



# *Town of Brookline*

## *Massachusetts*

**Planning Board**  
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Steven A. Heikin, Chairman  
Robert Cook, Clerk  
James Carr  
Blair Hines  
Linda K. Hamlin  
Matthew Oudens  
Mark J. Zarrillo

## **Planning Board Meeting Minutes**

### **Wednesday, May 2, at 8:15 AM**

### **Town Hall, Room 111**

### **333 Washington Street**

*Planning Board Members Present:* Linda Hamlin, Steve Heikin, Robert Cook, Mark Zarrillo

*Staff:* Kara Brewton, Trevor Johnson, Melissa Goff, Ben Lummis, Matt Gillis

*Guests:* Amy Emmert, Yolanda Rodriguez, Rhoda Goodwin, David Pollak, Betsy DeWitt, Elton Elperin, Anne Meyers, Lynda Roseman

*Materials Presented:* Strategic Asset Plan & Major Parcel Study (March 2018); Draft Implementation Table for SAP & MPS - 11x17

#### **1. Discuss draft implementation table**

Steve Heikin thought the Planning Board should focus more on the Major Parcel Study, as he thought the Strategic Asset Plan basically directed the Town to first “clean out the attic” with regards to scanning, reducing paper documents, and organizing available storage areas. He also wanted to make sure that the Town kept good records of any documents relating to Buildings.

Linda Hamlin thought the Town should focus on: i) Transportation Demand Management (TDM) for employees and ii) storage issues.

Bob Cook noted that the Strategic Asset Plan was more of an analysis and now needed to be turned into a plan, which would require a lot of buy-in from Town Hall employees and Division heads first to get the clean-up done; the Planning Board could then be helpful in shepherding what happens after the storage areas are cleaned up. He felt like there needed to be an “enforcer” to get this completed.

Mark Zarrillo thought the Major Parcel Study needed to percolate for a while, and thought the Strategic Asset Plan should be further developed by hiring another consultant to tabulate any inefficiency of each building and all facilities, other than schools. He then clarified that page 27 of the SAP recommends a consultant to help digitize records, manage storage needs, and archive documents, and create a protocol for the archiving. Secondly, Mark noted that he hoped one of the outcomes of the SAP would be that individual Departments don’t plan for a new facility without looping in other Town needs through the Planning Board.

Melissa Goff noted that with regards to the document protocol, we probably first needed guidance from an attorney about which items could be thrown out or scanned.

Linda Hamlin wondered whether a person needed to be hired as a Town employee to manage the project and get everyone to follow through.

Betsy DeWitt noted that in her recent roles on the Override Study Committee and the Strategic Asset Plan Subcommittee, she believed an archivist was needed, as they have specific education/ training to help design the protocols and to understand the great variety of various government document needs. However, Melissa Goff noted that this was recommended to the Select Board as part of the recent override discussions, and the Select Board wasn't in agreement with that suggestion at this point. Betsy wondered whether some of the proposed override funding earmarked for the Public Buildings Division could be used for that purpose.

After further conversation, the Planning Board agreed that Kara Brewton would set up a meeting with Melissa Goff, Town Counsel, Public Buildings to discuss next steps, the potential for a consultant contract for storage documenting, and who was going to be charged with seeing the project through.

Amy Emmert noted that she works in health care and the conversation about space for employees versus storage and records is a constant balancing act. After winnowing down physical records that were needed, they leased document facilities offsite, which was very cost-efficient given the cost of real estate, the ease of bar-code retrieval, and the quality of space that the documents were being stored in.

With respect to Linda Hamlin's question about implementing a TDM program for employees, Melissa Goff updated the Board that a Phase II of that study was scheduled for Fiscal Year 2019.

Kara Brewton asked the Planning Board whether they would also be interested in seeing if they could be of any assistance to the Parks & Recreation Commission in identifying at least two of the six new parks identified in multiple studies. Elton Elperin has recently been studying the utilization of people using pocket parks versus large open spaces, and wondered, given the cost and rarity of large tracts of land in Brookline, whether the Town should instead be prioritizing finding more spaces to create pocket parks. Mark Zarrillo noted that many communities also realize that, with the addition of better scheduling of user groups, and installing more artificial turf and lighting, they don't actually need additional space. Steve Heikin echoed the idea for more efficient use of parks generally. Arlene Mattison spoke up against turf use, but was open to the idea of converting existing parking lots to turf rather than converting existing grass fields to artificial turf; Mark agreed.

The Planning Board agreed that Kara should reach out to the Director of Parks & Open Space (Erin Gallentine) and Director of Recreation (Lisa Paradis) to schedule a time they could present to the Planning Board more detail on how existing fields are being used, the back-up data of why additional fields have been identified as a need for several years, and to discuss related projects in future years of the Capital Improvements Program.

With regards to the Major Parcel Study (MPS), Bob Cook noted that of the 124 identified parcels, only 18 of them were larger than 10 acres. He agreed with Mark Zarrillo that the MPS needed to sit and mellow for a while. However, he noted there is probably a need to micro-study those 18 parcels a little more, perhaps with a Subcommittee.

Steve Heikin noted that there was also some overlap with recommendations between the MPS and Housing Production Plan. He disagreed that the Planning Board should let the MPS "mellow", as there are items like the zoning rewrite and land fund advocacy that will be moving forward this fall. The Planning Board agreed that they would track and volunteer to assist with any process relating to the scope of the zoning rewrite and the land fund.

With regards to furthering study of a few major parcels, Steve noted that the Town should have more conversations are required with the owners to better understand their intentions, their openness to enter into a Right of First Refusal, and the Town's desire in some cases to keep them "intact". The Planning Board agreed that Steve should work with Kara to have those follow up more in depth property owner interviews; Kara would also update the Town Administrator and Select Board Chair about this effort.

With regards to the Capital Improvements Program review this June, the Planning Board agreed they wanted to focus on two meetings: Public Buildings/ Information Technology/ Town Counsel, and then the Parks & Recreation Commission.

## **2. Review action items and next steps**

Kara reviewed the action items noted in underline above.

Additionally, the Planning Board agreed to start planning for a meeting or two in July, which may include a public hearing, to formally amend the Comprehensive Plan. The amendment would incorporate recent studies that have been completed with significant public process. The Housing Production Plan would update the Housing Section, the newly-released “Perspectives & Opportunities for Brookline’s Commercial Areas” by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council would update the Economic Development section, the Strategic Asset Plan would update the Facilities section, and the Climate Action Plan (soon to be presented to the Select Board) would be added as a new section to the Comprehensive Plan.

Meeting adjourned.