

Franklin Master Plan - Introduction

*TOWN OF FRANKLIN
1997 MASTER PLAN*



FRANKLIN PLANNING BOARD

Purpose: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41, Section 81-D requires each local planning board to prepare and periodically revise a master plan that shall "provide a basis for decision making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality." In Franklin, master plans were completed in 1959, 1978 and 1987, although the 1987 plan was never officially adopted. This current plan reflects the many changes in the Town that have occurred in the past decade, and charts a new course for the future that responds to the

needs and desires of Franklin residents.

Process: In 1993, the Franklin Town Council adopted Resolution 93-64 establishing a Citizens Action Planning Committee (CAPC) and charging it with producing an updated master plan for the Town, including recommended goals and objectives relative to future growth. Eleven members were appointed, including representatives of various town boards and committees and citizens at large. The Council directed the CAPC to "make a major effort to solicit public input, both written and oral, to insure a broad cross-section of the community has an opportunity to provide information and comments."

In carrying out its duties the CAPC held approximately 75 regularly scheduled meetings, two televised call-in forums, three public workshops, and made at least a dozen presentations and progress reports to the Planning Board, Town Council and other Town boards and committees. The Committee also produced a newspaper supplement presenting the proposed master plan goals and objectives, a video on growth, and conducted two surveys to determine citizens' views on growth and development.

The Committee engaged several consultants to assist with the collection and

analysis of data, including Beals & Thomas, PGC Associates, Mullin & Associates,, and Economic Research Associates. However, the majority of work was done by CAPC members with support from the Regional Planning Services Office, the Town Attorney, and other Town staff.

Organization: The central pillar of the master plan is the following vision statement, which was developed by the CAPC with extensive citizen input and subsequently adopted by the Town Council.

The vision statement provides a common point of reference for the seven chapters in the master plan: Open Space and Recreation; Natural and Cultural Resources; Land Use; Housing; Infrastructure and Facilities; Economic Development; and Circulation. Each chapter contains several goal statements, which are extensions of the vision statement and which capture those elements of the vision statement applicable to the chapter topic. The goal statements provide direction for the Town in achieving the intent of the vision statement. They are timeless, and will not be achieved by any single action.

Each goal statement is followed by several objectives, which are more specific and targeted activities supporting the goal. Explanatory text and data in each chapter describe the major issues and summarize the CAPC's analysis of those issues. Finally, appearing in an appendix by each chapter are "Examples of Implementing Actions" which are intended to convey the CAPC's view of how goals and objectives can be carried out.

Many of these examples of implementing actions need further review and revision by appropriate Town boards and committees prior to implementation - a process which is expected to be lengthy. For this reason, the CAPC recommended formal acceptance and adoption of the master plan, including its goals and objectives, but not its examples of implementing actions.

Chairman's Message

The Franklin Master Plan differs from its 1959, 1978 and 1987 predecessors in at least two major aspects. First, the plan is based on a community vision; a collective statement of what we want Franklin to be like in the future. The vision points to where we want to go; the master plan provides a map showing the way.

Secondly, the plan has been prepared by the citizens of Franklin through the Citizens Action Planning Committee (CAPC), composed of volunteers who brought a wealth of community knowledge and experience, professional expertise, and diverse views and perspectives to the project. In addition, the CAPC employed an unprecedented variety of means to reach out to the community at large; to inform our fellow citizens of our work and, even more

importantly, to listen and learn. Although the Planning Board has the authority to adopt a master plan, it is hoped that by choosing this "grassroots" approach the entire Town will assume ownership of the plan and become actively involved in its implementation over the next few years.

The 1997 Master Plan reflects the many changes that Franklin has experienced over the past few years. Franklin has grown tremendously, providing many new opportunities but also new challenges. Fortunately, we have a wider variety of tools and techniques available to address those challenges. We also have a better understanding of the full implications of some of the approaches tried in the past. Wherever appropriate, we have drawn upon this new knowledge and experience in making our recommendations.

A special thanks is due to present and former members of the CAPC who collectively volunteered more than 2,000 hours of their time to this effort: Christie Anderberg; Mark Blazejewski; Helene Chamberlain; Dorian DesLauriers; Michael Doherty; Linda Drummond; Tom Eubank; Sam Gourd; Erik Hoffman; Alek Leontie; Norm MacNeill; Ron Massey; Paul Molla; Jim Nash; Don Netto and Joe Rico.

Appreciation is extended to Franklin's professional staff who provided invaluable support, especially Winn Davis, AICP; Paige Duncan; Rich McCarthy, Jr.; Krista Andry; Nick Alfieri; Karen L. Sherman, Domenica Tatasciore, and Valerie Brownly from the Regional Planning Services Office. For data collection and technical advice we thank: Gino and Pandora Carlucci, PGC Associates; John Mullin, Ph.D., Mullin Associates; Pam Brown, A.I.C.P., Beals and Thomas, Inc.; Russ Thibeau, Applied Economic Research, Inc.; James Nicholas, Ph.D., University of Florida; and Mark Bobrowski, Esq., New England School of Law.

Finally, we thank our fellow citizens who took the time to attend our sessions, respond to our surveys, express their opinions, and share their concerns.

Charles Fausold
Chairman