



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

Meeting Minutes
December 15, 2015
7:00 PM
Sargent Memorial Library Meeting Room, 427 Massachusetts Avenue

Members Present:

Voting Members Present:

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

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Adam Duchesneau (Town Planner)
Maria Neyland (School Committee)
Selina Shaw (Town Administrator)
Police Chief Warren Ryder
Fire Chief Randolph White

Voting Members Absent:

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

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:09 PM.

Meeting Minutes of November 23, 2015

Mr. Powers MADE a MOTION to approve the minutes of November 23, 2015 as amended. Mr. Murphy SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor.

Correspondence

Mr. Duchesneau indicated he had received correspondence from resident Lexi Ladd on December 11, 2015 in which she proposed new Goals, Strategies, and Action items under Aspiration #2 of Boxborough2030. Ms. Ladd's proposed additions had been included in the materials which were distributed to the Master Plan Update Committee (MPUC) prior to the meeting. In response to this proposed new text from Ms. Ladd, Chief Ryder had submitted an email to Mr. Duchesneau on December 15, 2015 proposing some edits to Ms. Ladd's new text. Ms. Ladd was in attendance at the meeting and Mr. Markiewicz decided to let her present her material before the MPUC examined the correspondence any further.

Discussion Regarding Boxborough2030 Recommendations and Implementation Plan

Ms. Ladd indicated she wanted to add language into the Recommendations and Implementation Plan document which addressed anti-bias and diversity actions. She apologized for bringing this to the Master Plan Update process so late and was thankful to the MPUC for allowing her to present her ideas. Ms. Ladd noted she was a member of the Anti-bias Working Group which contained members from both Boxborough and Acton. She felt there was an opportunity to

include some diversity language behind Aspiration #2, noting that approximately 20% of Boxborough residents are Asian. Ms. Ladd also felt there was an opportunity to make the community more welcoming to everyone. She noted anti-bias training can be reassuring to the community as a whole.

Mr. Markiewicz asked what source of grant funds would be used to pay for the proposed training. Ms. Ladd noted the anti-bias group is looking into this and the United Way would be one possibility. She also felt a Community Health Needs Assessment might be a good idea because it is a bit uncertain what the diversity or inclusionary needs are in the community since these types of questions have not been asked before. Mr. Markiewicz noted there was a substantial amount of detail in her proposed changes and indicated one of his concerns was who would be the lead entity which would take responsibility for these particular Action items. Mr. Fox stated he believed there is a Town policy which requires all Town employees to be trained on anti-bias and conflict of interest issues. Ms. Shaw indicated all Town departments have an anti-discriminatory policy.

Mr. Murphy stated the wording of Aspiration #2 had bothered him for a long time. He felt some people may disagree with the words “close-knit and welcoming” in the Aspiration’s language. Mr. Murphy asked Ms. Ladd if she had some proposed new wording for Aspiration #2. Ms. Ladd indicated she was advised not to focus on the Aspiration, but could explore adding new Goals, Strategies, and Actions underneath it. Mr. Markiewicz stated he could understand people interpreting the word “close-knit” as “closed.” Ms. Ladd noted she felt the wording seemed contradicting and unwelcoming. Mr. Powers indicated he did not read the wording of Aspiration #2 this way and Ms. Cannon agreed. Mr. Powers felt the word “close-knit” meant things the town does together as a community.

Mr. Fox suggested using the word “inclusive” instead of “close-knit” and Mr. Markiewicz proposed using the word “engaged.” Mr. Fox felt the word “engaged” may not cover the sense of what “close-knit” was trying to convey and pointed out Boxborough2030 was attempting to encourage all groups of people to be more engaged. Mr. Murphy supported using other words such as “engaged,” “involved,” or “active” in lieu of “close-knit.”

Mr. Markiewicz MADE a MOTION to replace the word “close-knit” with “engaged” in Aspiration #2. Mr. Fox SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor.

Mr. Fox noted the Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council has been active and perhaps should be included in the proposed addition under Aspiration #2. Ms. Ladd indicated the idea is not to add work to those staff and volunteers who are already very busy. Mr. Markiewicz suggested the MPUC start by looking at proposed Goal 2.1. and asked if this was a standard phrase which is used. Ms. Ladd indicated the language of the proposed Goal was modeled after the language Acton has in their Master Plan. Mr. Powers asked if the wording was a standard type of phrase used at the state or federal level. Ms. Ladd stated in the work she has been doing, this is how people would prefer to be referred to. Mr. Murphy noted step one is making residents aware of what biasness might constitute. Mr. Clemence stated he felt the language of the proposed Goal was very well worded.

At this time Chief Ryder and Ms. Neyland arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Fox asked what the outcome of these proposed new Action items would be and who would undertake them. Mr. Murphy asked if the Police Department is currently doing any anti-bias and diversity training and Chief Ryder indicated they do in fact do this training already. Mr. Markiewicz asked Ms. Ladd to please explain proposed Strategy 2.1.2. in greater detail, noting the word “equity” can mean a lot of different things to different people. Ms. Ladd stated the word “equity” has transitioned to mean “inclusion” but she noted there can be inclusion without equity. She continued on to state that “equity” means looking at the resources available and distributing them so everyone is on equal footing.

At this time Chief White arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Neyland pointed out if the MPUC decides to put this wording into Boxborough2030, the Committee needs to understand what it means. Mr. Markiewicz noted the Committee was not going solve the problem of equity in Boxborough2030 or at the meeting. Ms. Neyland stated if there is an Action item in the plan, there is an expectation it is going to be addressed. Mr. Markiewicz indicated the MPUC does not have to get into a philosophical discussion regarding equity. Mr. Powers pointed out the Goal does not speak to equity and felt it should not be included in the wording of the Strategy. Mr. Murphy felt the conversation was more about access. Ms. Ladd noted that is part of the issue, but not all of it. Mr. Fox stated the MPUC needed to have some allegiance to what was heard at the Public Kickoff and Visioning Forum in November of 2014. Mr. Markiewicz agreed, but also felt adding a component of diversity to Boxborough2030 was important.

Mr. Markiewicz MADE a MOTION to revise Strategy 2.1.2. by removing the words “and equity” from the statement. Mr. Powers SECONDED the MOTION. The motion passed with five members voting in favor and Mr. Clemence voting against.

The MPUC then discussed proposed Action 2.1.1.1. Chief Ryder noted the Police Department continues to participate in a multitude of anti-bias and diversity trainings, and felt the proposed Action seemed to suggest there was a problem with the Boxborough Police Department. Ms. Ladd indicated she thought the Town could show they are in the lead on this issue. She pointed out the Boxborough Police Department already does a great program on de-escalation, but the Action is intended to push for expansion in the area of cultural competency as well.

Mr. Powers MADE a MOTION to amend the language of proposed Action 2.1.1.1. to encompass all Town of Boxborough employees. Mr. Clemence SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor.

The MPUC then discussed proposed Action 2.1.1.2. and how the Community Services Coordinator fit into its implementation. The MPUC was comfortable with this proposed Action item and supported its inclusion in the plan.

The MPUC then discussed proposed Action 2.1.1.3. Ms. Neyland noted the Regional School District takes great measures to ensure there is an inclusive environment in their system.

At this time Mr. Powers departed from the meeting.

Ms. Neyland also pointed out there were major challenges associated with the implementation of this proposed Action because the Regional School District is a separate entity from the Town of Boxborough. The MPUC then agreed that this proposed Action item should not be included in Boxborough2030.

The MPUC then discussed proposed Action 2.1.2.1. Mr. Markiewicz noted they had removed the word “equity” from the corresponding Goal and should therefore do the same in this Action item. Mr. Fox asked if this Action item would expand upon the data which has already been collected in the United Way survey. Ms. Ladd indicated it would because the United Way survey did not ask the appropriate questions to get to the heart of this issue. Mr. Markiewicz asked if other communities have applied for and received this grant, and Ms. Ladd indicated that was the case.

Mr. Markiewicz then MADE a MOTION to remove “and equity” from proposed Action 2.1.2.1. Mr. Clemence SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor and Mr. Powers was absent from the vote.

At this time Chief Ryder and Chief White departed from the meeting.

Mr. Markiewicz wanted to make sure it would be very clear in the Recommendations and Implementation Plan document that the Action items under all of the Strategies are recommended or on-going Actions. Mr. Murphy felt the strategic versus on-going Action item issue needed to be addressed in greater detail and the MPUC discussed this topic further. Mr. Markiewicz noted that renumbering the Action items could make things rather difficult. After some discussion it was determined that the Timeframe Symbols key should be located at the bottom of every page in the Recommendations and Implementation Plan document. Mr. Clemence also asked that the corresponding years be added to each box in the Timeframe Symbols key.

Next Steps Leading to Boxborough2030 Approval

Mr. Duchesneau noted that in speaking with the consultant, the final work products for Boxborough2030 would not be completed in time for the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board to review and discuss them at their scheduled joint public meeting on December 21, 2015. It was determined that based upon the changes which still needed to be made to the final work products, the MPUC should review these final products at a meeting which preceded the joint public meeting. Mr. Duchesneau proposed the joint public meeting between the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board be postponed to January 25, 2016, and the MPUC agreed. Mr. Duchesneau stated he would send out a Doodle Poll to see what date in January 2016 worked best for MPUC members to review the final work products.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM on a MOTION by Mr. Markiewicz, SECONDED by Mr. Clemence, with all members voting in favor. Mr. Powers was absent from the vote.