

Town of Framingham Planning Board

2015 Annual Report

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2015 Framingham Planning Board Annual Report

Introduction

This Annual Report of the Framingham Planning Board (FPB) provides a snapshot of the FPB's long term planning efforts and progress towards completing the recodification of the Framingham Zoning By-Law, Master Land Use Plan action items, improved project review process, policy development, and implementation of other tasks undertaken during the 2015 calendar year. In 2015, the FPB with Town staff developed the motto Plan-Build-Grow to reflect the true mission and activities of the FPB and the Town.

History of the Planning Board

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, authorized cities and towns, except for the City of Boston, to establish a Planning Board under the Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L., Chapter (c.) 41, Section 81A. The Planning Board has statutory authority to adopt a master plan, maintain the official zoning map, serve as the local authority for the Subdivision Control Act, adopt rules & regulations, draft and submit zoning, serve as a special permit and local permit granting authority, act as the reviewing body for site plans under site plan review, and review scenic roadway modifications (under M.G.L, c. 40, Section 15C).¹

The FPB was established during Town Meeting in 1914, under Article 10. "To see what action shall be taken to create a Planning Board in conformity with the requirements of Chapter 949, of the Acts of 1913; to choose the members thereof, and to act in any manner in relation thereto." The Planning Board became an officially elected Board in the Town of Framingham in 1924.²

Composition of the Framingham Planning Board

The FPB is comprised of five elected members who reside in the Town of Framingham. Each member of the FPB is elected for a three year term, where a minimum of one member's term expires annually. From April 10, 2014 to April 9, 2015 the FPB included: Stephanie A. Mercandetti, Chair, Christine A. Long, Vice-Chair, Lewis Colten, Clerk, Thomas F. Mahoney, and Victor A. Ortiz. At the Annual Town Election held on April 7, 2015, Stephanie A. Mercandetti and Thomas F. Mahoney were re-elected for additional three year terms. On April 9, 2015 the FPB reorganized as follows: Christine A. Long, Chair, Stephanie A. Mercandetti, Vice-Chair, Lewis Colten, Clerk, Thomas F. Mahoney, and Victor A. Ortiz.

Framingham Planning Board Staff

The FPB Office consists of four employees who work under the supervision and direction of the FPB, in collaboration with Town's departments and staff. During the 2015 Annual Town Meeting (2015 ATM) the Town granted the FPB an additional staff position, which included a part-time Clerical Assistant to assist with the needs of a busy growing department. The 2015 ATM also granted a revision to the role of Administrative Assistant, which became the Community Outreach Coordinator (COC).

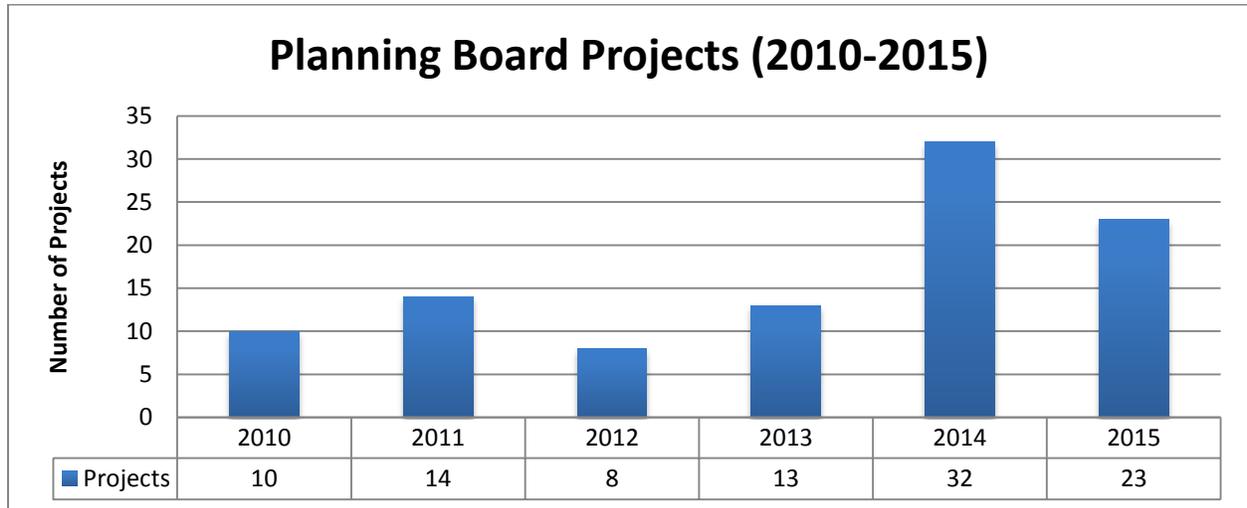
¹ The Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 41, Section 81A.

² Herring, Stephen W. Framingham, An American Town. Published by the Framingham Historical Society and The Framingham Tercentennial Commission. 2000.

Planning Board Quick Facts

In 2015, the Planning Board granted 23 Project Decisions³. Project Decisions ranged from Site Plan Review, Special Permits, extensions to previously approved projects, Public Way Access Permits, Scenic Roadway Modifications, Extensions of Time on Permits, and Preliminary Subdivision applications. Figure 1: Planning Board Projects Permitted from 2010-2015 shows the number of projects reviewed and permitted between 2010 and 2015.

Figure 1: Planning Board Projects Permitted from 2010-2015



The projects reviewed and permitted during 2015 occurred in record breaking time. Figure 2: Number of Permits Granted by the Planning Board (2009-2015) provides a snapshot of the permits granted by the FPB during 2009-2015. In 2015, the FPB granted the following permits:

- 15 Site Plan Reviews;
- 29 Special Permits;
- 3 Modification to a previously approved Decision;
- 1 Extension to a previously approved Decision;
- 6 Public Way Access Permits;
- 2 Scenic Roadway Modifications; and
- 1 Subdivision/Modification to a Subdivision.

Further, the FPB is responsible for the review of Approval Not Required (ANR) Projects. ANR Projects are an endorsement rather than an approval, based on projects meeting the required lot frontage and access over the legal frontage. During 2015, the FPB reviewed and endorsed a total of 19 ANR Projects, which is a 33% increase from 2014.

³ The 23 Decisions granted by the FPB only include projects that were permitted during 2015; this number does not include projects that were applied for by Applicants during 2015, which did not receive permits. Projects received by the FPB but not permitted during the 2015 calendar year will be counted in the 2016 numbers.

Figure 2: Number of Permits Granted by the Planning Board (2009-2015)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Site Plan Review	11	12	15	11	11	21	15
Special Permit	11	7	10	8	28	34	29
Modification to Approved SPR or SP	*	*	*	*	*	*	3
Subdivision Review	1	1	0	2	2	2	1
Approval Not Required	7	11	13	10	7	13	19
Planned Unit Development (PUD)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Public Way Access Permit	7	6	4	1	4	8	6
Modification to a Scenic Way	2	2	3	2	0	2	2

* Information not calculated

Public Hearings

The total number of public hearings held for approved projects in 2015:

- Average number of public hearings 3.13/2.57 (total number of public hearings/total number of public hearings minus public hearings continued without testimony).
- Median number of public hearings 2/2 (total number of public hearings/total number of public hearings minus public hearings continued without testimony).
- In 2015, the total number of public hearings held for a project was 39.78% less than the average in 2014 and 50% less than the median in 2014.
- In 2015, the total number of public hearings minus the public hearings continued without testimony was 41.04% less than the average in 2014 and 50% less than the median in 2014.

Permitting Time

The total permitting time from the date an application was stamped in with the Town Clerk to the date the Planning Board granted a decision for a project:

- Average number of review days: 66.57
- Median number of review days: 44
- In 2015, the total permitting time from the date an application was stamped in with the Town Clerk to the date the Planning Board granted a decision for a project decreased by an average of 30.55% compared to 2014. The median review time decreased by 70% compared to 2014.

The total permitting time from the date of the first public hearing to the date the Planning Board granted a decision for a project:

- Average number of review days: 43.3
- Median number of review days: 22
- In 2015, the total permitting time from the date of the first public hearing to the date the Planning Board granted a decision decreased by an average of 51.2% compared to 2014. The median review time decreased by 158% compared to 2014.

Job Creation, Tax Revenue, and Development Costs

Associated with the increase in Project development throughout Framingham, is the creation of jobs (construction/full time/part time), project development cost, and increase in tax revenue. The total number of jobs created by approved projects:

- Construction Jobs: 632-682
- Full Time Jobs: 119
- Part Time Jobs: 83

The Town has greatly benefited from the efforts made to streamline the permitting process. Commercial projects approved by the FPB generate increased tax revenue, which contributes to increased property values and an interest in reinvestment in private and commercial property. The increased tax revenue generated in 2015 is roughly \$296,362.56. Figure 3: Tax Revenue Associated with FPB Projects (pre-project vs. post project difference) provides an overview of the current taxes collected compared to the estimated post development taxes to be collected by the Town. The projects approved in 2015 have an expected development cost totaling approximately \$18,687,501.00 as reported in project applications.

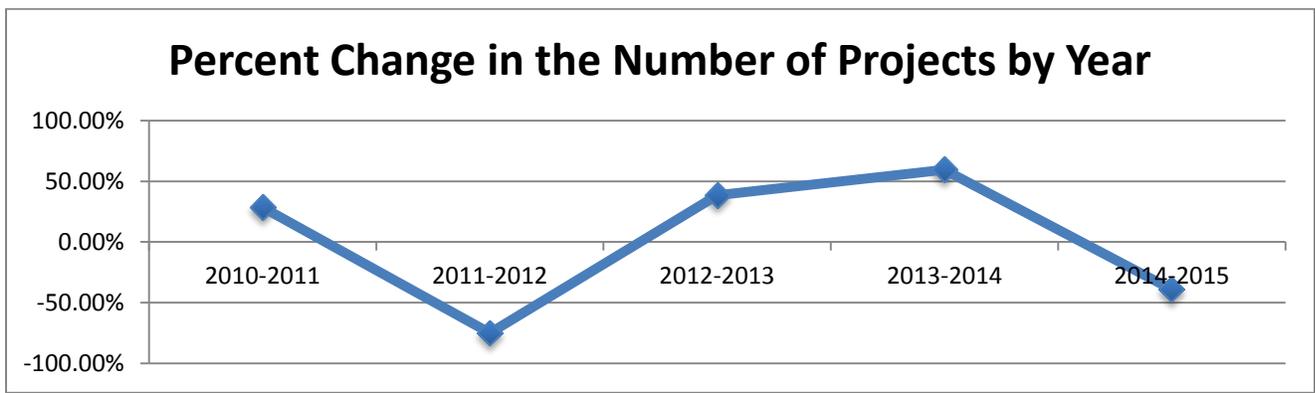
Figure 3: Tax Revenue Associated with FPB Projects (pre-project vs. post project difference)

Project Name	Current Tax	Est. Post Development Tax	Increase of (\$):
188 Lawrence Street	\$40,204.00	\$53,000.00	\$12,796.00
39 Grant Street	\$52,520.00	\$97,884.00	\$45,364.00
125 Newbury Street	\$175,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$25,000.00
655 Cochituate Road	\$73,468.00	\$96,000.00	\$22,532.00
100 Clinton Street	\$92,200.00	\$110,000.00	\$17,800.00
1 Worcester Road	\$3,671,350.00	\$3,690,905.00	\$19,555.00
1699 Worcester Road	\$16,734.00	\$31,318.00	\$14,584.00
1 Edgell Road	\$133,146.00	\$139,118.00	\$5,972.00
88 Blandin Avenue	\$50,047.00	\$55,000.00	\$4,953.00
270 Cochituate Road	\$38,744.36	\$108,224.50	\$69,480.14
340 Winter Street	\$9,440.00	\$9,440.00	\$0
1624 Worcester Road	\$14,106.58	\$50,000.00	\$35,893.42
63 Western Avenue	\$819,215.00	\$841,648	\$22,433.00
TOTAL	\$5,186,174.94	\$5,482,537.50	\$296,362.56

Number of Planning Board Projects (2010-2015)

The FPB has seen a fluctuation in the number of projects reviewed over the past five years. There was a 28.57% increase in the number of projects between 2010 and 2011, while between 2011 and 2012 there was a 75% reduction in the number of projects. The number of projects reviewed and permitted by the FPB increased by 38.46% during 2011-2012, which contributed to a 59.4% increase in the number of projects brought forward between 2013 and 2014. In 2015, the number of projects decreased by 39.13% from the previous year. The 2015 project numbers still exceeds the number of projects reviewed and permitted between 2010 and 2013. Figure 4: Percent Change in the Number of Projects by Calendar Year represents this fluctuation in the number of projects between 2010 and 2015.

Figure 4: Percent Change in the Number of Projects by Calendar Year



Average Planning Board Review Time (2010-2015)

In 2015, the FPB and Technical Review Team (TRT)⁴ worked together to thoroughly review projects, which have resulted in permitting efficiency and a decrease in the average review time. The average permit review time from the first public hearing to the granting of the decision was 43.3 days in 2015, which was a 51.2% decrease in time from 2014. Below is a snapshot of the average, shortest, and longest review times from 2010 through 2015.

- 2010: Average permit review time from 1st Public Hearing to a Decision 149.4 days
 - Shortest review time (1st public hearing to decision) - 1 day
 - Longest review time (1st public hearing to decision) - 454 days
- 2011: Average permit review time from 1st Public Hearing to a Decision 78.4 days
 - Shortest review time (1st public hearing to decision) – 14 days
 - Longest review time (1st public hearing to decision) – 277 days
- 2012: Average permit review time from 1st Public Hearing to a Decision 64.4 days
 - Shortest review time (1st public hearing to decision) – 7 days
 - Longest review time (1st public hearing to decision) – 161 days
- 2013: Average permit review time from 1st Public Hearing to a Decision 83.0 days

⁴ An informal working group consisting of representatives of the various Town Departments to review pre-application projects. The TRT meets on a regular basis to provide comments, concerns, recommendations, and a permit/license determination for pre-application projects prior to the submittal of a formal application. The TRT shall include the Building Commissioner, Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, the Board of Health, Community & Economic Development, the Department of Public Works, the Disability Commission, the Fire Department, the Police Department, and/or their designees.

- Shortest review time (1st public hearing to decision) - 1 day
- Longest review time (1st public hearing to decision) - 202 days
- 2014: Average permit review time from 1st Public Hearing to a Decision 65.47 days
 - Shortest review time (1st public hearing to decision) - 1 day
 - Longest review time (1st public hearing to decision) - 202 days
- 2015: Average permit review time from 1st Public Hearing to a Decision 43.3 days
 - Shortest review time (1st public hearing to decision) - 1 day
 - Longest review time (1st public hearing to decision) - 245 days

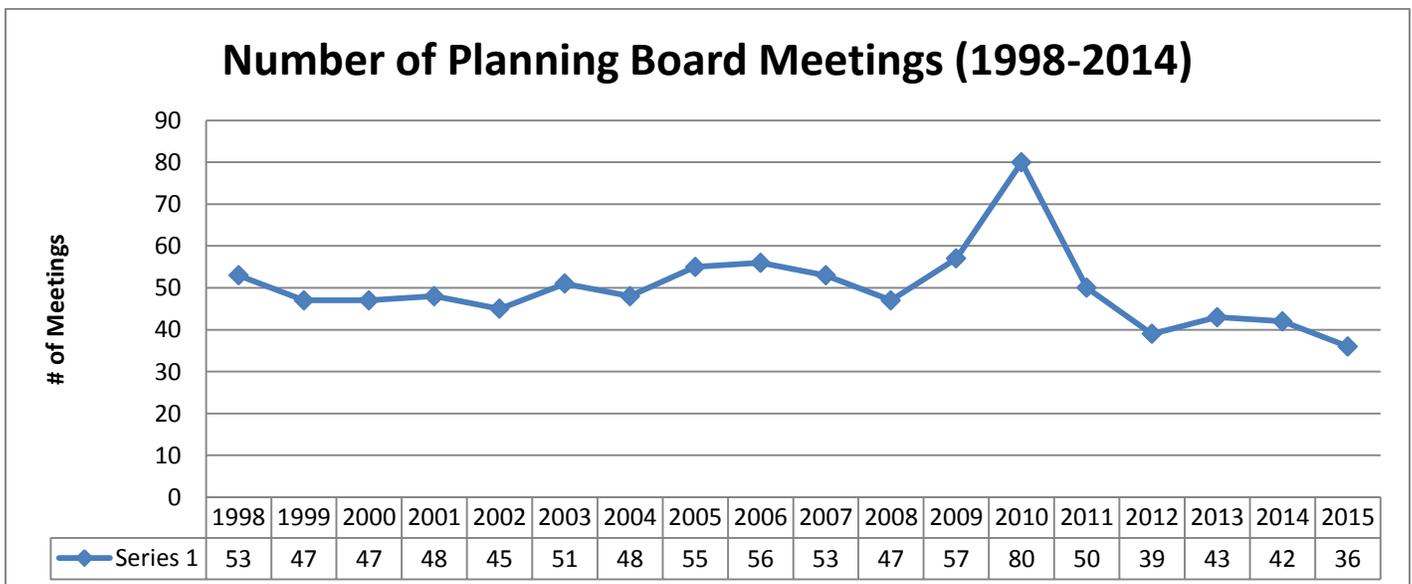
Permitting Summary

A major accomplishment in 2015 was the completion of the Development Handbook. The Development Handbook was released as a “Plan-Build-Grow” publication in an effort to assist both the commercial and residential land owner in navigating the permitting process in Framingham. The efforts of Plan-Build-Grow will continuously be reviewed and modified as the FPB continues to work on the recodification of the Framingham Zoning By-Law. The recodification process is expected to be completed by Fall of 2017, which will provide a clearer and simpler interpretation of the Town’s Zoning By-Laws for all users.

Planning Board Meetings

The FPB regularly met on Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. in the Memorial Building. In the 2015 calendar year, the FPB held 36 meetings to consider applications for site plan review, amendments to previously approved decisions, special permits, preliminary subdivisions, modifications to scenic ways, public way access permits, as well as public hearings for zoning amendments. Figure 5: Number of Planning Board Meetings (1998-2015) shows the number of meetings held by the Planning Board since 1998.

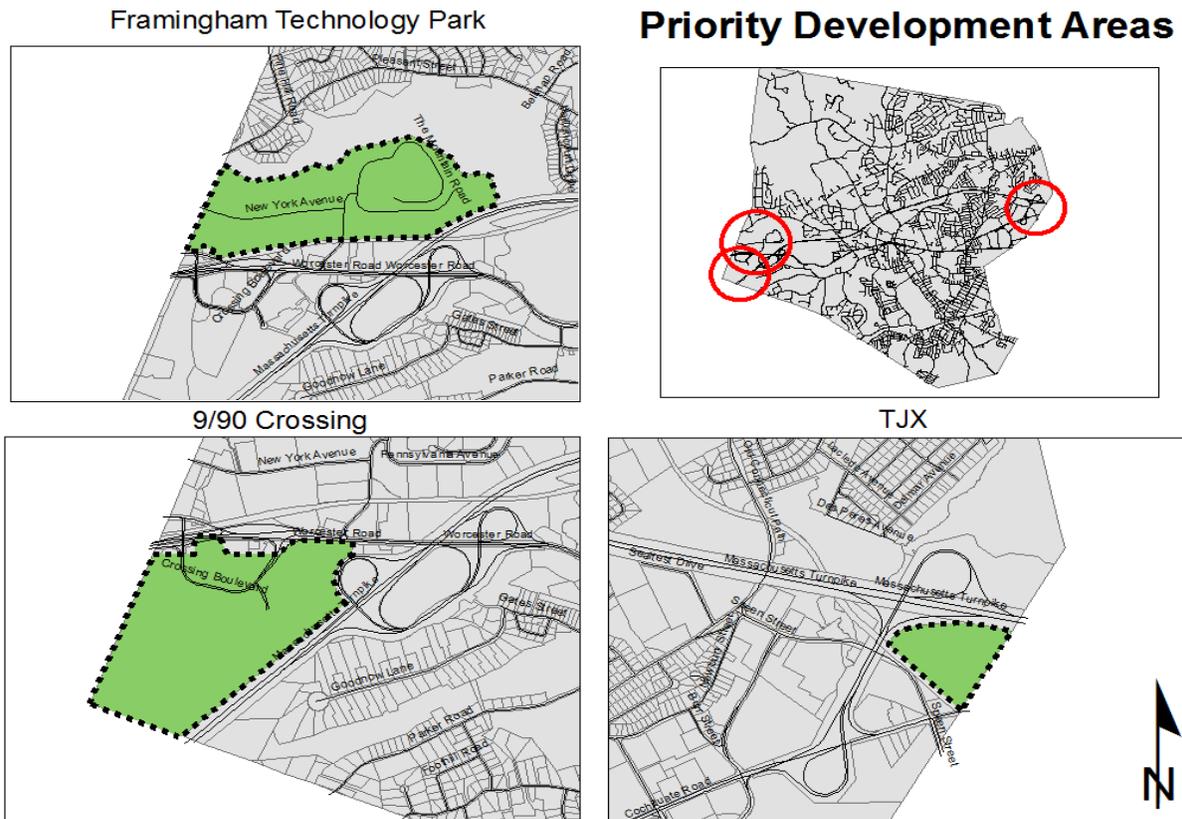
Figure 5: Number of Planning Board Meetings (1998 – 2015)



Chapter 43D: Expedited Permitting

At the 2013 Annual Town Meeting, the Town of Framingham adopted M.G.L. c. 43D: Expedited Permitting (420 CMR). The 2015 calendar year did not yield any projects designated as Priority Development Sites (PDS)⁵, under Chapter 43D: Expedited Permitting. Figure 6: Chapter 43D: Expedited Permitting Priority Development Sites shows the locations of all the Priority Development Sites within the Town. The FPB in collaboration with town departments and affected land owners began the process of rezoning the 9/90 Corporate Center as recommended by the Master Land Use Plan, 2014. This area will be known as the Corporate Mix-use I (CMU I) & Corporate Mixed-use II (CMU II) District. Revisions to the zoning in this area includes increased density, height, requirements for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and review requirements that will ensure that all projects provide the necessary infrastructure needed to support development growth. The CMU I & CMU II Zoning are expected to be adopted in 2016.

Figure 6: Chapter 43D: Expedited Permitting Priority Development Sites

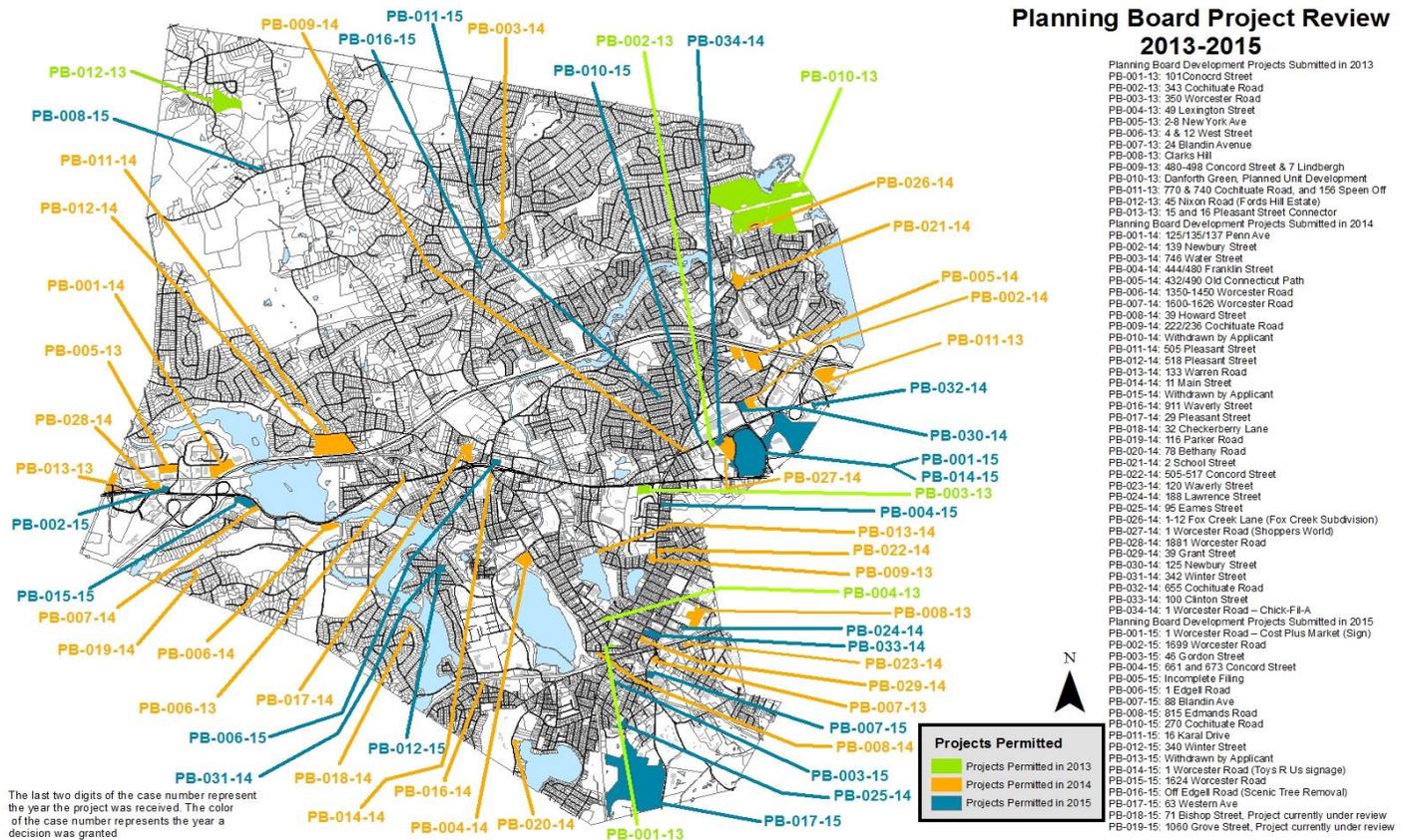


⁵ Designated Priority Development Sites: 1672 Worcester Road, 1800 Worcester Road, 1898RR Worcester Road, 1900R Worcester Road, 1900RR Worcester Road, 100 Crossing Blvd, 149 Crossing Blvd, 150 Crossing Blvd, 175 Crossing Blvd, 200 Crossing Blvd, 225 Crossing Blvd, 150 Gates Street, 100 Staples Drive, 200 Staples Drive, 400 Staples Drive, 500 Staples Drive, 740 Cochituate Road, 750 Cochituate Road, and 156 Speen Street, 9 Pleasant Street Connector, 15 Pleasant Street Connector, 10 California Ave, 11 California Ave, 40 California Ave, 1 The Mountain Road, 5 The Mountain Road, 100 The Mountain Road, 0 Pennsylvania Ave, 100 Pennsylvania Ave, 105 Pennsylvania Ave, 115 Pennsylvania Ave, 125 Pennsylvania Ave, 135 Pennsylvania Ave, 137 Pennsylvania Ave, 145 Pennsylvania Ave, 0 New York Ave RR, 1 New York Ave, 2 New York Ave, 31 New York Ave, 33 New York Ave, 45 New York Ave, 47 New York Ave, 49 New York Ave, 51 New York Ave, 55 New York Ave, 74 New York Ave, 84 New York Ave, 86 New York Ave, 86R New York Ave, 88 New York Ave, 92 New York Ave, and 0 Pleasant Street.

Development Project Locations

Projects reviewed by the FPB were located throughout the Town. Figure 7: Planning Board Project Map (2013-2015) shows the locations of each project permitted during the 2013, 2014, 2015 calendar years. Each project reviewed by the FPB receives a number (PB-000-XX: PB = Planning Board, 000 = the number the project was check-in under, and XX = the year the applicant applied for the project). Projects listed on the right of Figure 7 are ordered based on the year the applicant applied and the order it came into the FPB office. The map shows the year the project was permitted by color: projects in green were permitted in 2013, projects in orange were permitted in 2014, and projects in blue were permitted in 2015. Projects applied for in 2014 but permitted in 2015 are considered projects permitted in 2015, this trend continues for projects applied in 2015, but will be permitted in 2016 will be considered as a project permitted in 2016 and count towards 2016 numbers.

Figure 7: Planning Board Project Map (2013-2015)



Long Range Planning

The FPB continued to work on the recodification of the Framingham Zoning By-Law and the implementation of the Master Land Use Plan's action items throughout 2015. The information below provides a brief overview of the Long range planning efforts accomplished in 2015. These Long Range Planning efforts include the following:

Plan-Build-Grow – Development Handbook (collaboration between the Board of Health, the Building Department, Community & Economic Development, the Conservation Commission, the Department of Public Works, the Fire Department, the Police Department, the Planning Board, Town Clerk, Town Manager, the Public Information Officer, and the Zoning Board of Appeals)

The purpose of the Development Handbook and Permit Framingham: Plan-Build-Grow is to provide guidance and access to vital information for landowners, developers, companies, and businesses to easily understand the permitting process in Framingham in both paper and electronic format. Plan-Build-Grow serves as a valuable tool for anyone interested in development within Framingham. Plan-Build-Grow was developed as a 5 Stage process detailed as follows:

- **Stage one** helps an Applicant generate an idea for a project, gain a better understanding of what can be done on the site, and provides the steps required to develop the project.
- **Stage Two** allows Applicants that have an identified property, preliminary documentation regarding the property, and basic site plans and/or architectural plans to meet with the Technical Review Team (TRT) to determine which licenses and permits are required. The TRT then provides comments and a clear layout of the necessary process for each license and permit.
- **Stage Three** is when the application(s) are filed with the appropriate Permit Granting Authority (PGA) as prescribed in stage two.
- **Stage Four** is the review process to obtain the necessary licenses and permits applied for through the proper Permit Granting Authority (PGA).
- **Stage Five** is the construction phase of the project.

Framingham Zoning By-law Recodification – Phase II & III changes were voted by Annual and Special Fall Town Meeting (Consultant: Attorney Barbara Saint Andre, Petrini & Associates, collaboration with the Building Department and the Department of Community and Economic Development).

The purpose of the Framingham Zoning By-law is to establish regulations for the uses of premises, protection and promotion of life, health, safety, morals, convenience, and general welfare to the Framingham community. In 2013, at Annual Spring Town Meeting, the Town voted to commence a recodification process for the Zoning By-law.

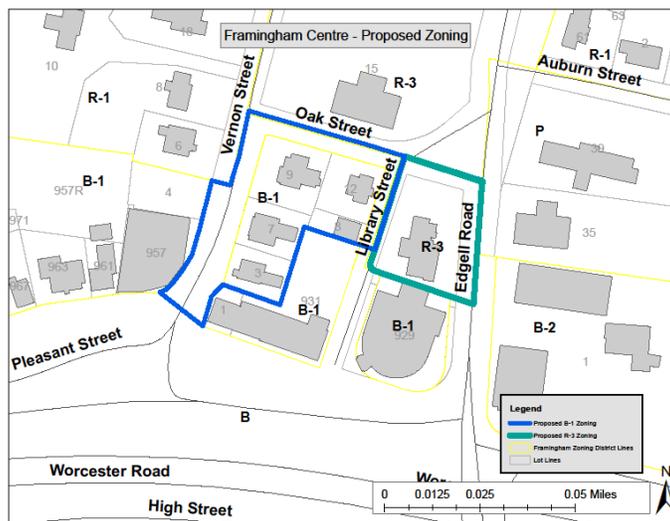
- Phase I of this project included the entire Zoning By-law being reorganized and brought up-to-date with current case law and Massachusetts General Law. No substantial changes were made during this Phase of the recodification process. Major revisions during Phase I included the following: relocation of Definitions, the creation of a Table of Uses, reorganization of sections, and general housekeeping.
- Phase II and III: The updating, correcting, amending, and modifying of various sections of the Zoning By-Law were started. These two phases allowed the Town to revise outdated processes and By-Laws and bring them up-to-date with best land use management practices.

Framingham Town Meeting

The FPB is responsible for the upkeep of the Framingham Zoning By-Law. The 2015 calendar year was extremely busy for the FPB and the Town in regards to zoning. In 2015, Town Meeting reviewed and approved seven major zoning articles sponsored/co-sponsored by the FPB. Zoning reviewed and approved in 2015 includes the following:

- Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) By-Law (Annual Town Meeting, April 28, 2015): Sponsor: Framingham Planning Board, Lead Department: Planning Board, Contributors: the Agricultural Advisory Committee, reviewed by the Standing Committee on Planning and Zoning
 - The Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) By-Law through a TDR special permit allows a Developable Farm and/or Developable Open Space Parcel to sell its potential Development Rights to a Receiving Parcel, thereby allowing the Receiving Parcel to meet its companies' growth demands. The objective of the TDR is two-fold: to serve as an economic development tool while promoting the preservation of Developable Farm and/or Developable Open Space parcels in exchange.
- Zoning Map amendments: rezoning of Framingham Centre (Annual Town Meeting, April 28, 2015) Sponsor: Framingham Planning Board, Lead Department: Planning Board, Contributors: the Historic District Commission, reviewed by the Standing Committee on Planning and Zoning
 - Amendment to the Framingham Zoning Map: Rezoning parcels: 3, 7 and 9 Vernon Street, 8 and 12 Library Street and abutting said lots to the center line of Library Street, Oak Street, and Vernon Street from Office and Professional (P) Zoning District and Business (B) Zoning District to Neighborhood Business (B-1) Zoning District, furthermore rezone parcel 18 Edgell Road from Single Family Residential (R-1) Zoning District to Single Family Residential (R-3) Zoning District

Figure 8: Framingham Town Centre amendments to the Zoning Map, adopted in 2015

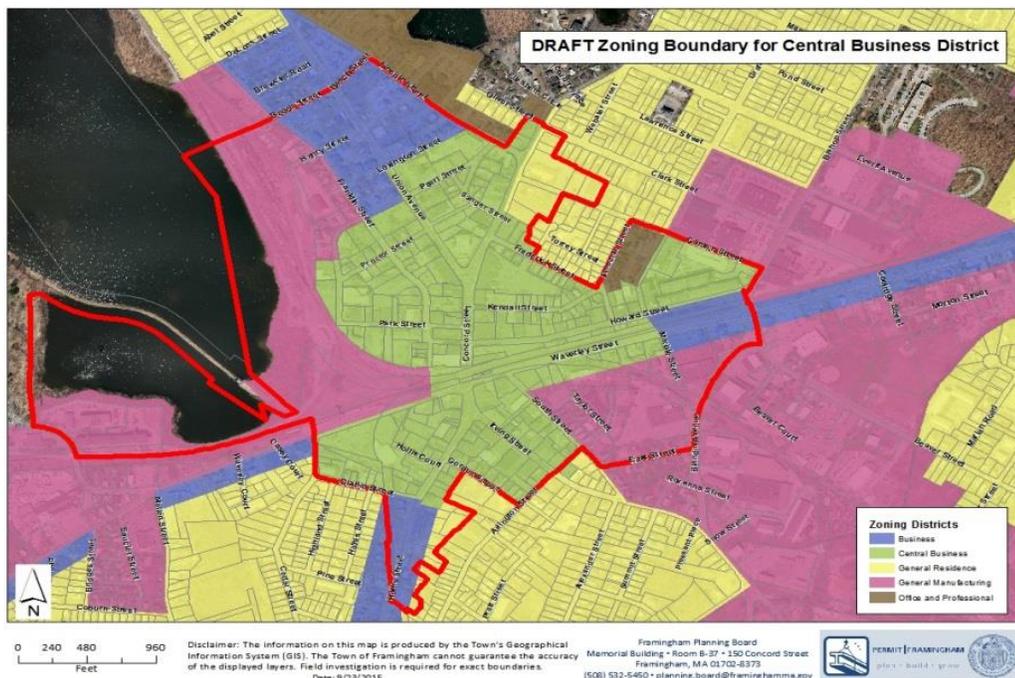


- Phase II: Recodification of the Framingham Zoning By-Law (Annual Town Meeting, April 28, 2015) Consultant: Petrini & Associates, Sponsor: Planning Board and Board of Selectmen, Lead Department: Planning Board, Contributors: the Building Department and the Department of Community & Economic Development, reviewed by the Standing Committee on Planning and Zoning
 - The FPB worked with Attorney Barbara Saint Andre, the Standing Committee on Planning and Zoning, the Department of Community & Economic Development, and the Building & Wire Department (the Working Group) to present Phase II of the Framingham Zoning By-Law. During Phase II of the Zoning By-law Recodification process, members of the Working Group successfully amended Section I.E, Definitions; amended Sections II.A, B, C, E, F, G, and H; amended Section III.E, Commercial Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Renewable Energy Installations Overlay District; amended Section IV Dimensional Regulations; deleted Section V.F, Open Space Residential Development in its entirety; amended Section VI.F, Site Plan Review; re-organized, re-positioned, re-captioned and re-numbered portions of the Zoning By-law and amending the Table of Contents accordingly; and made other amendments for clarification and consistency, including references to Sections of the Zoning By-law that are effected by the amendments

- Central Business District By-Law (Fall Special Town Meeting, October 20, 2015) – Consultants: Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), Sponsor: Planning Board and Board of Selectmen, Lead Department: the Department of Community & Economic Development (for overall project), Contributors: the Planning Board on the Development of Zoning, the Building Department, the School Department, the Police Department, the Department of Public Works, the Fire Department, and the Assessors Department, reviewed by the Standing Committee on Planning and Zoning
 - The Central Business (CB) District was redeveloped to stimulate a pedestrian- and transit-oriented, mixed-use environment that is supported by a mixture of residential, retail, office, and other commercial uses. The CB District encourages a compact, transit-oriented development (TOD) setting while preserving the area as the Town’s financial, civic, cultural, and government center. The CB District is intended to generate a livable downtown environment with a strong presence of a multitude of activities that increases pedestrian access and reduces the number of auto-oriented uses. Development should preserve the historic nature and architecturally significant buildings within the CB District, while promoting new and infill development to support a multi-modal transportation, mixed-use environment.
 - The Central Business (CB) District By-Law and design standards have been developed to promote quality development that preserves and enhances Downtown Framingham’s history and character; and further encourages a walkable, pedestrian- and transit-oriented environment. These design standards are integral to the CB District regulations and must be met as part of any CB District site plan review and approval.

- Framingham Zoning By-law by adding new definitions to Section I.E. Definitions, amend the Central Business (CB) District Purpose in Section II.A.2.d Central Business (CB) District, amend the Table of Uses related to the Central Business (CB) District in Section II.B and to further amend the Table of Uses by adding new Use Categories, add a new Section II.J Central Business (CB) District, amend the Dimensional Regulations related to the Central Business (CB) District in Section IV.E., amend Section VI.F Site Plan Review to include new specific Central Business (CB) District review process for project review, amend Section VI.G Variances to include the Central Business (CD) District, delete Section IV.E.9 in its entirety, and to further amend Sections IV.B.7.a., IV.E.5.d., IV.E.6.d., and IV.E.7.d.2. by deleting references to the Central Business (CB) Zoning District
- Zoning Map amendments related to the Central Business (CB) Zoning District (Fall Special Town Meeting, October 20, 2015) – Consultants: Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), Sponsor: Planning Board and Board of Selectmen, Lead Department: the Department of Community & Economic Development (for overall project), Contributors: the Planning Board on the Development of Zoning, the Building Department, the School Department, the Police Department, the Department of Public Works, the Fire Department, and the Assessors Department, reviewed by the Standing Committee on Planning and Zoning
 - Amendment to the Framingham Zoning Map: amend the Framingham Zoning Map by expanding the Central Business (CB) Zoning District as shown in the Zoning Boundary for the Central Business District map shown below, Figure 9: Central Business (CB) District Boundaries, adopted in 2015. The red line in Figure 8 indicates the new CB Zoning Boundary.

Figure 9: Central Business (CB) District Boundaries, adopted in 2015



- Off-Street Parking Regulations (Fall Special Town Meeting, October 20, 2015)
Consultants: Jeffery Dirk , P.E., PTOE, Vanasse & Associates, Inc. and Howard-Stein-Hudson, Sponsor: Planning Board, Lead Department: Planning Board, Contributors: the Department of Public Works, reviewed by the Standing Committee on Planning and Zoning
 - Revisions to the existing Off-Street Parking Regulations were incorporated into the recodification of the Framingham Zoning By-Law process. The updated parking regulations now required bicycle parking, the use of solar carports, parking to be located to the rear and/or side of the building, consolidation of curb cuts and the encouragement of shared driveways and the use of alley ways, furthermore, the update allows for shared parking agreements, reductions in the number of off-street parking spaces in exchange for several alternative transportation options. Overall, the revisions to the Off-Street Parking Regulations allow for better land uses, a more pedestrian style environment, and improved circulation of the site and Town.
- Phase III: Recodification of the Framingham Zoning By-Law (Fall Special Town Meeting, October 20, 2015) Consultant: Petrini & Associates, Sponsor: Planning Board and Board of Selectmen, Lead Department: Planning Board, Contributors: the Building Department and the Department of Community & Economic Development, reviewed by the Standing Committee on Planning and Zoning
 - Amendments to the Framingham Zoning By-law: Amending Sections I.A, Authority; I.B Purpose; I.C Basic Requirements; I.E, Definitions; II.A, Classes of Districts; II.B, Table of Uses; II.C, Prohibited Uses; II.D, Home Occupations; IV Dimensional Regulations; V.A, Special Uses; and V.J, Drive-thru Facility Regulations, and amending the By-law for clarification and consistency with the above changes.

Collaboration

The FPB has worked in collaboration with a number of Departments and Organizations to help implement the Master Plan Use Plan, Framingham studies and plans, and on grant opportunities. Below is a list of working collaboration items that the FPB has participated in.

- MetroWest Moves: Through the Mass in Motion/Community Transformation Grant, the Town of Framingham continues to work in collaboration with the communities of Hudson, Marlborough, and Northborough to adopt a healthy community’s initiative. The FPB, along with other key Town departments were instrumental in completing revisions to site plan review, off-street parking regulations, and the Bicycle & Pedestrian Policy, which were items on the MetroWest Moves 2015-2016 work plan.
- Open Space & Recreation Plan, update: The FPB continues to participate in the implementation of the Open Space & Recreation Plan, spearhead by the Department of Community & Economic Development (CED). Through these efforts, the FPB has worked with CED and Conservation Commission staff to develop a parcel prioritization list that ranks all the open space parcels within the Town. Furthermore, in collaboration with CED and the

Conservation Commission the Town has been actively working on other priority initiatives indicated in the Master Land Use Plan and the Open Space & Recreation Plan relative to the preservation of open space, the development of trails and trail connections, etc.

- Transit Oriented Development, Central Business District Zoning: The Town undertook a much needed major rezoning effort of the Central Business (CB) Zoning District. A Special Town Meeting vote created the CB District on November 9, 1999, accompanied by a Zoning By-Law that set special provisions for projects in the CB District. A Special Town Meeting, voted to approve Article 13, Mixed-use Regulations, on October 25, 2000, thus allowing mixed-use and mixed-use complex projects within the CB District. Subsequently, the Framingham Planning Board adopted the Central Business (CB) District Design Standards as part of the Planning Board Rules & Regulations on March 27, 2001. Although 16 years passed with no action taken on this initiative, CED implemented a plan of action with the FPB to successfully revise and gain Town Meeting approval of the new CB District By-Law and expanded Zoning District boundaries shown in Figure 8: Central Business (CB) District boundaries, adopted in 2015.

The new CB District By-Law was developed as Transit Oriented Development (TOD) style zoning in order to allow for a mixture of development types that would provide a connection to available public transportation, most particularly the Commuter Rail Station in downtown Framingham.

- Framingham Development Handbook: The Development Handbook, which subsequently became known as “Plan-Build-Grow” development process reviewed Town permitting procedures, identified issues in the process, and revised to better serve all users. The Development Handbook and Plan-Build-Grow was initiated by the FPB, developed as in collaboration to reflects the spirit and commitment of all those involved.

Technology & Process Improvements

Below is a brief summary of the FPB technology and process improvements related to increase in the use of technology:

- Project Files – Archived FPB files were successfully scanned into Laser Fiche. FPB can now electronically send requested files via email, decreasing time searching for files, and eliminating the use of paper.
- Plan-Build-Grow - The Development Handbook is now available on the Framingham.gov webpage by clicking the Plan-Build-Grow button.
- FPB Website – Since 2014 the FPB has continuously improved access to public information by making land use applications and projects under review available on the FPB website. During 2015 additional features were added to the FPB website to provide increased availability of information to the public. Those improvements include a slide show of each project’s existing conditions, the dates of public hearings, a direct link to the minutes relative to the project, as well as an aerial map of the project property and surrounding area, and other important documents. In addition, the FPB website provides all background information related to zoning for Town Meeting thus allowing public access as well.

- Electronic Application – New in 2015, is the ability to file digital applications online and make electronic submissions. Although it remains a legal requirement to retain one paper copy of all submitted materials, the allowance of electronic permits has greatly improved streamlining the process while increasing transparency.
- ACCELA – The FPB in collaboration with Technology Services finalized the development ACCELA program which allows Town departments to review all land use applications online, ultimately reducing the need for paper plans and providing applicants with a more thorough review. Through ACCELA departments can review and make comments in addition to review what other departments’ comments are regarding a project, in addition to providing reminders if a reviewer has not submitted comments on a project.

Framingham Planning Board Goals for 2015

The FPB has set many goals for the 2016 calendar year. These goals have been developed by the members of the FPB as recommended by the Master Land Use Plan and through ongoing project planning efforts.

2015 Planning Board Goals in Accordance with the Master Land Use Plan

Goals from the 2014 Master Land Use Plan:

- 5.1.1 Comprehensive Revision to Town Land Use Regulations
 - Recodification of the Framingham Zoning By-law (on-going)
 - Revised and update Section V.B. Historic Re-Use(expected at Fall Special Town Meeting 2016)
 - Revised and update Section V.H. Affordable Housing (expected at Annual Town Meeting in 2016)
 - Revised and update Section V.L. Land Disturbance (expected at Fall Special Town Meeting in 2016)
- 5.1.2.3 Target Areas on Corridors Identified for Rezoning
 - 5.1.2.3.2 South Framingham (expected at Fall Special Town Meeting 2016)
 - 5.1.2.3.4 9/90 Corridor Corporate Center and Technology Park (expected at Annual Town Meeting 2016)
 - 5.1.2.3.6 Saxonville and Nobscot Center
- 5.1.3 Conservation of Open Space, Agricultural Lands, Natural and Historic Resources
 - 5.1.3.1 Agricultural Preservation
 - Expansion of the Transfer of Development Rights Receiving Areas
- 5.1.4 Transportation
 - 5.1.4.2 Complete Streets
 - Complete Street Designation, Chapter 90I
 - Apply for Complete Street Grant Funding
- 5.2.9 Specific Area Strategies
 - 5.2.9.9 9/90 Corporate Center and Technology Park - Develop a cohesive plan for these two districts that allows for future expansion of the Framingham economic development base

Other Planning Board Goals for 2016

- Continue the implementation of the Recodification of the Framingham Zoning By-Law work plan
- Complete the update and amendments to the Framingham Subdivision Rules & Regulations
- Complete the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- Work with the Department of Community & Economic Development, the Department of Public Works, and other key Town Departments to apply for State Complete Street Funding
- Work with the Open Space & Recreation Committee to acquire land grant opportunities
- Increase open space preservation opportunities throughout the Town

2016 Planning Board Office Goals

- Continue to work in collaboration with Town Departments to enhance the Town's planning efforts;
- Continue to collaborate with the Standing Committee on Planning and Zoning emphasizing FPB goals
- Increase the FPB number of likes and feeds on Facebook;
- Continue to improve Plan-Build-Grow to increase public information related to project review and applicant information; and
- Continue to update and revise the Planning Board webpage to increase public access of review of projects and planning efforts.