

Master Plan Committee

Meeting Minutes

November 19, 2025

Begin at 7:02pm

1. Attendance: John Charbonneau Town Planner, Rich Preston, Linda Brown, Bob Minarik, Bob Moran, Mike Zwicker, Meg Schlesman, Ross Smith, Carol Gogolinski, Gordon Larrivee, Rebecca Lavalley, Dan Mascroft and Margaret Bacon. Rob Leonardi excused.
2. Minutes of October 29, 2025. Dan Mascroft would like to see noted during the Right to Farm discussion that nuisance complaints would be a change from what we do now. Linda Brown will review the recorded meeting and note the change that in regards to the nuisance complaints. Bob Moran motions to approve the minutes as amended. Bob Minarik seconds the motion. Carol Gogolinski and Meg Schlesman abstain. The motion passes.
3. Quarterly Reporting: Bob Minarik states the monthly reimbursement was delayed this month because the Finance Director was unavailable to sign warrants. Bob submitted the reporting 3 hours ago. He will cc all the parties involved.
4. Land Use discussion continued: Emily Glaubitz and Sam Carter are here from CMRPC. Chris Pupka, Town Accessor, is present to give us further information on the Industrial Zone. Last meeting there were questions about why there was underlying Industrial Zone included in the State Forest Open Space Zone (SFOS). He states there is no harm leaving the underlying Industrial Zone as is. From the assessment standpoint it does not change anything because industry would not be allowed after the state acquires it. The state does not give us additional tax revenue now for Industrial Zone parcels they own than any other zones. There are also many state-owned parcels that are not included in the SFOS Zone. This is because the state acquired them after the town voted to create the SFOS Zone. Emily will let Gabe know that we are looking for an updated map that encompasses all the state-owned land that is in addition to SFOS Zone and create a new plan for us with different shading and description key.

Dan Mascroft left the meeting at 5:27pm.

We ask Gabe to look into parcels that have split zoning and how we can correct that.

Gabe could work on Light vs Heavy Industrial Zones. John Charbonneau would like to make sure the definitions of light & heavy be included. Noise in regards to traffic can also be included in Heavy Industrial Zone. Light Industrial could mean processing inside of a building.

5. Photo Contest: The contest is up and running and we have received a new flyer. The only comment is photos submitted need a caption from the contestant stating the Douglas location/importance. Bob Minarik spoke to the Town Administrator in regards to using our grant money for gift cards. Using grant money for gift cards is not allowed. We will solicit donations from Douglas businesses instead. Emily will pursue this on our behalf. Rich and Bob Minarik will get on the next Selectmen's agenda and find out if we need permission from the Selectmen to accept donated gift cards as prizes for our photo contest and the highest prize amounts acceptable. Donated gift cards could be \$50 and the cover photo winner could be \$100. We discuss that Master Plan members will be allowed to participate in the photo contest but will not be eligible to win the gift card prize if their photo is selected to win. This is because the Master Plan Committee are the contest judges.

6. Population & Housing: Draft Full Chapter

- Emily will make a chart on what exactly Affordable Housing income is in Douglas and include a definition.
 - We need to get a good cross section of comments from our town wide survey.
 - Rich asks Emily and Sam to come up with some models of towns that did higher density, moderate and senior housing with all of the challenges including infrastructure.
 - Sam will bring to the next meeting information that justifies the claim that increasing density brings down housing cost.
 - Mike Zwicker motions to remove the recommended Action Item 'Amend Accessory Apartment Zoning Bylaw that aligns with MGL Chapter 40A'. Bob Minarik seconds the motion. The motion passes. After discussion Ross Smith motions to keep in this Action Item. Mike seconds the motion. The motion passes.
 - Adopt Zoning that facilitates senior housing development.
 - Explore community support for Smart Growth Zoning districts.
 - Adopt zoning that supports pocket neighborhoods of smaller scale homes.
 - Adopt mixed use zoning in village centers.
 - Encourage ongoing community involvement in housing planning.
 - Develop a housing production plan.
 - Explore a committee dedicated to addressing housing and affordability in Douglas. (see next bullet)
 - Support the Douglas Housing Authority in efforts to address housing and affordability.
 - Explore a Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund with an active Board of Trustees.
7. Timeline for our completion of the Master Plan. Emily states we should have finalized all our Master Plan chapters.
8. Emily hands out a Downtown Business Survey she would like us to review and approve at our next meeting. Then she will distribute to our downtown businesses to get their input.
9. Linda Brown reports that the Right to Farm Bylaw did pass at the Nov. 17, 2025 at Fall Town Meeting.
10. Mike Zwicker motions to adjourn at 7:00pm. Rebecca seconds the motion. The motion passes.

Linda Brown

Master Plan Committee

Secretary