



MASTER PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE
29 Middle Road, Boxborough, Massachusetts 01719
Phone: (978) 264-1723 • Fax: (978) 264-3127
www.boxborough-ma.gov

Meeting Minutes
November 23, 2015
7:00 PM
Boxborough Community Center, 30 Middle Road

Members Present:

Voting Members Present:

John Markiewicz, Chair (Planning Board)
Marie Cannon (Board of Health)
Bryon Clemence (Agricultural Commission)
David Follett (Conservation Commission)
Mitzi Garcia-Weil (Recreation Commission)
Rebecca Morris (Energy Committee)
Al Murphy (Housing Board)
Frank Powers (Council on Aging)

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Adam Duchesneau (Town Planner)
Kevin Mahoney (Historical Commission)
Selina Shaw (Town Administrator)

Voting Members Absent:

Les Fox, Vice Chair (Board of Selectmen)

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

Meeting Minutes of October 20, 2015

Mr. Markiewicz MADE a MOTION to approve the minutes of October 20, 2015 as amended.

Mr. Powers SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor and Ms. Cannon was absent from the vote.

Correspondence

Mr. Duchesneau indicated he had received an email from Samantha Morgan on Monday, November 23, 2015, inquiring if the periodic change in nesting sites for blue herons in the area had been taken note of in Boxborough2030. She asked this question as it related to updating the blue heron nesting sites for outside engineering firms needing access to current information of the birds' nesting locations, or if this was being addressed by another entity.

Mr. Markiewicz asked if the Master Plan Update Committee (MPUC) needed to respond to Ms. Morgan. Mr. Follett noted blue herons need dead trees for nesting, but the trees could not be unstable or unsafe for nesting, and therefore, the herons do move around to different locations. Mr. Follett also added if a nesting tree is a threat to human safety, the Conservation Commission will tell the property owner to cut the tree down.

Discussion Regarding Boxborough2030 Recommendations and Implementation Plan

Mr. Duchesneau began by providing a brief overview of the latest draft of the Recommendations and Implementation Plan from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). Mr. Follett stated the document missed 80% of the tasks the Conservation Commission currently performs, 5% were actually captured correctly, and the rest were in a gray area. Mr. Follett felt many of the Action items listed in the document should not be memorialized in such a fine level of detail. Mr. Powers indicated he felt some of the Action items were accurate and should be left in the Recommendations and Implementation Plan. Mr. Markiewicz stated the on-going Action items under each Strategy should not be lost, but they should be reorganized. He also pointed out the document does not say all of the Action items need to be completed and noted they are simply recommended actions. Mr. Follett stated he felt a number of the Action items should simply be eliminated as formal Action items. Ms. Morris recalled from the last MPUC meeting there were three different manners in which the Recommendations and Implementation Plan could be presented.

At this time Ms. Cannon arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Duchesneau noted MAPC had attempted to call out the most important Action items by placing boxes around certain pieces of text. He also suggested a reordering of the on-going Action items or perhaps creating a list of the on-going items under each Strategy. Mr. Markiewicz felt it may make more sense to pull out all of the on-going Action items and to classify them as recommended Actions or possible Actions. Mr. Murphy indicated there appeared to be a lack of priority classification for the Action items and felt this was an important aspect which should be implemented into the Recommendations and Implementation Plan. Mr. Markiewicz noted when one board or committee is working on a particular item, this may reprioritize an associated Action item for another board or committee.

Ms. Shaw suggested simply adding text at the beginning of the document which indicated the Action items were recommendations. Mr. Follett proposed using the word "Recommendation" instead of "Action" for each item. Ms. Morris stated she preferred the word "Action" because the MPUC should expect each board and committee to follow through on the Action items for which they are responsible. She added that the word "Recommendation" is too soft or passive for a Master Plan document. Mr. Murphy stated he did not feel the timeframe for each Action item and the priority for each Action item were one in the same. He also noted the Housing Board's prioritization and edits did not appear to be included in the latest draft of this document.

Mr. Markiewicz indicated he felt the Action items were the biggest moving targets. For the MPUC to say the document is all inclusive; the MPUC would be kidding themselves. Mr. Follett stated he felt the Conservation Commission's comments had not been incorporated into the latest draft. He also felt the document should only list Action items which were new and significant, or which were items that dictated changes. Mr. Follett stated he felt the document should only memorialize items at a very high level. Ms. Morris pointed out the most important actions which the Conservation Commission should undertake (or is currently performing) are the items which should be included in the Recommendations and Implementation Plan. There was then a conversation regarding a handbook related to how each board or committee should be acting and the items which they should be undertaking.

At this time Ms. Garcia-Weil left the meeting.

Mr. Markiewicz felt the question which needed to be answered was the level of detail which the MPUC wanted to get into at the Action item level. He pointed out there are some specific goals Boxborough2030 is trying to achieve. Some of the Actions which are attempting to help achieve those goals are blatant, and impacted boards and committees should be aware. Mr. Duchesneau stated it seemed that approval of Boxborough2030 by the end of 2015 was becoming unrealistic based upon the comments from the MPUC members. Mr. Follett noted the discussion is primarily about the Action items. He stated the Board of Selectmen provided feedback and he did not see their comments reiterated in the latest draft of the document. Mr. Follett indicated there was too much detail in the Recommendations and Implementation Plan.

Mr. Markiewicz stated that if the boards and committees are in disagreement with the Action items, the MPUC needs to address this. He then suggested that each MPUC member review the document primarily focusing on the Action items for which their board/committee has lead responsibility, and, more specifically, review the items which are on-going. Ms. Shaw noted the Board of Selectmen eliminated many items but felt some should be retained for the public to show the on-going activity which is taking place to achieve each Goal. There was then a discussion regarding various Action items within the document and which ones appeared to be routine or on-going already. Mr. Markiewicz suggested moving the Action items which were on-going into a single grouping under each Strategy and eliminating the Action items which are unnecessary.

The MPUC decided they would get back to Mr. Duchesneau with any comments they may have by Sunday, December 6, 2015. All comments would be passed along to MAPC for review and incorporation into the document. The MPUC would then hold another meeting on Tuesday, December 15, 2015 to review the updated document and hopefully vote for the document to be moved on to the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen for their approval/endorsement before the end of the year.

Discussion Regarding Boxborough2030 Magazine Style Summary

Mr. Duchesneau provided a brief overview of the changes which had been made since the last version of the document had been released. He noted the most significant change was the two-page executive summary within the document which Mr. Fox and Mr. Markiewicz had pulled together, which included a list of eight different Top Priorities that were identified during the Master Plan Update process. The MPUC reviewed and discussed these Top Priorities listed in the document. The Top Priorities were edited, combined, and reduced down to six key items.

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