



Master Plan Committee
April 17, 2024

Meeting will be held at the Municipal Building
Town Council Chambers
355 East Central Street
6:30 PM

A NOTE TO RESIDENTS: All citizens are welcome to attend public board and committee meetings in person. The meetings will also be live-streamed by Franklin. Recordings of meetings are available on Franklin TV's "Franklin Town Hall TV" YouTube channel. Additionally, in an effort to maximize citizen engagement opportunities, citizens will be able to continue to participate remotely via phone OR Zoom.

Link to access the April 17, 2024 Subcommittee Meeting:

Meeting Link [HERE](#) -- Then click "Open Zoom"

Or copy and paste this URL into your browser:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84501134237>

Call-In Phone Number: Call 1-929-205-6099 & enter Meeting ID: 84501134237 then press #

Town of Franklin - Master Plan Committee
April 17, 2024
6:30PM

1. Meeting Minutes
 - a. February 14, 2024
 - b. March 6, 2024
2. Subcommittee updates
3. Next Steps
 - a. Timeline Review

Master Plan Update Committee 2023

Public Hearing 1

Meeting Minutes

February 14, 2024, 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 9 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; Kenneth Elmore; Joe Halligan; Ginelle Lang; Gino Carlucci; Rick Power; Meghann Hagen; Bruce Hunchard; Erin Gallagher;*

Committee Members Absent: *Eric Steltzer; Jennifer Williams;*

Chair Glenn Jones called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

Public Hearing Presentation

Chair Jones introduced a presentation about the Master Plan process and the Master Plan Update Committee's role in it, along with their progress. The presentation also covered the role of each subcommittee, as well as a summary of the Town Inventory. Ms. Slankas began presenting the information, continued by Ms. Farmer and Mr. Maxtutis partway through. At the end of the presentation, Chair Jones thanked the Consultants and then allowed the subcommittees to introduce themselves. The roles and objectives of each subcommittee were explained by their respective chairs, along with information about their upcoming meeting dates and locations. Key questions from each subcommittee were also presented for audience members to keep in mind and provide feedback on.

Question and Answer with Public

- For the Housing and Economic Development Subcommittee's question: "How does Franklin thrive in a changed landscape for living space, work, and business?" Amy Johnson of 19 Addison Avenue asked how the Committee defines the word "thrive". She added that she believes that what it means to be thriving is probably different for someone in their 20s when compared to someone in their 30s or 40s or over 60. Member Elmore, as subcommittee Chair, said he hoped that would be a fundamental question that they talk about as a preamble to the entire master plan.
- Mr. Richard Frongillo commented that he would like to see additional housing options be embraced as it is not easy for his children to buy a house in Franklin, but also it is not easy for the aging population to downsize into smaller units. Chair Jones agreed with

his points that affordable housing stock is making the younger population have to leave the Town and even the State.

- Mr. Mark Minnichelli of 31 Longfellow Drive commented on Member Elmore's statement about the disruption of Covid-19 to commuting and said he believed that commuting by car will only be getting worse. Thus he is wondering if there are better things that can be done to leverage the commuter rail that runs through the Town. Chair Jones responded that following Vice Chair Frongillo and the CSFC subcommittee would be posing that question in their process.
- Member Hunchard commented that Mr. Frongillo's comment might be in reference to Vice Chair Frongillo living with him, to which Vice Chair Frongillo said he is happy to be able to live in Franklin due in part to being able to have an accessory dwelling unit be built on their property. Chair Jones added that affordable housing is something that Boston realized it needed to create to address the overpopulation and underdevelopment issue, and that is a discussion the Master Plan Committee and the Town need to both address as they go forward.
- Ms. Paula Longobardi commented that she understands the need for housing, but is still concerned about the sight of large scale apartment complexes going up. She added concerns with apartments being built on Grove Street in an area without sidewalks that would be near water resources. She is concerned about how much capacity there is at the Charles River Pollution Control to accommodate all proposed new building in the future. She added her concerns about increased car traffic resulting in bottlenecks around Beaver Street. Ms. Longobardi added concerns about other apartment projects on Summer Street, East Central Street, and near St. John's draining water resources, and so she is wondering at what rate the projects' impacts will be monitored and whether or not they will be on town sewer. She reiterated that she is not against growth, but is just concerned with it all happening at once. Chair LoPresti responded that residents can be sure that they are taking these concerns into consideration throughout the process, and will be addressing the issues the Committee continues to grow throughout it, including with water usage, wells, and sewer capacity. He added that they are keeping their open spaces in mind as they look to avoid overdevelopment in a community zone. Ms. Longobardi also asked if the apartments on Grove Street would have balconies at all, out of concern that outdoor grills could cause sparks that might set fire to the nearby forest.
- For the Community Services, Facilities, and Circulation Subcommittee, Vice Chair Frongillo, as subcommittee Chair, asked if anyone could think of services that are not provided or are, but could be expanded upon. Ms. Amy Johnson of 19 Addison Avenue commented that the services for the Franklin Library are "Tremendous" and more people should utilize them.
- Vice Chair Frongillo focused on the Circulation (transportation) element of his subcommittee and asked if there were any areas around Franklin where people feel less

safe and want to change. Chair Jones said it added to Mr. Frongillo's question of how people get around Town. He also built off of Ms. Longobardi's concern that traffic would become a worse issue in the future and they need to look at ways to ultimately reduce vehicular traffic and create ways to travel the community safer.

- Ms. Ali Rheume of 147 Summer Street commented that many crosswalks in the Downtown Area feel unsafe to a lot of people, in part because they are not obvious enough, but they include one by the end of Summer Street that one would cross to reach the Birchwood Bakery, and the large crosswalks on Main Street. Thus, she is wondering what they can do to improve that area for mobility and accessibility. Vice Chair Frongillo thanked her for her continued advocacy for accessibility and safety, and Chair Jones remarked that pedestrian safety is ultimately one of the things the community needs to address.
- Mr. Mark Minnichelli commented his agreement with the other points about pedestrian safety, adding that the brick area of the Main Street intersection with Dean Avenue is poorly lit at night and in rain. He also commented that he believes the GATRA service is underutilized and under-communicated resource available to people, but if they knew about it then they might avoid use of their car and be able to reach places they previously thought only reachable by car. He asked if, in the cause of making pedestrian circulation in the downtown area better, they could consider changing part of it into a pedestrian-only area.
- Mr. Thomas Such from 79 Populatic Street commented in regards to where people feel less safe in Franklin that additional traffic has grown on Populatic Street in the past 10 years due in part to new subdivisions nearby, and although the speed limit is 20 mph, there are no sidewalks. Thus, he feels less safe on Populatic Street from the additional cars and traffic. Chair Jones thanked Mr. Such for his comment and said that his concern has been added to their notes.
- Member Hagen, Chair of the OSRP and NCHR subcommittee, presented her questions about what historical and natural preservation projects should be prioritized; and how the Town can best reach the community for public outreach and education around Open Spaces and Natural, Cultural, and Historic Resources. A member of the public commented that the information from the Town website has been getting better and better, with the email updates also being great. So perhaps Twitter or other applications that could be subscribed to could be helpful. Chair Jones asked what her preferred methods of receiving information from the Town are, to which she answered the Town website. Member Elmore asked to poll the current audience on the same question of their preferred communication method from the Town. Mr. Minnichelli also said the Town website was his preferred way of receiving information, and applauded the Open Space and Recreation Plan for DelCarte that is on the Conservation webpage as a template worthy of being replicated for other information. Mr. Such agreed that the Town Website is also his preferred way of learning what is going on in Town. Ms.

Rheaume said that, in addition to the Town website, she also uses email and social media such as Franklin Matters and the Franklin Observer as resources. Mr. Davin from 85 Oxford Drive provided his feedback that the Town website is excellent and has improved a lot, but thinks there is room for improvement wherein Town Departments could push rather than try to pull information and attention. He added that there are opportunities to reach out through the schools, sports teams, senior center, etc. to share information rather than just having to learn from singular individuals as points of contact through the Town. Chair Jones responded asking how Mr. Davin found out about the public hearing, which he answered that he had learned about it on Instagram. He added that increased development along Prospect Street with Bellingham and the increased traffic from it had led him to attend the meeting and determine that he needs to be more aware of what is happening. Chair Jones remarked that it is great to hear about him wanting to be more aware, and then asked if the Committee were to choose a Historical or Preservation Project, what he would prioritize. Mr. Davin answered Schmidt Farms, citing the open space and opportunities to have things like a farmers market there. Chair Jones asked, if the Committee were to put together an ad hoc subcommittee to work on the topic of Schmidt's Farm, would Mr. Davin join the subcommittee or share his input with it, to which Mr. Davin said yes.

- Mr. Davin also commented in regards to the changing economic environment of housing and work from home, saying that the pandemic had put the Town ahead 5-8 years in terms of how people work and how they commute. As more people are being called back into commuting into work, conditions will probably slowly reverting back to what they were in 2019, and so the Committee should consider that before any drastic decisions are made with addressing current circumstances. Chair Jones thanked Mr. Davin for his comments, and noted that Open Space areas including Schmidt's Farm had been purchased in the last few years with the idea of mitigating overdevelopment in mind.
- Member Hagen asked if there were any comments on accessibility for the Open Spaces, as the Town is making a concentrated effort on accessibility and she would be interested to hear any more input people might have.
- Member Lang, Chair of the Land Use & Zoning subcommittee, asked the audience for thoughts on two questions: How might (they) encourage responsible development that enhances the character of Franklin while activating underused areas; and also what areas in Franklin could benefit most from reimagining their current land use, and how might those adjustments positively impact the people of Franklin. Mr. Minnichelli responded to the first question that, if large development projects are going up, then in his opinion they are better off in the Downtown area and the section of East Central Street close to Town. He added that some areas that are zoned right now to exclude residential could be rezoned to make that possible, but having the residential be included in the central areas could help prevent an increase of traffic that results from

most new residential projects. He added that accessory dwelling units could be helpful in the area near the Downtown station area more so than out and away from it.

Member Carlucci commented on how the current development near Downtown, in comparison to the areas of Open Space that the Town has purchased away from being developable that would have required cars to travel to and from, is conducive to new residents not needing to use cars. Chair Jones responded to comments made about a friendly 40B affordable housing project on 121 Grove Street and how the Committee Members do consider potentially detrimental impacts and the loss of industrial-zoned land even when they understand that the Town needs more affordable housing.

- Member Carlucci, Chair of the Sustainability subcommittee, asked for ideas on how the Town could best reduce greenhouse gas emissions, noting that the Town has taken many steps already in terms of making its buildings more efficient and transitioning to using electric vehicles and utilizing electricity from solar farms. Mr. Minnichelli commented encouragement of the Town to look at the EnergizeFranklin.org website as a platform for educating people on how they can reduce greenhouse gas emissions. He also said that there are laws that are not being enforced that could help, such as idling cars in the morning.
- At the request of any additional questions, Mr. Such commented that not everyone uses social media, and asked if what is being posted on social media mirror what is being put on the Town website. Clerk Hamblen responded that anyone should be able to find the same information on the Town website that they might find on social media. Chair Jones highlighted the newsletter option that pops up when people visit the Town website, as well as Stephen Sherlock of Franklin Matters as a useful source of information.

Ms. Slankas said she was glad that so many people from the public were engaged in the process. She added that the Consultants are happy to be working with the Town and the Committee, and thanked everyone for their help and input.

Next Meetings (Main Committee)

March 6, 2024 at 6:30PM

Open House: March 23, 2024 from 11:00AM-2:00PM or 3:00PM at Dean College, room TBD

Public Hearing 2: April 10, 2024

Next Meetings (subcommittees)

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

Community Service, Facilities & Circulation: March 6, 2024 at 5:15PM

Land Use and Zoning: March 4, 2024 at 7:00PM

Housing & Economic Development: February 15, 2024 at 5:00PM

Sustainability: TBD

Additional Comments

Adjourn Meeting

Member Hunchard motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Clerk Hamblen. There was a unanimous vote in favor of adjourning. Meeting adjourned at 8:24 PM.

Master Plan Update Committee 2023

Meeting Minutes

March 6, 2024, 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 9 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; Joe Halligan; Ginelle Lang; Gino Carlucci; Rick Power; Meghann Hagen; Bruce Hunchard; Eric Steltzer; Jennifer Williams;*

Committee Members Absent: *Kenneth Elmore; Erin Gallagher;*

Others in Attendance: *Bryan Taberner, DPCD Director; Amy Love, Town Planner; Jill Slankas, Barrett Planning Group LLC; Jeff Maxtutis, BETA Group, Inc.*

Chair Glenn Jones called the meeting to order at 6:29 PM.

Subcommittee Updates

Vice Chair Frongillo said that the CSFC subcommittee was not able to meet quorum for their meeting earlier in the evening, so he and Member Lang will share information they gathered from Facilities Director Mike D'Angelo with the absent subcommittee Members later. Member Lang, Chair of the Land Use and Zoning subcommittee, updated everyone on their joint Public Outreach meeting with the Sustainability subcommittee at the Franklin Public Library on Saturday March 2, saying that some useful insight was received and discussions had with residents. She added that March 16 will be the date of another public hearing for the Land Use and Zoning Committee at the Winter Farmers Market. Member Lang asked about what the Land Use & Zoning subcommittee is allowed to discuss in regards to solutions to issues that might directly impact what other subcommittees are focused on. Chair Jones forwarded her question to Town Planner Love. Town Planner Love instructed everyone on how they can sign up for news updates specific to the Master Plan Update Committee online, and they are planning to post the summary of the survey online. Member Hagen remarked that, going forward, a better sense of collaboration and understanding of what other subcommittees are doing across the board should be something that the Committee Members work on. Chair Jones responded that the Committee can start focusing on that issue after March most likely. Member Carlucci provided update as Chair of the Sustainability subcommittee to agree with member Lang on the productivity of the joint Public Outreach meeting, and said that their next subcommittee meeting is scheduled for March 11. Member Hagen updated the OSRP and NCHR subcommittee on their recent trip to the SNETT Trail and are planning to meet next on March 23.

Meeting Minutes

Member Hunchard motioned to approve the December 13, 2023 and February 7, 2024 Master Plan Committee Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Member Carlucci. The Committee voted unanimously in favor of approving both sets of minutes.

Planning for Workshop Meeting

Chair Jones made note that, ideally, a non-quorum group of Master Place Committee Members would be formed to meet with the Consultants sometime before March 22 to come up with plans for the March 23 Open House. Ms. Slankas then went over what the group would need to provide to ensure the Workshop is ready, and stated that they needed to determine what they want the public to be able to provide input and feedback to. Chair Jones noted that, with the size of the room at Dean College they are planning to utilize for the workshop, the plan is to have each subcommittee take a corner of the room to focus their discussions with the public at. Chair Jones added that what each subcommittee is going to be expected to bring is up to them, at which point he asked the Consultants for ideas and examples they would recommend.

Mr. Maxtutis weighed in to say that, no matter the technique, it is important for people to see each other providing input because it stimulates them, more so than anonymous feedback notes. Member Williams asked how they would be advertising and promoting the Workshop to people currently so that they can put it on their calendars sooner rather than later. She also asked about having a site plan accompany the Workshop advertisement so that people who see it will know where at Dean College it will be happening. Chair Jones and Town Planner Love said the Workshop will be advertised soon on email, social media, and the Town website, as well as Franklin Matters. Member Williams asked if targeted, non-automated messaging could be sent out to specific entities and communities like the Police Department and the leaders of advocacy groups. Chair Jones agreed that should be an element of the promotion of the Workshop. Member Halligan offered to reach out to Alan Earls of the Franklin Observer to see if he could run a repeating advertisement of it, and added that he could cover expenses for it should it become a cost to the Committee.

Chair Jones placed himself on the non-quorum group for Planning the Workshop Meeting, along with Member Lang, Member Williams, and Member Carlucci. Member Steltzer remarked that the Workshop is a great opportunity to not just collect feedback, but also to clarify and educate the public about what a Master Plan is. Town Planner Love responded that the educational component is planned to be a part of the event. Member Lang asked about having a location map ready to be present at the Workshop, and recommended using the lobby outside of the meeting room as a space for a welcome table. Chair Jones concluded by saying the members of the group would be sent an email laying out the remaining details that need to be set up. The group members coordinated when they would meet to plan out those remaining details.

Next Meetings (Main Committee)

Open House/Workshop: March 23, 2024 from 11:00AM- 3:00PM at Dean College, Alumni Memorial Hall at 60 School Street

Public Outreach 2: April 10, 2024 at 6:30PM in Town Council Chambers

Next Meetings (subcommittees)

Open Space & Recreation, Natural, Cultural, and Historic Resources: March 23, 2024 at 6:00PM

Community Service, Facilities & Circulation: March 20, 2024 at 5:15PM

Land Use and Zoning: March 18, 2024 at 7:00PM

Housing & Economic Development: March 7, 2024 at 5:00PM

Sustainability: March 11, 2024 at 6:30PM

Additional Comments**Adjourn Meeting**

Member Hunchard motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Member Steltzer. There was a unanimous vote in favor of adjourning. Meeting adjourned at 7:06 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Tyler Paslaski

Administrative Assistant