

Master Plan Implementation Committee Meeting

March 11th, 2021, 7pm

Members Present: Lisa Lopez, Emilio Mauro, Kathy McCormack, Kristian Merenda, Mike Nourse, Sean Robinson, Maureen Moran (non-voting)

Members Not Present: Mike Loughran, Bob MacDonald

Staff: Laura Smead, Town Planner

MINUTES

1. Call to Order, Acceptance of minutes

- 2/11 minutes - Approved 6-0-0

2. Discussion of Top Master Plan Priorities

Key Questions/Discussion

- What rises to the top?
- Lisa Lopez - Start with small wins, let the master plan gain legitimacy before taking on actions that may be perceived as highly controversial (Canton Junction). Start with the affordable housing trust. Other priorities highlighted below.
- Emilio Mauro- Pursue those items that are highly opportunistic, even if it means to try and sell benefits in the press etc.
- Sean Robinson - Consider the long-term implication of the zoning of golf courses. Before we pursue other priorities. Might we first halt development to allow for more compact housing around golf courses. Laura - Blue Hills is concerning because it could be developed. We can apply our open space subdivision bylaw.
- Mike Nourse - Revere site took 8 years to come onboard. Need to begin now for longer term items.
- Kristian - Clarified that some items prioritized by the schools were not present. Understand that they may only be important to the schools. Item of concern, but longer-term development is the Galvin Middle School. Also raised the priority of the Youth Risk Behavior Assessment.
- Laura - clarified that the missing five-line items related to the schools received 2 or fewer votes.

For reference:

- (2 votes) Conduct community needs assessments to identify gaps in health and social services for current and future residents, particularly older residents and low-income families and individuals. Consider additional staff and operational reorganization as needed (e.g. Substance Abuse Coordinator).

- (2 votes) Continue performing a regular Youth Risk Assessment at the middle school and high school levels and sharing data with other departments.
- (1 vote) Continue to support the recent proposal to restructure how the facilities are used and the location of students/school district offices identified in the Canton Public Schools facilities assessment plan.
- (1 vote) Engage the Canton Public Schools, faculty, and students in municipal planning issues that go beyond the public schools (e.g., housing, recreation, walking and biking, etc.)
- (1 vote) Continue coordination with regional technical schools to broaden educational and job opportunities for Canton's youth.
- Mike Norse - Raised discussion of possibility of Net Zero or other ways to help fund/get momentum on building a new Galvin Middle School. Can we look for an opportunity for a signature project that can include elements - open space, transit-accessible, economic development, green energy, high density housing that might help find new funding and interest in the school.
- Emilio - Start taking away zoning for things we do not want there that might impede the implementation of the 138 study. Consider claiming golf course land when it becomes available for town use, e.g. open space, location for schools, etc.

Top Priorities for Next Year

1. Complete streets (Top 5) preliminary designs – check status, make progress
2. Support a municipal affordable housing trust (Town Meeting 2021)
3. Trails master plan implementation progress, especially as it related to off-road paths connecting schools and other recreational resources
4. Support municipal energy aggregation (Town Meeting 2021)
5. Rezoning - affordable housing (either Canton Junction Transit-Oriented Design); and/or removing barriers to multi-family housing/ “missing middle” housing
6. Rezoning – 138; focusing first on streamlining zoning uses, parking requirements – rather than map change

** Also, pursue alternative energy grants and opportunities (ongoing through Green Communities, etc.).*

FOR REFERENCE

High Priority Themes (received 4 votes)

- Advancing preliminary design of Complete Streets projects (especially Top 5)
- Exploring holding a “Canton Day” to bring residents together to learn about town functions and services, meet local decision makers, and promote opportunities for residents to participate in local government
- Implement the Earl Newhouse Waterfront Plan (expected to be implemented in the next year)

High Priority Themes (3 votes; sometimes 2 where marked)

Live

- Remove impediments to multi-family housing (zoning)
- Establish an Affordable Housing Trust
- Educate decision-makers on public health/ social wellbeing – create a public health advisory committee
- Evaluate transportation needs of seniors and those with disabilities; also, to Canton Food Pantry

Work

- (2) Expand **external marketing** efforts; business resources; CABI; **additional staff**
- See also focus areas, especially **Downtown** and **Rte. 138**

Play

- Implement Trails Master Plan
- (2) Pequitside Master Plan – revisit
- (2) Provide connections between parks & recreational facilities
- (2) Increase rec/open space near residential areas more than 0.25 mile from other open space
- (2) Communication strategies to increase public knowledge

Connect

- Final design and construction of Complete Streets projects
- Safe Routes to School program funding
- Off-road connections (especially to schools) – see also Trails Master Plan
- ADA audit of key corridors

Protect

- (2) Arts & Culture: Support Canton's arts community and support placemaking programming/ public art
- (2) Environmental Stewardship: Prioritize and incorporate green infrastructure and prioritize acquisition of properties of high conservation value

Adapt

- Municipal and school energy-efficiency improvements
- Municipal and school electric vehicles/energy-efficient vehicles, and add public charging stations
- Increase solar/alternative energy and Town/school buildings (mid-term goal)?
- Municipal energy aggregation
- Resiliency plan (mid-term goal)
- Resilience design standards

Focus Area 1- Canton Junction

- Rezoning (see TOD study), exploring 40R as an option, include affordable housing, include design review

Focus Area 2 -Downtown

- Business outreach
- Open underutilized parking to the general public

Focus Area 3 - Rte 138

- Advocate and communicate with MassDOT for roadway changes (see Rte 138 infrastructure study)
- Rezoning for mix of uses (see Rte 138 zoning study)

3. Next Steps

- Laura said we need to bring the pre-culled list (see Reference list above) to the various town boards to assist in the identification, based on what they say is doable and where sources of funding might be.
- Over the next month (by 3/11), identify any priority areas to amend and then finalize top three for each category.
- Email Laura and Emilio directly to avoid open meeting law issues.
- Laura will forward the committee additional information on the top priority topics

4. Next meeting date and time: April 8th, 2021 at 7pm