



MASTER PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE
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Meeting Minutes
June 9, 2015
7:00 PM
Grange Meeting Room, Town Hall, 29 Middle Road

Members Present:

Voting Members Present:

John Markiewicz, Chair (Planning Board)
Les Fox, Vice Chair (Board of Selectmen)
Bryon Clemence (Agricultural Commission)
Marie Cannon (Board of Health)
Al Murphy (Housing Board)
Dennis Reip (Conservation Commission)
Frank Powers (Council on Aging)

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Steven Ballard (Finance Committee)
Adam Duchesneau (Town Planner)
Maria Neyland (School Committee)
Matt Rosner (Recreation Commission)
Police Chief Warren Ryder

Others in Attendance:

Manisha Bewtra, Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Christine Madore, Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Jessica Robertson, Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Emma Schnur, Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Voting Members Absent:

Mitzi Garcia-Weil (Recreation Commission)
Rebecca Morris (Energy Committee)

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM.

Meeting Minutes of May 5, 2015

Mr. Markiewicz MADE a MOTION to approve the minutes of May 5, 2015 as amended by Mr. Clemence. Mr. Powers SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor and Ms. Cannon was absent from the vote.

Meeting Minutes of April 22, 2015

Mr. Markiewicz MADE a MOTION to approve the minutes of April 22, 2015. Mr. Clemence SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor and Ms. Cannon was absent from the vote.

Correspondence

Mr. Duchesneau indicated the Master Plan Update Committee (MPUC) had not received any correspondence since their last meeting.

At this time Ms. Cannon and Mr. Rosner arrived at the meeting.

Plan Recommendations Exercise and Discussion

Ms. Bewtra from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) explained the exercise they would be conducting and indicated MAPC was looking for MPUC members initial reactions and comments regarding the draft Recommendations for the Master Plan. The idea was to transition from the Vision Statement to making the Plan realized. Ms. Bewtra went over the levels of the Recommendations which began with Aspirations at the highest level, then Goals, then Strategies, and finally Actions.

At this time Mr. Ballard arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Bewtra noted at Fifer's Day MAPC would like to get the broader public's reaction to the Recommendations and they were working on a variety of ways to capture this during the fair. Mr. Markiewicz asked if the Aspirations were listed in any specific order. Ms. Bewtra stated they were not, but she noted they could be reordered and prioritized. She continued on to indicate MAPC would like to have all comments from the MPUC on the Recommendations by Monday, June 15, 2015.

Mr. Markiewicz indicated the MPUC should understand how the Recommendations would be used for Fifer's Day because this might influence priorities and what the MPUC wanted to discuss that evening. Ms. Bewtra stated they were thinking of asking fairgoers to prioritize the Goals or to have people provide Strategies for each of the Goals. Mr. Murphy felt all of the items listed in the Recommendations were great, but he did not think they were a plan. He felt the Aspirations should be prioritized and their prioritization should be determined based on public input at Fifer's Day. Mr. Markiewicz indicated sharing the Aspirations and the Goals with the public at Fifer's Day made sense, but getting into more detailed aspects may raise a number of questions.

Mr. Rosner asked what MAPC's plan was for collecting feedback on the Recommendations at Fifer's Day and Ms. Bewtra indicated the activities they were planning would be more interactive and fun than the exercise at the meeting. Mr. Markiewicz stated that at Fifer's Day the MPUC needed to let the public know this process is, and has been, on-going. Mr. Fox indicated that many fair attendees will not be aware this process has been on-going, but most people will want to know where it is heading. Mr. Reip suggested perhaps simply focusing on the Aspirations of the Recommendations during Fifer's Day. Mr. Clemence felt the Goals and Strategies should be left out of the materials for Fifer's Day and the conversation should be focused on the Aspirations. Mr. Powers felt only the Aspirations should be discussed at Fifer's Day because he believed it would be difficult to keep people's attention during the fair. He thought it would be more beneficial to ask fair attendees about the important, higher level items. Ms. Madore thought MAPC would be able to tease out specific Action items from people's comments at Fifer's Day.

Mr. Murphy wondered if a questionnaire should be developed around deriving Goals and Strategies for the Plan. Mr. Fox felt the Recommendations should be whittled down to the Aspirations and Goals for Fifer's Day. Mr. Rosner suggested MAPC ask fair attendees what

were the three most important items the Town should focus on improving and then let people come up with their own ideas. Ms. Neyland pointed out the MPUC needed to be careful they do not take a step backwards in the overall process because they did some of this already at the Public Kickoff and Visioning Session last fall. Mr. Markiewicz noted the MPUC is putting pieces together as a framework and they are attempting to solidify a vision for Boxborough for the next 10-15 years. He felt the Fifer's Day Booth should be an update on the status of the Master Planning process, present the Aspirations that have been drafted, some of the Goals, and solicit feedback from people on these items.

Mr. Powers supported Mr. Rosner's idea because Fifer's Day will bring in a very broad audience to the event. Mr. Murphy indicated having a poster which laid out the planning process to this point would be helpful to fairgoers to understand what has been happening. Ms. Madore pointed out the MPUC and MAPC have a level of accountability to the people who attended and participated in the Public Kickoff and Visioning Forum and to those who responded to the Economic Development Survey. Mr. Markiewicz stated he felt it was important that people know the Master Planning process has been an open process to this point.

Ms. Neyland noted many fairgoers will say Boxborough is just fine the way it is and the MPUC needs to be prepared for this response and acknowledge that if people like things the way they are, steps need to be taken to preserve the existing situation. Mr. Markiewicz pointed out the demographics in the town are changing and the public needs to understand the impacts of this on the community.

The MPUC then went through the exercise MAPC had prepared and they provided comments on the Recommendations which had been drafted.

At this time Mr. Powers departed from the meeting.

The MPUC then reconvened to continue the discussion about the draft Recommendations. Mr. Rosner felt identifying parts of the Plan which can obtain state and federal funding to undertake Action items should be priorities. Mr. Markiewicz noted subcommittees may need to be created to move a number of the Master Plan initiatives forward. He pointed out the Town needs to find ways to get funding from outside of the Town's tax base. Mr. Fox felt Aspiration # 5, regarding the town being a close-knit and welcoming community, had too much "feel good" language in it. He indicated Goal 5.3 regarding enhancing the quality and variety of recreation programs and facilities should be the main topic for this particular Aspiration.

Mr. Markiewicz noted one of the main items that was constantly restated during the entire Master Plan Update process was that people wanted a place to congregate and come together as a community to supplement the Town events that already exist. Mr. Rosner noted when his son was at the Blanchard School, that was when he felt the largest sense of community in the town. He wondered how outreach to town residents could be better improved. Mr. Markiewicz pointed out the public was asking for other opportunities to communicate other than at the Transfer Station. Ms. Neyland indicated that a specific segment of the population is reached when information is distributed there. Mr. Fox wondered if regionalization of the school system has impacted how close-knit the community is. Ms. Neyland felt regionalization has not had a big

impact on this item. Mr. Markiewicz indicated the MPUC needed to ensure some type of community communications plan was a part of the Master Plan. Mr. Fox pointed out no one in town is presently responsible for community outreach on a holistic level.

Next Steps for Fifer's Day and the Master Plan Website

The MPUC then discussed what the Boxborough 2030 Fifer's Day Booth should include in order to gather information from fairgoers. Ms. Neyland felt the MPUC members should have talking points so everyone is sending the same message. Mr. Rosner stated it would be good to know what people think about the Master Plan Update process moving forward. Mr. Reip noted that age demographic information about the community would get people's attention. Mr. Murphy indicated people would relate to concrete examples. Mr. Markiewicz felt they should ask fair attendees what Boxborough looks like in the future for them. Chief Ryder suggested the MPUC should point out to people what will happen to the future of the town if no action is taken. Mr. Rosner felt the MPUC should point out the town is changing and ask attendees if they wanted to have a voice in the town's future. Mr. Markiewicz felt the MPUC should ask people if they knew about the changes that were happening in town and inquire how people felt about them. Ms. Neyland noted Fifer's Day is a great venue to change the thought process about Boxborough 2030 and they should use this as a title instead of calling it the "Master Plan." The MPUC then further discussed set up and booth activity logistics for Fifer's Day. Ms. Bewtra indicated MAPC was hoping to have the Boxborough 2030 website more fully developed by Fifer's Day.

Mr. Duchesneau indicated he would send out a Doodle Poll to ask MPUC members about their availability for an August meeting date.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM on a MOTION by Mr. Markiewicz, SECONDED by Mr. Fox, with all members voting in favor.