their meetings which occurred between the prior Main Committee meeting and this meeting. He added that he would like to have Subcommittee Reports be an agenda item at the start of all future Main Committee agendas. The Chairs of each subcommittee then provided summaries of their meetings. Member Lang, Chair of the Land Use and Zoning subcommittee, asked for the Land Use & Zoning subcommittee if they could have updates on in-progress goals from the 2020 update on implementation items for the 2013 Master Plan.

Chair Jones then discussed having Barrett Consulting, LLC and BETA Group, Inc. be able to support the subcommittees with their data and resources. Town Planner Amy Love urged the Committee Members to reach out to her if they had any questions or information that she may be able to help provide to them.

Vice Chair Frongillo, Chair of the Community Service, Facilities, and Circulation subcommittee, asked about obtaining data pieces regarding budget forecasting, employee compensation, and space utilization, for comparing to other communities.

Member Hagen, Chair of the Open Space & Recreation Plan, and Natural, Cultural and Historical Resources subcommittee, asked about the possibility of transforming Franklin into a right-to-farm community, as it had been brought up by Agricultural Commission member Roger Trahan at their subcommittee meeting. However, Member Hagen did not know if the matter should be an OSRP and NCHR matter or if a different subcommittee should be looking into that, to which the Committee discussed it also being an issue for the Sustainability subcommittee. Clerk Hamblen said she speak with Roger Trahan and would look into how the Master Plan in

Medway is addressing the matter. Member Lang weighed in to say that they should look into what State has for protections on right-to-farm. Clerk Hamblen asked what Member Lang had in mind for goals about the permitting process for the Land Use and Zoning subcommittee. Member Lang responded by clarifying they would be looking at whether or not to reevaluate the permitting process as they continued their brainstorming sessions.

Marketing Flyer and Logo

Town Planner Love briefed the Committee on options for the Committee's logo, along with possible taglines. Chair Jones told the Committee that they would be having a booth at the September 30 Harvest Festival, but they would like to have a logo and other materials settled upon before then. Member Gallagher asked if they should continue waiting on Marketing and Communications Director Lily Rivera for a new logo, or if they should be drafting one themselves. Clerk Hamblen asked about making sure the branding for Franklin, Massachusetts helps distinguish it from other towns and entities that are also named Franklin. Member Williams asked if Franklin had a brand standard for colors, fonts, etc., and remarked that it would be nice to have consistency with the other projects and goals that the Town is working on. Vice Chair Frongillo answered that the Town has received State funding for just that goal. The Committee continued deliberating on branding and taglines. Vice Chair Frongillo remarked that there could be a difference between advertising to outsiders vs. insiders, as well as advertising to convince people to get involved in the process.

Finalize Marketing Outreach Plan

Town Planner Love briefed the Committee on the most recent draft of the Outreach Plan, and discussed recommended edits that had been received by Committee Members. She advised that the marketing materials, once finalized, could be given to the Committee Members to distribute throughout the Town.

Member Steltzer commented that not everyone in the community speaks English, as such they should look into resources for translating the materials. He added that there are underrepresented communities in Franklin that might not participate in events where the Committee might be trying to engage people at, and so they might want to look into seeing how they can invite those communities into participation.

Member Williams added that speaking with the Chairs and representatives of groups who are on the interview list about what they think the best way to reach their audience would be. Member Williams also asked if a consultant would be doing an evaluation of school facilities, to which Town Planner Love answered that a facilities study had in fact been done recently. Stephen Sherlock of Franklin Matters weighed in and explained that an analysis piece was being put together that would be ready in September. Member Williams added that it might be beneficial to complete a map-based survey as part of their method, explaining that there are programs that allow participants to map out their answers to questions and make results easier to visualize. Member Lang suggested that the program could be opened on tablets and mobile devices that are set up at events so that members of the public can quickly and easily provide

feedback. Vice Chair Frongillo suggested that it would be difficult to get a representative sample of Franklin from any quantitative data collection, so they should be careful about saying such data is representative of the average Franklin resident. Member Williams proposed the idea of gift card rewards to the first people who respond to the survey as a means of increasing participation, to which Chair Jones responded by explaining the issues with using public funds for such things. Member Elmore responded to Chair Jones that incentivizing participation in survey research is standard procedure. Chair Jones asked Town Planner Love to ask Town Attorney Cerel about what the Master Plan Committee's options are to incentivize participation. Stephen Sherlock asked that they also find out if the Master Plan Committee has restrictions on generating that kind of data as a result of being a Town organization, then could they hire another organization to possibly generate the data.

Finalize Timeline

Vice Chair Frongillo commented that there are timelines he would like to have finalized as a subcommittee Chair, such as the deadlines for requesting and expecting data. Vice Chair Frongillo also commented that he believes the schools would be interesting and willing to help with the process.

Member Gallagher asked if they would have a survey ready to distribute by the time of the Harvest Festival, adding that there should at least be an action item that will draw in people to participate. Town Planner Love mentioned that the Franklin For All project put up boards at events where anyone could write their thoughts. Member Hagen suggested having a QR code display that would sign up those who scan it to receive an email with the survey once it is ready. Vice Chair Frongillo commented that he believes there is information available at the time of the meeting that could be put into an advertisement to the public. Town Planner Love resumed briefing the Committee on how the timeline would continue to develop.

Chair Jones remarked that they would ultimately like to see where within the scope of the next few months would subcommittees need to complete public input sessions, as he has found that there is uncertainty about that at each of the subcommittee meetings. He added that it did not seem like the data and analyses from the Consultant groups would not arrive until October.

Vice Chair Frongillo weighed in to advise that the Committee should be collecting input from the public while the Consultants are gathering data on the public.

Member Williams asked what the expectations on public outreach that subcommittees should be doing in comparison to what the expectations of the Main Committee. Vice Chair Frongillo responded that the 2023 Open Space and Recreation Plan process was a good model for what the Master Plan Committee could do in terms of organizing meetings and public hearings by topics. Town Planner Love clarified that the individual subcommittees could perform outreach at events like DPW's Touch-A-Truck or events at Dean College, while the Main Committee in its entirety would go out together with the survey. Member Hagen requested that any points made at a subcommittee meeting that pertain to a different subcommittee are recorded in minutes so that they do not go unaddressed at the following Main Committee meeting.

Member Halligan questioned if the Committee should make sure its members have received the necessary data prior to public hearings so that they can effectively answer any questions fielded from the public. Chair Jones answered that they absolutely should, which is why the start of 2024 has been set on the timeline as the point at which to schedule the public hearings. Member Halligan remarked that using the input from people who visit at events would still be using a small sample to reflect a population of 40,000 people, and asked at what point the Committee decides that their position as elected officials means they will exercise their own judgement on what is best for the Town. Chair Jones responded that anything the Committee does is going to be a reflection not just of the public's input, but also the expertise and judgement of each of the Committee Members. Vice Chair Frongillo also weighed in to express that the public hearings are not just about listening to public input, but also providing their own types of expertise that the Committee might not have between their members. Chair Jones then led the Committee in setting up a timeline for the public hearings and outreach events. Chair Jones asked Town Planner Love how the Committee and subcommittees would know what objectives from the 2013 Master Plan have been met. Town Planner Love answered that the 2020 Plan would be the most updated information that most of the subcommittees would use, with the exception of the OSRP and NCHR subcommittee who will have the 2023 Open Space Plan to work from. Member Lang commented that she had marked the Land Use subcommittee spreadsheet with what goals from the 2013 Master Plan were completed according to the 2020 Plan, and would make sure it was available to be seen by the rest of the Committee. Chair Jones asked the Committee members to review it.

Next Meetings (Main Committee)

September 13, 2023 at 6:30PM

Next Meetings (subcommittees)

Open Space & Recreation, Natural, Cultural, and Historic Resources: TBD

Community Service, Facilities & Circulation: TBD

Land Use and Zoning: TBD

Housing & Economic Development: TBD

Sustainability: September 18, 2023 at 6:30PM

Additional Comments

Adjourn Meeting

Member Hunchard motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Member Williams. There was a unanimous vote in favor of adjourning. Meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tyler Paslaski

Administrative Assistant

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