

**FRANKLIN PLANNING BOARD
Workshop- Master Plan Discussion Meeting
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

Wednesday, February 12th, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Call to Order: 6:40 p.m.

Present:

Planning Board: Jo Brown, Powell Glenn, David Veysey, Mike Freeman and Brian Colburn.
Zoning Board: Don Gagnon and Donna Tully.
City Council: George Dzujna and Glen Feener.
Heritage: Glen Feener, Michael Mullavey, Jeff Whitney, and Bob Lucas.
Public: Bette and John Tobey, Todd Workman, Jim Aberg, and Steve Foley.

Richard Lewis introduced himself and explained that tonight would be a preliminary discussion to lead up to the first formal meeting for the Master Plan. He stated that on March 12th, 2014, there will be a discussion on the general areas of the master plan and the vision statement. He stated that to paint the picture for the vision chapter, Jim Aberg would summarize the presentation that he gave to the City Council regarding the community survey. He stated Todd Workman will then give a presentation on the Downtown Charrette that he has put together regarding the downtown and the mill buildings.

Jim Aberg then introduced himself as the President of FBIDC and went through his PowerPoint presentation on the Community Survey. (See the Community Survey attached.)

After the presentation he stated they are looking at possibly doing another follow up survey in the next few months. Bob Lucas stated that if this paints an accurate picture, then the picture is not looking good. Mr. Lucas stated there are at least four areas that have had a lot of improvements since the survey was done. He stated that one thing that was missing was the Rowell Community Center. Angie Carey stated the community center was not running when the survey was done.

Mr. Lucas stated the areas that have had substantial improvements are the Water System and overall educational growth. He stated this puts a good light and he is anxious to see how these items will be approached and what improvements will be done.

Mr. Aberg stated that no one is sitting around and doing nothing. He stated there is a budget that has to be dealt with. He stated another improvement is the use of the Proulx Center.

Mr. Foley stated that the schools are not as bad as people think or portray them to be.

Todd Workman explained his presentation prior to giving it. He indicated that his presentation encompasses the downtown bridge to bridge, but as it goes on it narrows it down to a building or two. He stated the Master Plan and Visions have been done over the years, and what has already been done is very good, but hasn't been put into play. He stated good plans have been done in the 1997 Charrette, the Vision of 2000 and 2006 and the Master Plans. He stated all the information is good; but, it hasn't been implemented and no action has been taken.

Mr. Workman stated that the boards need to work on action and implementation more than the vision. He asked why the City hasn't put a dent into what is constant, which are the land and buildings and the real estate. He stated the owners lack motivation and there is no incentive for property owners to take care of their properties. He stated the City and property owners need to create a public/private partnership to further the visions. The City and the owners of properties need to work together.

Mr. Workman stated the reputation of the City is not good; because your reputation is based on what you see when you go into downtown. He stated the existing visions need to be looked at for what they could be. Find a way to solve problems, get grants, fix up the downtown buildings, and create flexibility and creativity.

He stated the place to start is the Riverbend Mill and the area behind the library that can be seen when traveling on Central Street by the river. He stated this is a beautiful building that could really be showcased. He stated he is partnering with the owner of the property and they need a city partnership to make this work. City support is needed to move forward, by means of the TIF, 79E arrangements, Brownfields Grants and other grants.

Mr. Workman stated everyone needs to keep an open mind. Benjamin Franklin is the namesake of the city; however there is nothing in Franklin showing this, no statue or tribute. He stated a few quotes by Benjamin Franklin that he likes and highlights what should happen in Franklin are:

"Well done is better than well said!"

"You may delay, but time will not!"

"Energy and Persistence accomplish all things!"

He stated if we keep talking and nothing is done, the buildings will fall apart and lose character. Mr. Workman stated the city should implement the existing visions and master plans and Charrette's and not keep talking about what should be done as the city could lose its history and heritage and character.

He stated the Charrette was completed by a group of people that came to town and fell in love with the city after walking around. These people were retired architects, engineers, college students and college teachers. The area that was focused on was the Riverbend mill, community center, old armory and Stanley Mill building.

He stated the Charrette talks a lot about permaculture, developing a system intended to be sustainable and self efficient. Also preserves the historic resources, works on catching and storing energy and create no or little waste and not allowing water to drain into the river.

Mr. Workman then went through his Charrette PowerPoint presentation (see attached).

After his presentation, Planning Board Chair Brian Colburn stated that 3-4 years ago changes were made to the code to give more flexibility in the downtown area. He asked, short of that what the boards that are present tonight can do. Mr. Workman stated fantastic things have been done, and the regulations have been changed to allow for mixed uses in the downtown area, which is great. He stated writing letters or support for grants, TIF financing, 79E financing and other grants is what is needed. The City can support them and write letters making financing easier.

George Dzujna indicated it is understandable where they are coming from starting small and with one building and asked what comes first, the upgrade of the buildings or the water system and

permaculture. Mr. Workman stated they should be done at the same time but the sequencing will be necessary due to costs involved. He stated waiting is not going to help anyone, as the Stanley mill is already on the verge of collapsing due to a failing roof.

Richard Lewis thanked everyone for coming. He stated the common themes in all the Charrettes and other documentation is that it takes dedication. He stated the City of Franklin has great bones that needed to be restored.

He stated the vision meeting will take place on March 12th, and they would like to get as many people as possible here to get their input. Another public hearing will take place in late spring or early summer. RSA's require that the master plan have a section on the vision and land use sections. The Downtown Economic Development is important. Some sections of the master plan will be longer than others. Key issues will be highlighted.

Brian Sullivan and Richard Lewis have been working on the infrastructure and utilities and CIP. Richard stated he will work with Krystal Alpers, Recreation Director, on recreational issues.

Mr. Lewis stated good groundwork has already been laid and that the board needs to further this work.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Angela M. Carey
Planning and Zoning
Assistant to the Administrator