



**Mayor
Charles C. Kokoros**

Department of Planning and Community Development

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MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Jennifer Wadland, Chair
Amy Holmes, Vice Chair
David Cunningham, Member
Julia Flaherty, Member
Peter C. Herbst, Member
Justine Huang, Member
Thomas Kent, Member
Shelley North, Member
Elizabeth Page, Member
Joseph Reynolds, Member
Rayna Rubin, Member

IN LIEU OF ACCEPTANCE BY MPSC

MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE – MEETING MINUTES

Thursday – September 21, 2023 – 7:00 PM

Location: Cahill Auditorium, Braintree Town Hall, 1 JFK Memorial Drive

Meeting came to order at 7:00 PM

Members Present:

Amy Holmes, Acting Chairperson
David Cunningham, Resident
Julia Flaherty, Town Councilor, District 1
Peter Herbst, Business Owner
Shelley North, Business Owner
Elizabeth Page, Resident

Staff Present:

Melissa SantucciRozzi, Director-PCD

Consulting Firms

Flavio Vila

Members Absent:

Jennifer Wadland, Chairperson
Justine Huang, Resident
Thomas Kent, Planning Board Representative
Joe Reynolds, Town Councilor, District 2
Rayna Rubin, Resident

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

MPSC Member and Staff Announcements:

Director SantucciRozzi states there are no comments from staff this evening.

Discussion and Comments – Draft Master Plan –

Flavio Vila

Flavio Vila, Community Planner for Land Use and Urban Design at JM Goldson, explains that tonight we will be going over the Draft Master Plan, and he invites members to interrupt any time they need to. Mr. Vila asks the committee for their preference on how the Draft Master Plan is presented. It is decided that the presentation will go page-by-page. A member from the audience asks if there are handouts.

Master Plan Steering Committee

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Member Page comments that she doesn't like the cover, as it doesn't scream "Braintree". She was hoping that it would have something a little more of an iconic and recognizable feature of the town. She knows this is an aerial view of Sunset Lake, but she thinks a picture on ground level of Sunset Lake looking across the lake in the fall toward the church would be lovely. Her other suggestions would be possibly a picture of Pond Meadow Park, Town Hall, or the French House – something more recognizable.

Mr. Vila continues that the next page will be the letter that we spoke about at our last meeting. This will be a letter from the mayor, and he confirms that we are fine with the photo. Next, we have the Contents Page, which is self-explanatory. Mr. Vila asks if there are any comments on the text of the Introduction. Member Peter Herbst has a comment on the first paragraph, second sentence. The line talking about "thousands of years" stood out to him as odd. Braintree was incorporated in 1640, less than 400 years ago. His suggestion would be "Since 1640, Braintree offers a unique blend". Member Herbst thinks we did a good job on page 14 talking about Historical and Cultural Resources. He doesn't think we need to include the "thousands of years" comment in the first paragraph.

Mr. Vila continues to Chapter 2, Planning Process. Member Page references page 9, Phase II, towards the bottom of the paragraph, it says "After collecting the insight of more than 2,400 points of engagement", but if we go to page 10, in the bottom left-hand corner under "Engagement Process" it says, "we had over 2,500 touch points". Member Page asks if those numbers should be the same. Mr. Vila clarifies that if we add the numbers in Phase I and Phase II, we have a little more than 2,400, and if we add the rest of the numbers in Phase III, we are going to have more than 2,500. Member Page understands the clarification. Pages 10 and 11 highlight Phases I, II, and III, and Mr. Vila explains that we are in Phase IV currently. On these pages, we explain all the touch points we had with the Braintree Community per engagement method per phase. There are also photos of some of the engagements. Director SantucciRozzi points out on page 9, there is a gap in the Phase dates – Phase II ends on December 2022 and Phase III doesn't start until March 2023 – so we need to adjust those dates as this has been continuous.

Mr. Vila explains that in Chapter 3 we summarize the Existing Conditions Report. The is the chapter called, "Braintree in Context". The Existing Conditions has eight chapters, so in Chapter 3 we have eight subsections. Member Page references page 13, under Housing and Demographics, under the first paragraph a sentence reads: **Population growth from 2010 to 2020 outpaced housing unit growth, with a 10 percent increase in population compared to a 2 percent increase in housing units.** She knows we had letters that were supposed to be examined and put into this, and as far as she is aware, there was a decennial census where the housing units were 15,077 in 2020, and in 2010 the number was 14,260, which makes the growth in housing 6% not 2%. She was under the impression that was going to be corrected. Mr. Vila explains that at the time the Existing Conditions Report was written, they used the American Community Survey because that was the best data available at that time. Changing that data to the 2020 census would have been like changing all the reports. We addressed that comment by saying we used the best data at that time, and those were the results. Member Page feels this is an inaccurate statement and should be corrected or removed. She thinks it doesn't make sense to keep it in there. Member Shelly North clarifies that Mr. Vila is saying he pulled information from a certain corporation on a certain date in a certain report, and that's where most of this information comes from. So, if this was corrected, we would be referencing two different reports at two different data points. Mr. Vila confirms that when the Existing Conditions Report was written, they used the American Community Survey five-year estimates from 2017 to 2021, which is also like a U.S. Census service. Member Page states the data she referenced was from the State of Massachusetts Census data – so it's accurate data, and she thinks we should have corrected and factual data.

Councilor Flaherty asks if it would be difficult to update the data using current resources. Mr. Vila explains that would mean they would have to update the whole Existing Conditions Report, which is a phase that we have

already closed, and that is a background document that has led to the rest of the phases. It is not in the scope of the discussion right now.

Director SantucciRozzi has a suggestion, because we have already accounted for all these numbers, maybe the paragraph can be adjusted in that specific paragraph to reference the community survey, which is done in between the U.S. Census that is done every ten years, and then we could just include the number for 2020, which is the 15,077. That would clarify this paragraph and supplement it with the new data. Member Page states, when you are talking about a 2% increase in housing units, that's inaccurate. She thinks that phrase should be stricken from this. The Director proposes referencing both data points for the 2% and the 6% data.

Member Page references the "Economic Development" section on page 13 where it says: **Braintree's population is growing and becoming younger, wealthier, and more educated. The 65-74 age group is projected to grow significantly, while an influx of workers increases the town's daytime population by over 7,000.** Member Page states this sounds confusing to her. Mr. Vila states they can reframe that; he explains that these paragraphs come directly from the summaries of each chapter in the Existing Conditions Report. Councilor Flaherty would like to suggest clarification, as she agrees that it could be clearer. She suggests: **Although the 65-74 age group is projected to grow significantly, an influx of workers will increase the town's daytime population by over 7,000, which is what contributes to making the town younger.** Acting Chair Holmes asks if anyone disagrees with rephrasing. Member Page notes that it says, "our population is growing", and she asks if we are referring to the worker population or the resident population. The Director clarifies that these three sentences are independent of each other. We are talking about how our younger population is growing. We are also going to see an increase in our older population. The third point in this paragraph is that we do have a daytime population of workforce. There are three different points that are not to be taken together. Mr. Vila states we can separate those ideas into different paragraphs. The Director suggests using bullet points. Acting Chair Holmes confirms that everybody is okay with that.

Member Page refers to page 15, the section related to Transportation, first paragraph, and she reads: **Many employed residents live outside Braintree (90 percent), and a large portion of Braintree residents work outside the Town (87.4 percent).** The Director suggests a correction to the beginning of the sentence to clarify that "many people employed in Braintree live outside Braintree (90 percent)".

Member Page refers to the section related to Transportation, third paragraph, and she reads: **Though ridership dropped by 66 percent during the COVID-19 pandemic between 2019 and 2020, it has since rebounded, showing a 23 percent increase between 2020 and 2022.** Member Page asks if we should state that ridership is still down by 43 percent? Mr. Vila states he can add that. Acting Chair Holmes has a hard time with that, and she explains because the Red Line has had so many issues, ridership is down because they can't track it accordingly. Councilor Flaherty thinks it could be qualified with a "partial rebound", which would make it much clearer. Member North asks about the second paragraph under the Transportation section where it says: **Nearly 70 percent of Braintree residents commute to work by driving alone or carpooling.** Member North asks if that was taken pre-pandemic because many friends that used to commute all work from home. Mr. Vila states he will check into this.

Member Page refers to the section related to Facilities and Services on page 15, second sentence, where it reads: **Most educational buildings are outdated and in need of modernization.** Member Page acknowledges that this is partially true, but she explains that we just had a major renovation and an addition put on East Middle School and we have a brand new South Middle School facility that just opened this fall of 2023. She thinks those two points should be in this paragraph. The Director suggests we say: **"Aside from the East Middle School and South Middle School projects, most educational...."** Member Page agrees with that. Councilor Flaherty thinks it is worth noting the middle schools, but the thrust of the comment is that our school system is aging and in need of repair and replacement. She doesn't want the main thrust of the point to be lost.

Mr. Vila explains that starting on page 18 we have the Future Land Use Map, and it has been corrected using the comments from the last meeting. We have the new Multimodal Improvement Area. After that, there is an explanation of each of these areas numbered from one to ten. Member Page suggests minor correction of “Woods Road” to “Wood Road” on page 20. Member Page refers to Item 7 on page 20, where it mentions “urban renewal efforts”. She states there is a big stress in this document that Braintree is a suburban town, and she thinks the word “urban” should not be used there. She thinks we should say “revitalization efforts”. Also under Item 9, where it mentions “urban development”, Member Page stresses that the town residents expressed that they did not want to be urbanized. She suggests replacing “urban development” with “redevelopment”.

Member Cunningham states at the last meeting he brought up the lack of any multimodal improvement area addressing the fact that there is another Red Line station that serves the northern part of the town, despite the fact that it is in Quincy. There is no mention of that here. The Director clarifies whether Member Cunningham is suggesting extending the connection to the town line next to Quincy Adams Station. Member Cunningham states yes – something to that effect – he notes that the station has a much larger garage and is much closer to commercial entities in that part of the town. He states not being able to get from Quincy Adams “T” Station to Wood Road, Forbes Road, Braintree Hill Office Park, or South Shore Plaza is a weakness, and we should try to address it.

Mr. Vila notes that next we have a “Zoom In” map of the corridor between Braintree Square and South Braintree Square, and then we move on to Chapter 5, Planning Framework, where we explain what the Vision is, what the Core Themes are, what the elements are according to the Massachusetts regulation, what the Goals are, and what the Strategies are. Also, in this spread, we introduce two sets of icons: (1) the Statutory Elements Icons; and (2) the Strategy Types Icons. We use these icons in the rest of the document to explain our strategies and core themes.

Councilor Flaherty asks to look back at the map on page 22. There is a long, blue-dotted line that is marked as the Monaquot River Trail, and she asks if that is the proposed extent of the trail or are we representing what exists? The Director clarifies that is the future. Member Cunningham states, if the future is on this page, perhaps we should keep the portion of Braintree that is east of the highway on the map. He notes that his neighborhood is not there. The Director explains this is just a “blow-up”, and she asks if Member Cunningham does not want the “blow-up” map. Member Cunningham thinks leaving out one of the three squares in the town sends a terrible message to the people who live in that section of the town. A lot of them feel like they have been forgotten. He suggests shrinking the “blow-up” to include that portion of town. The Director suggests making the map on pages 18 and 19 larger without the table, moving the table to the next page, and scrapping the “blow-up”. Member Cunningham thinks that is a good idea. Mr. Vila clarifies that it is a booklet.

Member North draws our attention to page 26 where it labels the church “St. Michael’s Church”. It is noted that is not a church in Braintree. The Director thinks St. Francis would be a good one to put there, or she could go out in the community to take more pictures. Mr. Vila states they can replace any of the pictures that committee members want to replace. Member North mentions that one of Braintree’s Prides is their sports – so, there is discussion about the sports leagues and using a sports-related photo because sports bring the community together from children to grandparents.

Mr. Vila explains that on page 27 we summarize the five Core Themes, and each of the Core Themes have their own elements. Each Core Theme highlights the Statutory Elements that the Massachusetts regulations ask for. This page also shows the number of goals and number of strategies for each of the five Core Themes. It is basically a summary page for what is coming in the rest of the document.

The next pages (Chapter 6) begin the first Core Theme, which is **A Sustainable Community with Strong Connections**; the next chapters follow the same structure with Element Icons, Vision, Goals, and Strategies related to Goals. Each strategy has its own icon, which was introduced on page 25; there are four icons: Physical/Design, Regulatory/Policy, Programmatic, and Capacity Building. The idea is that someone that reads the document can easily see which type of intervention corresponds to which type of strategy. Mr. Vila suggests that a small legend be added to each spread, if the icons are too difficult to remember. Mr. Vila explains that each section also has a “Metrics to Measure Progress”. This was a result of the last meeting. The consulting team tallied the votes for each metric and included the top 3-4 metrics that would measure the progress for each of the goals. Chapters 7, 8, 9, and 10 follow the same structure.

Member Herbst notes that the buildings in the photo of South Braintree Square have a brand-new façade and look awesome- this photo is really outdated. Member North suggests replacing the picture of the Farmer’s Market on page 29 with the more vibrant picture shown on page 35. She also suggests replacing the picture of Sunset Lake on page 32 with a better picture of Pond Meadow in the fall. Member North agrees that both South Braintree Square and historic Braintree Square have been done over, and the facades look better, more modern, and vibrant. Member North states some of the pictures look a little tired. Member North would like the first picture on Chapter 6 to be a community picture, and she suggests using a picture of Braintree Day. It is also suggested to use either the parade or the road races.

Member Page asks to go back to page 49, related to the Metrics for **Residential Neighborhoods and Housing Options**. She states we talked about the priority being to protect and preserve the residential neighborhoods, and there is nothing in these metrics that addresses that. She addressed that same issue at the last meeting – so she has some ideas or metrics that she would like to be considered:

1. Track development where residential neighborhoods that are abutting development have an increased buffer zone to 150 feet for any new development or any redo of a development. (She explains that we talked about increasing the buffer zone, and that would be one metric that protects residential neighborhoods.) *The Director wants to clarify that any property that is currently developed and that is already invading in that buffer zone is protected and non-conforming. We would have to change the bylaw – so currently we would be creating a metric for an ordinance that we don’t currently have. The 150 feet would only apply if it was all green now. Member Page states we did talk about increasing the buffer zone; the Director understands that, but there is very little undeveloped land. The Director explains that a redevelopment has pre-existing rights.*
2. When considering proposals that are before the Town Council and the Planning Board that have effect on residential neighborhoods, track the letters from the resident expressing concerns, make some type of overall list of concerns, and incorporate these concerns in the decision-making and approval process. She thinks the letters of concern from the residents about their residential neighborhood should be tracked. *The Director clarifies that these metrics are to measure progress and how we are fulfilling the strategies in the Master Plan and how we are going to track that. Member Page is concerned because we talk about prioritizing and protecting residential neighborhoods, yet there isn’t one metric that applies to that. The Director states she wasn’t at the last meeting, and she doesn’t think these metrics are great. They are all related to veteran housing, and while we could likely be constructing veteran housing, we are not going to be pumping out units every year for veterans. There really is not going to be a lot to track. The Director clarifies that the metrics for this theme track a lot of the same things when you really need one track of different styles of units. Member Page states, in addition, there needs to be some tracking of residents’ concerns when there is something that has a large impact on a residential neighborhood because we talk about prioritizing and protecting. Councilor Flaherty can speak to what happens on the Town Council side. Councilors get emails, and they may or may not reply to all of them depending on who they are and whether it affects their District. Lots of things might fall into that decision. Councilor Flaherty doesn’t know how those things are handled through the Planning Board.*

Councilor Flaherty thinks what Member Page is suggesting is more of a Strategy than a Metric. The third question is what we would do with the data once we tracked it. Councilor Flaherty explains that Board Members are appointed by the mayor, Councilors are elected every 2 years, and the mayor is elected every 4 years. So, the way to hold individuals accountable is by voting. Director SantucciRozzi clarifies that the Planning Department gets all kinds of comments; we get people at the counter, people come to public hearings, and we get written comments. When a project is likely to be approved by the Planning Board and it meets the criteria and the ordinance, nine out of ten times the comments that come from abutters are that they “don’t want this”. That is not a constructive comment because it ends there. We get comments that are very constructive and help in the planning process that create sidewalk connections or that plan trees in people’s yards. Those end up as conditions in a decision. When we get comments that are not going anywhere, sometimes that material is used in support of a denial decision. In these cases, we must rely heavily on technical data and engineering data as well when we make decisions. We keep all the comments in the record. We post them online. We get a lot of form letters that are basic in nature, they all say the same thing, and multiple people sign them. Acting Chair Holmes asks if there is a way to list the actual conditions; the Director explains that is all in the Decision, which is a public document filed with the Town Clerk’s office and recorded with the deed. It is very enforceable and runs with that property forever until some alternate decision supersedes it or that development is no longer part of that property. The Planning Board Decisions are very enforceable and contain conditions that reflect the outcome of the public hearings. Member Cunningham’s comment is that, when we have letter writing campaigns, we could get 10,000 letters that all say the same thing. Do we really want to take town employees and require them to keep track of 10,000 letters that all say the same thing? At the federal level, there are special interest groups that get millions of things sent into members of Congress, but we elect our members of Congress and tell them that we want them to do this job and use your judgement to act in the best interests of the people of the country. On a much smaller scale at the municipal level, we are doing the exact same thing. Member Cunningham expresses that he doesn’t want the Planning Board or the Town Council or the Mayor’s Office just to count letters – he wants them to exercise their judgement regardless of how many letters they get for or against a particular subject because that is the job they were hired to do in the first place. Member Page thinks her content is getting distorted, and she states whether you have 100 letters or 10 letters, the content of the letters is what is important. When people have concerns, quite often there are people in one neighborhood that are all impacted in one way. For example, the traffic is going to drive down one street from a development. That’s a real valid concern. Her point is we talk about preserving, protecting, and prioritizing our residential neighborhoods. How are we going to do that? She asks if anyone else has a suggestion. Member Shelly North refers to Strategy 1B, where they say: **Amend zoning requirements to strengthen protections for neighborhoods that abut potential developments, decreasing height allowances as development transitions closer to smaller-scale residential neighborhoods**, and she thinks this would cover the concern. Member Page agrees, but she asks where there is a metric to measure that. We must be accountable for what we say we’re going to do. Member Cunningham states the answer that he would propose is that the people who are making the decisions are accountable to the people who vote. If the people who are making the decisions are ignoring the input from residents to the dissatisfaction of the majority of the residents, then change will happen. If, on the other hand they are making decisions that they believe are in the best interest of the entire town, even if it is against the interests of a minority of the town, their job is to try to do the best for the entire town and not for a minority of the town. Member Cunningham gives the example of a school being built even though a minority group of senior citizens may oppose that. Member Page states we are talking about metrics; we are not talking about voting right now. Acting Chair Holmes states that the Director “hit the nail on the head” when saying that the metrics are the actual conditions of a decision. Member North asks Mr. Vila how he would amend the reports and the metrics to make them reflect what our concerns are.

Mr. Vila explains that it is difficult to have 20 different metrics for each Core Theme. He points out that the committee voted on the metrics, and he shows the document that shows what the votes were from the last meeting. It shows the people that voted from the worksheets, and the resulting most voted for metrics. Member North doesn't think the metrics on page 49 really go with that Core Theme nor would they be something that we would be tracking. Member North feels that, if the committee incorrectly favored these metrics for this Core Theme, then she apologizes, but she thinks we somehow must change those three bullet points. The three metrics included on this page don't summarize what this Core Theme represents.

Director SantucciRozzi confirms that Member Page is focused on **Goal 1 – Protecting Neighborhoods and Enhancing Community Engagement**. The Director suggests that they try to come up with a metric to address this. She thinks that the three metrics in the green box could be combined into one. The Director thinks that tracking how many letters come in does not track how we provide protection. We need to be able to measure how we protect not how many people tell us something. We need to track what we are doing as a community to live up to these strategies.

Councilor Flaherty states she doesn't have a suggestion precisely on how to measure the extent to which we are increasing protection of neighborhoods, but this also calls for enhancing community engagement, and she thinks we could measure the number of people who come to meetings, you can count the number of people who are following a Facebook page or the circulation of a newsletter (if we had one), you could count the number of posts that we make for outreach. All of those are trackable data points that you could use to compare your performance this year against last year. The Councilor agrees that she doesn't know what to suggest as far as how to measure the extent to which we are protecting neighborhoods.

Member Peter Herbst has a comment for Councilor Flaherty and then some ideas for Member Page. He doesn't like the government tracking people going to meetings or in Facebook groups. He feels like that is a slippery slope. For Member Page, he suggests tracking the number of acres in Residential A and Residential B because that would show encroachments for commercial uses, if that changes over time. You could track the number of conversions from single-family to multi-family houses and see if those types of changes take place over time. You could track the number of injuries of pedestrians in neighborhoods and see if that relates to traffic problems. Member Page thinks that is a good idea. The Director states those are already tracked. Member Page states that is part of something that could be used to make sure that our neighborhoods are being kept safe.

Mr. Vila confirms that he can consolidate the three metrics into one and then add another one that we can work on over email. Director SantucciRozzi states we will rework the metrics currently in the green box. Then, we need one about neighborhood protection. Then, we need one on how we are going to improve our outreach. Acting Chair Holmes confirms that everyone agrees.

Mr. Vila states we are moving on to Chapter 10. Member Page asks if we really need two pictures of the MBTA tracks. She thinks that is "overkill", as we have a picture under Chapter 5. Mr. Vila explains there is one of the Red Line Station, and the one in Chapter 10 is of the Commuter Rail. Mr. Vila states the consulting team doesn't have a strong preference for any photo. They included the pictures they had available. Member Page doesn't think we need two pictures of the MBTA; Acting Chair Holmes thinks we could use the stone wall with flowers at Braintree Police, as it looks good.

Director SantucciRozzi recognizes that she wasn't at the August meeting, but she wants to discuss Chapter 10. She refers to the metrics in this section: **Average number of days that a complaint about a service takes to be resolved**. The Director explains that we have **SeeClickFix** program that monitors issues. Sometimes things are a quick resolve and sometimes they are "an act of God". There are different levels of issues (Example: trash not getting picked up vs. residents wanting new sidewalks). The Director thinks we need to drill down more.

She feels the same about the second metric for this Core Theme: **Average number of days to get a return call from a town official**. She wonders how this is going to be tracked, and who is going to track it. The Director feels like both metrics are similar, and when we look at the chapter related to **Expanding and Modernizing Town Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure** she thinks we can do better. She thinks we can track community investment and where we are spending money through our capital plan or through Community Preservation. What type of investment is the town making in itself? This would be demonstrative of improvements.

Councilor Flaherty agrees, if you look at how we are spending our money, that is a quantifiable way of identifying how and where we are making improvements. Like many of the things we have discussed, that is already fully available information. The Director is trying to think of how we would measure investment. While all that data is there, are people tuned in and are we tuned in as a government on spending the money where it should be spent. Historically, are dollars going to the things that people complain about or that people feel should be improved? There are a lot of things that we need to spend money on in the town, but some things are not ones that residents get excited about (Example: new water line on street). The Director suggests tracking spending in categories (i.e. Beautification, Aesthetics, Infrastructure). Are we spending the money on what people wanted to see in the Master Plan? Councilor Flaherty states, if we created a historical comparison of spending to track where we're spending in various categories that were established, that would be a very valuable resource because what residents and even Councilors can get right now is the raw data (this number for this budget line). Councilor Flaherty thinks that would be quite helpful.

Mr. Vila explains that the next chapter is about Implementation. It is basically one spread that recommends the creation of a Master Plan Implementation Committee and the details of what the roles of this committee would be. Mr. Vila explains that this concludes with the Acknowledgement Section that needs to be completed.

Director SantucciRozzi thinks we need to think about the metrics a little more. There were a lot of good comments tonight. The Director is going to encourage the members that were not in attendance tonight to send in some comments. Now that we have had this discussion, if anyone has any ideas for different metrics, they can send them to Planning Staff, who will coordinate with the consulting team (Flavio and Jen) to fine tune those. She thinks it is important to have good metrics that produce indicators that we can pivot from. There are multiple departments in the town that have different functions, but there is a lot of overlap – especially when we think about the future. With our five-year plan, it is important to look at what we have done in the past. Where have we spent money? Where has it served us well? Where has it benefited us? Where is it worth reinvesting? The Director explains how a historic tracking graph was made for a recent Community Preservation meeting.

Member North asks if the Building Department has software that shows how many permits have been pulled and what the category of those are, by the year. The Director explains that they have building permit software. Member North asks if a metric could be created related to building permits for larger projects. The Director explains that every year she prepares that kind of information for the mayor. Member North says wouldn't that tell us how many residential, how much commercial, how much new office space? That could also be mapped. The Director explains she does that every year. Acting Chair Holmes states that if this is already being done annually, how about making this type of information available to the public twice a year to give them some idea of tracking what is going on? The Director agrees that is a good idea, but she explains that many applications take several months to conclude – so when do you count the project, at application time, at approval, or at groundbreaking? The Director reminds the members that we used to have an Annual Report, which showed: everything that occurred at Town Meeting, summaries of the boards, highlights of big projects, budget money. The Director explains that, when we switched our form of government, they stopped doing them. Acting Chair Holmes asks why we can't add that back into our Metrics. The Director explains that is not her call. Member North states that people keep talking about transparency and that they want more information. If that was a snapshot of what was going on in the town and people enjoyed it, why wouldn't that be something that we asked for.

Member Page asks who would be responsible for coordinating this type of reporting now? The Director advises that it used to be the selectmen. So, it will likely be the mayor or the Town Council. The Director explains that there is a lot of information out there, and much of it used to go into the Annual Report. If there is a movement to bring that back, it's a very useful document. Member North suggests that maybe this could be included on the Implementation Page. Mr. Vila explains that it is there under the fourth bullet point. The Director explains that there are so many different things that could go into that; she wants to think about how this would be done, but she doesn't want to commit the town to anything because it wouldn't be her call. The Director explains what went into the old Annual Reports, but she mentions that was before we had a website. Currently, there is a ton of information on the website, but it is not centralized into one document. Acting Chair Holmes states having information consolidated into one document would be helpful. Councilor Flaherty states that if this committee could be responsible for launching an initiative to bring back the Annual Report, that would be a major contribution to the town. It is an invaluable resource. It is unfortunate that we don't have it anymore, and she thinks we should.

Mr. Vila explains that his main takeaways from this meeting are that we will need to touch base about three things:

1. Photos,
2. Metrics, and
3. At some point, we will need to choose what to do with the Acknowledgement Section.

Mr. Vila explains that there was a very brief discussion at the last meeting about the acknowledgements. We should decide what to do with this. Mr. Vila suggests that members should feel free to send him emails over the next few weeks about these three things.

Member North asks for a reminder about what other towns do with the acknowledgements, and she confirms that the letter was going to be from the mayor. Mr. Vila has examples that he will display. The Director points out that one group that should be acknowledged is BCAM. The Director explains that it includes the Planning Board, the Master Plan Steering Committee, the town departments that participated in the workshops and the Road Show, a general statement about the residents and their participation in the surveys and forums, Jen Goldson and her team, RKG, and Kittelson. Then, we could take a group photo of the Master Plan Steering Committee. The Director explains that she can help the consulting team populate the acknowledgement page.

Acting Chair Holmes asks if there are any other comments.

Public Questions and Comments

Dan Clifford, former Town Councilor retired, 265 St. Claire Street, Braintree, states, as far as the discussion around community safety addressed on page 49, he would share the following. He was here at the beginning of this committee being formed. He said the same thing as he is going to say now. It has become clear that the committee is really on the right road now after some discussions tonight. If there are engineers or project managers here tonight, they know that there are a set of deliverables which would be analogous to the strategies. Within those deliverables, there are dependencies. How are we going to make these deliverables come to fruition? Is it going to take money? Is it going to take a department within the town to work with to make that happen? Has that department signed up for that task? Do they have the resource bandwidth to take it on? These are questions that must be asked by every project manager because if there aren't solutions to the dependencies, your deliverables will fail every time. Mr. Clifford states, when you talk about protecting neighborhoods, and you talked about the Annual Reports, he agrees with Director SantucciRozzi that those reports were wonderful. They did stop in 2008 after the new government came on. That alone would be a terrific deliverable for this committee – to reinstate Annual Reports.

To that end, Mr. Clifford will say, after having been a Councilor, there are requirements for each chairman of each of the ten committees to write an annual report on the work that they have done during the year. The Town Council is responsible and obligated by their own rules to write these annual reports. The disappointing part is that they don't get written. The next thing that Mr. Clifford would suggest is that the committee ask the Town Council to live up to their obligation to do their annual reports. Once the ten reports are done, then a cover letter can get slapped on it by the President of the Council saying we had a banner year, and we are happy that we were able to do all this stuff of value for the Town of Braintree. That's what you hope is done. That can then be compiled and put into the annual report. Mr. Clifford offers this as something he hopes the Master Plan Steering Committee brings forward. Mr. Clifford expresses that much of government is not held accountable. These reports would hold accountability and transparency to the work that is being done by those ten committees. Those ten committees are important to the town, to veterans, to elders, to the highway department, for rules and ordinances, and for new bylaws for rezoning. All of that is important and valuable work. Mr. Clifford asks the committee to bring it forward.

Other than that, Mr. Clifford would like to discuss crime. He states that our communities are increasing in the crime that is affecting them, and that, he hopes, will be part of the Master Plan. There are ways to measure it. You have police reports. You have neighborhood watches. The North Braintree Civic Association has been terrific in bringing issues forward with solutions. It's easy to bring a problem forward; it isn't always easy to offer a solution. When Mr. Clifford was in corporate America, his teams knew that their president would not accept anything but excellence and substantial solutions to a problem. She would say, "do not come into my office with a problem unless you have a solution with you". So, for each of the strategies that are being applied to each of the themes, there must be a clear, substantive goal. Mr. Clifford knows that there are goals here, but if you look at them and see the word "opportunity" – each one of the strategies talks about opportunities. Mr. Clifford asks to be shown where it says, "this is what we are after, and this is how we can measure it for success". There is a correction in the discussion, and it is clarified that Mr. Clifford is referring to the Transformation Areas on page 20 of the document rather than the strategies. Director SantucciRozzi explains that the strategies are pretty action oriented. She reads some of the strategies under Goal 2. Under Strategy 2C: **Adopt and implement a Climate Change Plan**, Mr. Clifford asks who is going to do that and how much will that cost? Is it achievable? Mr. Clifford doesn't expect anyone to respond. The Director clarifies that is for the Implementation Committee. Mr. Clifford discusses the difficulties of being asked to accomplish these strategies. He thanks the committee for letting him speak, and he asks the committee to make these strategies substantive so that the next guy that you hand this to has a fair chance of doing the job.

Adjournment

Acting Chair Holmes looks for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION made by Member Page to adjourn the meeting; **SECONDED** by Councilor Flaherty; voted 6:0:0. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Louise F. Quinlan,
Office Manager, Planning and Community Development