




## MEMORANDUM

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December 3, 2012

TO: Board of Mayor and Aldermen

FROM: Eric Stuckey, City Administrator   
Vernon Gerth, ACA, Community and Economic Development  
Catherine Powers, Director, Planning and Sustainability

SUBJECT: Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA)/Franklin Municipal Planning Commission (FMPC) Joint Conceptual Workshop

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA) with information to facilitate a discussion regarding the use of the joint conceptual workshop in the planning/development process and to consider potential alternatives.

### **Background**

The 2008 Zoning Ordinance included a provision for a BOMA/FMPC Joint Conceptual Workshop. The workshop was designed to allow the members of the BOMA/FMPC members an opportunity to discuss Planned Unit Developments (PUD) in an informal setting that allows for questions from the BOMA or FMPC members and provides feedback to the developer. Recently, the BOMA/FMPC Joint Conceptual Workshop has also served as an introduction to Zoning Amendments initiated by staff.

While the intent of this workshop concept is good, it has been increasingly obvious that it is not working as intended. The primary reason for the ineffectiveness is that the workshops are not well attended by the BOMA and to lesser extent the FMPC members. This is understandable given the number of meetings attended by these members and maybe that some of the subjects or projects discussed are not as relevant to individual BOMA/FMPC members as others may be. Finally, some of the BOMA/FMPC members may choose to attend the Neighborhood Meeting instead of the Joint Conceptual Workshop.

However, without the participation of all the BOMA/FMPC members the purpose of the meetings is eroded. This situation is particularly detrimental to the applicant since the requirement for a Joint Conceptual Workshop causes a delay of a month in the approval process.

The other issue is that even with good representation, the projects do not seem to be fully vetted and give and take between the applicant and the BOMA/FMPC members is limited. This may be a result of early stage of the plan, the lack of public participation or the Workshop is not creating the environment for this exchange. Staff does not have a solution but would like to present to both the BOMA and the FMPC members some possible options for discussion as follows:

### **Options**

**Status Quo** – This option would continue the present process with a request to the BOMA/FMPC members to attend and participate.

PROS:

- The Zoning Ordinance would not need to be amended. The applicants are familiar with the process and timeline.

CONS:

- The BOMA and FMPC members are overscheduled, and given the time of the workshop, it may not be possible to attend.
- The project is at a very early stage and information related to traffic, drainage, and other issues may not be available.

Joint Conceptual Workshop takes place in the Board Room and is filmed prior to the FMPC meeting.

This scenario would keep the workshop at the same time but move the location and provide filming for the public.

PROS:

- This scenario would allow members unable to attend to view the workshop at a different time.
- This scenario would allow the public another opportunity in addition to the neighborhood meeting to see the project in the early phase.

CONS:

- This scenario may lose some of the informal atmosphere of give and take between the BOMA/FMPC members and the applicant.
- This scenario could encourage more public participation, thereby limiting the discussion between the BOMA/FMPC members and the applicant.
- The logistics would require the meeting end no later than 6:30 p.m. in order to set up for the FMPC meeting. This could be frustrating if we have a number of items on the agenda.
- Attendance would still be an issue.

Hold and film the Workshop on a separate night from the FMPC meeting in the Board Room

This scenario would choose a different night for the Joint Conceptual Workshop. The Historic Zoning Commission uses this format.

PROS:

- This scenario would allow more discussion time and a record of the meeting on tape.

CONS:

- This scenario would add another obligation to already busy schedules, possibly further reducing participation.
- It is often difficult to schedule the Board Room.

Substitute the Neighborhood Meeting for the Joint Conceptual Workshop

- This scenario would request the BOMA/FMPC members attend the Neighborhood Meeting instead of the Joint Conceptual Workshop.

PROS:

- The BOMA would have an opportunity to gauge the public's reaction to the project.

CONS:

- The Neighborhood Meetings are on different nights, so there will not be a consistent schedule.
- There will be less opportunity for feedback to the applicant
- Neighborhood Meetings are not filmed, although notes are taken by the applicant.

Conduct the Joint Conceptual Workshop and Neighborhood Meeting together on a pre-determined evening

This scenario would require all Neighborhood Meeting(s) and the Joint Conceptual Workshop be held in the Board Room and filmed on a particular night prior to the FMPC meeting.

PROS:

- Both the Neighborhood Meeting and Joint Conceptual Workshop would be filmed.
- All the projects would be presented at the same time and both the public and the BOMA/FMPC members would have an opportunity to provide feedback.
- Depending on the timing, the applicant might gain time in the approval process by combining the meetings.
- The BOMA would be able to hear their constituent's concerns without attending a separate meeting.

CONS:

- Discussion on particular project(s) could be lengthy, thereby inconveniencing the public not in attendance for that project.
- May limit the give and take aspect between the BOMA/FMPC members and the applicant.
- Does not guarantee attendance by the BOMA or FMPC members but would provide a record for later review.

Eliminate the BOMA/FMPC Joint Conceptual Meeting and allow more time at the FMPC meeting

PROS:

- This scenario would allow a month time savings for the applicant.
- More information related to the project is available at FMPC stage in the process.
- Those interested BOMA/FMPC members could attend the Neighborhood meeting.
- The BOMA can attend the FMPC meeting or review it on film in preparation for the BOMA work session.



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- There is time at the BOMA Work Session and Public Hearing to ask questions or give feedback.

### CONS:

- The applicant may not be willing to make changes to the plans as a result of FMPC review.
- The informal dialogue would be compromised.

### **Recommendation**

This is a beginning discussion to resolve the issue of a venue that presently does not provide optimum results. Staff has attempted to capsule the issues with each option, but the BOMA/FMPC members may have additional options or desire more detail. This discussion will also take place at the BOMA/FMPC Joint Conceptual Workshop on December 20, 2012. Please review and provide feedback.