



TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER, MASSACHUSETTS MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES: FEBRUARY 16, 2017

Members Present: ✓ Tom Hall ✓ Carlton D. Hunt TBD

Guests: Sue McCombe, BSU; Kevin Mandeville, OSC; Frank Sousa, Town Councilor District 7

The storm delayed meeting was called to order at 4:11 PM February 16, 2017 in Academy Building Rm 201A.

The January 12, 2017 minutes were approved with no changes. Motion passed (2,0)

Old Business

The discussion with BSU regarding downtown revitalization (including Transit X concepts) was limited due to unavailability of BSU staff and members of the Town Executive Office. Sue McCombe conveyed she had participated in a Town/BSU fact finding effort to several college towns in New England with the objective of assessing how the towns and colleges/universities engage students and remain vital. She noted that BSU is still examining various concepts and possible ways to help engage revitalization to benefit the Town and BSU. A major, if not the largest, barrier to University engagement and town revitalization is the visually apparent poor maintenance of downtown buildings by the owners. A key question is how to get the owners to invest in their buildings. Possible considerations include a BSU bookstore that caters to students and citizens, development of maker space opportunities, and eateries that can host a range of activities including offsite meeting space for campus committees and businesses. A second need is increasing the range of commercial activities that would draw students to the downtown.

Based on the discuss the following actions were identified:

1. BSU to contemplate what a downtown university bookstore would stock.
2. Town and BSU identify potential grant opportunities and investors to aid revitalization
3. MPC chair to send the OCPC economic and traffic study to Frank and Sue.
4. MPC Chair to meet with Karen Jason, BSU Vice President of the Division of Operation to increase understanding of BSU's plans and activities
5. Continue discussion with BSU and Town staff to facilitate action identification and implementation

The anticipated Community and Economic Development Update on getting to 20% commercial tax base and a concept for filling empty commercial spaces was not available. The chair provided copies of the concept to the guests for their consideration

The chair relayed that the draft Open Space and Recreation Plan is undergoing review by the Steering Committee. The steering committee will meet with the consultant and Community and Economic Development Office on February 23, 2017 to address committee comments and changes.

An update on progress on meeting 2014 Master Plan goals and objectives was not available.

Upcoming Ordinances – no discussion.

Claremont property Zoning request – an update was not provided.



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New Business

The Chair led a discussion of the preliminary Transit X proposal and next steps. Committee concerns included potential ridership (will it be viable?), identifying potential off campus/commuter parking areas to realize traffic reductions, and viability of the concept if the installation does not include current BSU parking and BSU buildings.

It was noted that BSU cannot make decisions regarding use of state properties, rather the Div. of Capital Asset Management & Maintenance (DCAMM) makes those decisions. The Chair conveyed that Mike Stanley, CEO of Transit X notified him that he has an agreement with Edaville USA to install a demonstration system by the end of 2018 and that he still needs a customer to access major investor funds. The Chair read a preliminary resolution for Town Council consideration regarding Transit X and conveyed his belief that while activities had been conducted in part under Master Plan Committee auspices, it was time for the Town Manager and Town Council to deliberate on the proposal.

The committee consensus was to recommend that the Town Manager and Town Council officially consider the proposal through a resolution to include a Master Licensing agreement with Transit X. The Chair agreed to develop a transmittal letter from the MPC and submit it to the Town Manager, President of the Town Council, and chair of the Council's Economic Development Committee once Transit X had DCAMM and MBTA, which control rights-of-way for potential routes, agreements to support the concept.

No further discussion or actions being identified the meeting was adjourned at 5:40 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 9, 2017 @ 4PM, Room 201B, Academy Building.

Submitted by Carlton D. Hunt, Ph.D.

MPC Chair