



**MASTER PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE**  
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**Meeting Minutes**  
**October 29, 2014**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Morse-Hilberg Room, Town Hall, 29 Middle Road**

Members present:

Voting Members Present:

Marie Cannon (Board of Health)  
Bryon Clemence (Agricultural Commission)  
David Follett (Conservation Commission)  
Les Fox (Board of Selectmen )  
John Markiewicz (Planning Board)  
Al Murphy (Housing Board)

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Adam Duchesneau (Town Planner)  
Tom Garmon (DPW Director)  
Maria Neyland (School Committee)  
Police Chief Warren Ryder  
Selina Shaw (Town Administrator)

Others in Attendance:

Manisha Bewtra, Metropolitan Area Planning Council  
Mitzi Garcia-Weil (on behalf of the Recreation Commission)  
Christine Madore, Metropolitan Area Planning Council  
Francie Nolde (on behalf of the Energy Committee)  
Alan Rohwer (on behalf of the Historical Commission)  
John Rosamond (on behalf of the Finance Committee)

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

**Introductions and Kickoff**

Mr. Duchesneau opened the meeting and introduced Ms. Bewtra and Ms. Madore from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), the consultant for the Master Plan Update project. Ms. Bewtra began by introducing herself and asked all those in attendance to do the same. As part of the introductions, Ms. Bewtra asked people to tell the rest of the Committee something about Boxborough that others may not know or to share something they love about the community. She also asked that each person indicate what they envision as Boxborough's future and to explain why participating in the development of the Master Plan Update interests them. The follow comments were provided by the Master Plan Update Committee members that were in attendance:

- The old Master Plan simply sat on the shelf and I would like to see this updated plan become a living document.
- This is a nice, small town with nice residents.
- I enjoy the Town trails and the small-town feel.
- We should pay attention to this plan update and I enjoy the rural atmosphere of Boxborough.
- Please make the Master Plan Update an actionable and living document that looks at economic development. I enjoy Boxborough for the quality schools and the horses.

- I love to see that the Town is forward thinking but I would like to see more emphasis on energy efficiency and renewables.
- My favorite aspects of Boxborough are the space, the rural character, and the access to communication. I would like to see the Master Plan Update be an active document that is used. It would be preferable if there was a way to measure the progress of the plan to see if the Town is meeting certain goals along the way.
- I do not want this new plan to just sit on the shelf and I hope that it can be a living document. I am interested in seeing more economic development, the rural character be maintained, and establishing more reasonable taxes.
- I enjoy the Town celebrations such as Fifer's Day and WinterFest. I hope that this Master Plan document has a purpose and will be used.

Ms. Bewtra then went over what the content of the Master Plan Update would entail. She noted that MAPC and the Town will be pulling in pieces from other plans that are already being worked on such as the Housing Production Plan, the Open Space and Recreation Plan, and the Energy Action Plan. Ms. Bewtra indicated the Plan Update will examine local regulations and an implementation strategy will be developed for the plan as well. She then discussed the rough timeline for the Master Plan Update process which has a conclusion goal of October 2015. She noted that the Town and MAPC see the Master Plan Update Committee (MPUC) members as the ambassadors for the plan who represent a variety of community viewpoints. Ms. Bewtra then covered the roles and expectations of the MPUC.

There was then discussion about the final product MAPC would produce at the end of the Master Plan Update process which would be a website where the Master Plan would "live." Ms. Bewtra indicated MAPC was planning on using the program WordPress to build out the Master Plan website. Mr. Markiewicz raised questions about the process for publishing material to this website. Mr. Fox pointed out that the MPUC has to be careful about complying with Open Meeting Law requirements. Mr. Duchesneau explained that draft sections of the Plan Update would be posted to the website for the MPUC and the public to review, but they would only be discussed at MPUC meetings. During the time between the posting of each new section and each MPUC meeting, MPUC members will review each draft section and come to the next meeting with comments and suggestions. Mr. Murphy asked how members of the public would be able to comment on each draft section. Mr. Duchesneau indicated that constituents could email him directly with comments or they could attend the MPUC meetings and provide feedback.

The MPUC then discussed how the proposed Master Plan Update website would be used and what information would be posted there. There was discussion as to how people could post their comments on the website in order to provide another way for people to comment on each draft section of the Master Plan Update. Mr. Fox asked if there would be some type of Master Plan Update blog. Ms. Shaw indicated she had concerns about balancing first amendment rights on a municipality's public blog and potential inappropriate comments that could be posted there. Mr. Duchesneau reiterated that Town Staff and the consultant would likely be the only entities posting materials to the website and that the only information being posted would be new draft sections of the plan.

Ms. Madore then presented demographic information about the community. She noted that the number of senior households would be increasing over the next 15 years, but that the town's net in and out migration would be the same. She indicated that Boxborough's population is projected

to decrease, although she did not provide further explanation or data. The MPUC felt that this should be clarified. Ms. Madore indicated that there were about 4,200 jobs in Boxborough, which raised questions from a few members of the MPUC. Ms. Madore stated she would look into this number a bit further to determine how it was calculated. Ms. Madore continued on to note that the number school aged children in town would likely decrease over the next 15 years, while the number of seniors would increase. Mr. Markiewicz was curious to know how these population trends compared to the other surrounding communities and Ms. Madore stated she could look into this comparison further. Mr. Follett noted that technology office space has increased in the Cambridge/Boston area recently and rents per square foot continue to increase. He felt that eventually prices would become too high and businesses would make their way back out to the Interstate 495 area.

### **Election of Master Plan Update Committee Chair**

Ms. Bewtra indicated it would be a good idea to elect a Chair for the MPUC. Mr. Fox MADE a MOTION to nominate Mr. Markiewicz as Chair of the Master Plan Update Committee. Mr. Clemence SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor.

Mr. Fox then offered to be a Vice Chair of the MPUC. Mr. Markiewicz then MADE a MOTION to nominate Mr. Fox as Vice Chair of the Master Plan Update Committee. Ms. Cannon SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor.

### **November 19, 2014 Public Kickoff and Visioning Forum**

Ms. Bewtra indicated the goal of the Public Kickoff and Visioning Forum was to gather enough information and feedback from attendees in order to form the Vision Statement for the Master Plan Update. Ms. Bewtra noted the exact details for the structure of the forum were still being worked out, but smaller table discussions and a short presentation would be involved. She stated it would be helpful if there could be at least one MPUC member at each small discussion table to help guide the conversation and to collect the most information from attendees. There was also consensus by the MPUC that a Community Assets poster should be created for the forum where attendees could identify where they felt important community resources were located. Ms. Bewtra indicated that refreshments would be provided and asked MPUC members to think about how some local town flavor could also be incorporated into the event.

Mr. Clemence stated it would be helpful if at the Public Kickoff there could be a little explanation as to how the Master Plan Update fits into the regional context and MetroFuture, MAPC's 30 year regional plan for the greater Boston area. Mr. Markiewicz asked what members of the public this forum should be attracting and what is the anticipated result of the forum. Ms. Bewtra indicated the goal of the forum is to come away with the parameters for a Vision Statement for the Master Plan Update, as well as particular goals for the Plan. Mr. Follett suggested that obtaining feedback from the public would be more successful by soliciting input on the Master Plan Update at Town events such as Fifer's Day and WinterFest, as well as at community gathering places such as the Transfer Station. Ms. Nolde stated she would like to see the topics of public water and sewer explored in greater detail and for those topics to have their own specific sections within the Master Plan. Mr. Follett also pointed out that students at the regional high school will need to be lining up senior projects soon and perhaps they could be incorporated into this process somehow.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.