



**MASTER PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE**  
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**Meeting Minutes**  
**December 9, 2014**  
**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)  
Marie Cannon (Board of Health) at 7:33 PM  
Bryon Clemence (Agricultural Commission)  
David Follett (Conservation Commission)  
Rebecca Morris (Energy Committee)  
Al Murphy (Housing Board)

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Steven Ballard (Finance Committee)  
Dmitry Bykhovsky (Local Business Owner)  
Adam Duchesneau (Town Planner)  
Maria Neyland (School Committee)  
Police Chief Warren Ryder  
Selina Shaw (Town Administrator)  
Fire Chief Randolph White

Others in Attendance:

Rita Grossman

Voting Members Absent:

Mitzi Garcia-Weil (Recreation Commission)  
Frank Powers (Council on Aging)

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM.

**Meeting Minutes of October 29, 2014**

Since the minutes were just distributed prior to the meeting and in order to give members more time to review them, Mr. Markiewicz recommended that the Master Plan Update Committee (MPUC) discuss the October 29<sup>th</sup> minutes at their next meeting. Mr. Murphy asked that the minutes be distributed electronically to the entire Committee so members could make their edits digitally and send them to Mr. Duchesneau.

**Correspondence**

Mr. Duchesneau indicated there was none.

**Review of Draft Vision Statement and Data from November 19, 2014 Public Kickoff and Visioning Forum**

Mr. Fox began the discussion by noting that the draft Vision Statement provided by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) seemed to be more of a list of items and lacked a crisp, succinct statement. Mr. Murphy agreed and felt the Vision Statement should be short, succinct, and catchy. Mr. Fox then distributed a draft Vision Statement as well as the current Vision Statement in the Town's existing Master Plan which was completed in 2002. Mr. Fox felt the MPUC could use this as a starting point for crafting a different Vision Statement for the Master Plan Update.

Mr. Markiewicz indicated the Vision Statement should provide a direction for where the community wants to be in 10-15 years, but this could also include maintaining some of the elements already in place in town. Mr. Murphy noted there will be tradeoffs between the items listed in the draft Vision Statement. Mr. Markiewicz stated that if the MPUC could create a succinct statement with some bullet points, perhaps four to five or even less, that would be ideal. Chief Ryder indicated he felt there should be a value statement, a vision statement, and a mission statement all incorporated into the draft Vision Statement. He agreed the statement should be on the shorter end, but felt it should also include some of the community's values as well.

The discussion then shifted to what MPUC members had heard at the Public Kickoff on November 19, 2014 and gleaned from looking over the raw data from the kickoff. Mr. Fox noted that when he looked over the data he felt residents were indicating perhaps not much needed to be changed in the community. Mr. Markiewicz stated the MPUC needs to consider the data that is available regarding the demographics and economic growth of the community. Chief Ryder added that the Master Plan should be adaptable to different situations. Mr. Clemence indicated the new Master Plan should take into account future population projections. Ms. Morris wanted the updated Plan to set out goals to help reduce the town's carbon footprint and dependence on fossil fuels. She wanted to see Boxborough set an example for other small communities in terms of reducing its carbon footprint and felt the updated Plan should acknowledge the urgency of doing this. Mr. Fox noted energy and carbon footprints are newer themes that could be included in the Plan update, but felt that residents are currently talking more about housing needs for the young and old.

Chief Ryder desired there to be an element of human services included in the Master Plan update and something about Boxborough being a caring, safe community. Mr. Follett noted the comments from the kickoff were far more consistent than he was anticipating. He felt the comments regarding transportation and the community in general were somewhat surprising. Mr. Follett continued on to note it seemed many people at the kickoff indicated they wanted a pub in town or some place where they can go to be with others in the community. He also noted there were very few comments regarding the taxes in town and the cost of infrastructure. Mr. Follett lastly noted he was expecting more comments on housing.

Chief Ryder felt perhaps the town was struggling a bit to find its identity. Mr. Clemence noted that transportation has become a much bigger issue in town. He also stated how the request for more rural-type, agrarian businesses was an interesting comment from the kickoff meeting. Mr. Markiewicz stated he heard people wanted to retain more agricultural business and also noted improving safety along Route 111 was very important to residents. Mr. Follett indicated that rural roads can be dangerous for pedestrians as well as vehicles. Mr. Murphy felt there would need to be a tradeoff between the rural character of the town and having sidewalks. Mr. Follett stated he did not see those items as being in conflict and noted that many existing amenities in town are difficult to reach on foot.

At this time, Marie Cannon arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Grossman stated she was excited to see so much support for conservation lands and open space at the public kickoff. She felt those items wrapped into both the rural character people wanted to preserve and the sustainability they wanted to achieve. Mr. Follett noted that some of

the basic infrastructure items in town needed to be addressed including Town Hall and the Fire Station, which is too small.

Mr. Markiewicz stated the MPUC needed to focus on the key items for the Vision Statement. Chief Ryder stated that something about maintaining the town's rural character should be included. Mr. Follett noted the statement should speak to an area where people in town can congregate. Other elements that were mentioned were the town's carbon footprint, economic development, and transportation.

Mr. Fox noted recreational needs, such as a pool, were items that residents had not made vocal lately. Mr. Murphy pointed out there could be legal issues for town property with regard to additional recreation facilities. Mr. Markiewicz stated most people seemed to want to maintain the existing character of the town, but there was also conversation about creating positive economic development in the community. Ms. Morris indicated she felt the words "preservation" and "enhancement" captured many aspects of the conversation in the meeting to this point. Mr. Clemence added that "affordability" and "fiscal responsibility" should also be included in the draft Vision Statement. Mr. Murphy noted that perhaps the Committee was getting too detailed and that they needed a statement people could glom on to. Mr. Ballard added that the Vision Statement should be succinct but also have integrity as well as an affordability aspect.

Mr. Markiewicz agreed that the new draft Vision Statement should be succinct and should not try to recreate the contents of the Master Plan Update. He also noted that the Master Plan would be broader and cover more topics than those the public had identified at the kickoff meeting. Mr. Markiewicz pointed out that many residents enjoy the Town events that are held each year such as Fifer's Day, the Harvest Fair, and the Tree Lighting, and that people are looking for additional ways to get together and build on the strong sense of community that the town has already established, outside of the school system. Mr. Fox stated that when people outside of the community would ask "what does Boxborough want to be?", the response seemed to be "look around, it's right here." Many of the MPUC members agreed with this sentiment. With assistance from Ms. Grossman, Mr. Follett, and Ms. Shaw, a rough wording of a new draft Vision Statement was created and the conversation continued.

Ms. Morris asked about the threats to the community and if those should be addressed. Mr. Markiewicz felt they should be addressed in the various sections of the Master Plan as opposed to the Vision Statement. He continued on to note the Vision Statement should include the values the Committee has been hearing over and over. Mr. Murphy stated he felt the Vision Statement should not have any bullet points. Ms. Grossman noted that the bullet points could be used in a more informative manner. A one line lead-in to the draft Vision Statement was developed which indicated that Boxborough was "A Rural, Engaged Community for All."

Mr. Bykhovsky noted the draft Vision Statement was very good, but economic development in the community is a very important aspect and he felt this should be worked into the statement somehow. Mr. Clemence agreed and felt the question regarding, "if growth is to occur, how should it occur?" should be answered. Mr. Ballard felt the MPUC should be representing the interests of the town more broadly. Mr. Clemence felt that something about economic development should be in the Vision Statement, but the Master Plan should help to shape how that development unfolds.

Mr. Follett felt the Vision Statement should be definitive and its wording should indicate this as well. Mr. Markiewicz agreed and felt the statement should show action. Mr. Ballard was supportive of how the draft statement included both the words “fostering” and “maintains” which help to balance out the statement.

Mr. Fox then MADE a MOTION to propose the draft Vision Statement for the Master Plan read as follows:

“A Rural, Engaged Community for All

Boxborough shall maintain its traditional values of rural open space, a first-rate educational system, agricultural and conservation lands, and historical roots, while fostering a balanced economic environment and enhancing a close-knit sense of community for all generations.”

Mr. Follett SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor.

**Review of the Following Draft Sections of the Master Plan: Local Services and Facilities**

There was consensus among the MPUC members that discussion about the details of this section should take place at the Committee’s next meeting. Mr. Clemence noted he felt an energy/utilities section should be added to this Local Services and Facilities section.

**Monday, December 15, 2014 – Joint Public Meeting with the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen, Grange Meeting Room, Town Hall, 29 Middle Road**

Mr. Duchesneau reminded the Committee members the draft Vision Statement which had just been approved earlier in the meeting would be reviewed for approval at a Joint Public Meeting with the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen on December 15, 2014 and encouraged the Committee members to attend.

**Schedule January 2015 Meeting Date**

The MPUC set their next meeting for Tuesday, January 13, 2015 at 7:00 PM in Town Hall, 29 Middle Road.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM on a MOTION by Mr. Follett, SECONDED by Mr. Fox, with all members voting in favor.