

# Future of Franklin

## Advocating For A Better World Together

Franklin Community Advocates, Inc. (FCA) knows that our strength lies not only in the words we stand by, but most importantly through the actions of our initiatives. Our Nonprofit Charitable Organization realizes that by working together we can overcome our challenges much more efficiently, and that is why we have decided to launch FCA.

## About Us

FCA is a 501(c)(3) making all donations tax deductible!

FCA is volunteer driven - no one receives compensation or material benefits.

100% of proceeds are used to support our cause and administrative costs.



## Debut issue

Franklin Community Advocates **P.1**

FCA's Legal Challenge **P.2**

Strauss in the News **P.3**

Franklin City Meetings Calendar **P.4**

## Who Are Franklin Community Advocates?

Citizens that demanded Strauss Brands, LLC's slaughterhouse not be approved and worked to inform fellow neighbors about the proposal have come together to form an official non-profit community group, Franklin Community Advocates (FCA).

Marcelino Rivera III, founder and director of FCA created the Change.org petition in September of 2020 which now has well over 5000 signatures opposing the Strauss project. Other Franklin residents aggrieved by lack of ethical behavior and failure to consider citizens complaints have joined Rivera on the Board of Directors.

## Board of Directors

### Marcelino Rivera III

Executive Director

### Gabrielle Jolly

Assistant Director

### Dave Sorensen

Director of Finance & Legal

### Kelly Hersh

Director of Communications & Marketing

## Mission

- Upholding Integrity in decisions that impact community health, environment and/or natural resources.
- Holding elected officials accountable by advocating for transparency and ethical behavior.
- Connecting and communicating with others in an effort to build community and practices to improve quality of life now, and preserve it for future generations

## Vision

- Continue growth of our community together while remaining true to the City of Franklin motto: Celebrating Quality of Life

## Values

- Ethically advocating for all citizens, employing integrity, respecting diversity, and operating with transparency, to bring about positive change.



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## Franklin Community Advocates File Lawsuit

A legal challenge (Case 2020CV007031) was filed on December 1, 2020 with Milwaukee County Clerk of Circuit Court by Franklin Community Advocates.

The official legal complaint lists five points of contention with the application and approval; Lack of substantial evidence, Interference with adjacent developments, Contrary to applicable zoning, Inconsistent with Comprehensive Plan (Violation of Wis. Stats. 66.1001), and Violation of Due Process – Risk of Bias.

## Legal Challenge Update

Seven pages of supplemental material, and multiple exhibits have been added to Franklin Community Advocates's Lawsuit. The filing was amended late on December 23rd with Milwaukee County Clerk of Circuit Court.

The amendment specifically compounded information around "impermissibly high risk of bias" of Mayor Steve Olson. Exhibit G contains several screenshots and pictures of text messages from Franklin Mayor Steve Olson. Many of these text messages targeted the wife of a Franklin resident.



"I promised you that I'd work on your concerns. I have. Then you stuck the project up my a\*\* at every opportunity and then had your wife join in. What would you like me to do now?" - Steve Olson, City of Franklin Mayor

Strauss' Special Use application was initially rejected with a vote of 4-2 by the Common Council on October 20, 2020. On November 2nd, Ald. Shari Hanneman, brought the motion back for reconsideration where the council voted 3-3 with Mayor Steve Olson breaking the tie to approve the special use.

The new facility as approved would initially be 152,035 square feet. Strauss also intends to seek an expansion of the new facility in the relatively near future so as to add an additional 112,000 square feet of operational space and an additional 47,000 square foot truck maintenance facility. This is a total of 311,035 square feet, which is in excess of 7 acres of buildings.

FCA and other citizens including the individual plaintiffs organized and began to further investigate the proposal. As part of that it was learned that many required federal and state permits from EPA, WDNR, and MMSD had not been applied for and upon belief have still not been applied for by Strauss.

However, neither the documentary support nor the oral statements

made by Strauss provided actual credible and substantial evidence that the proposed meat processing facility would satisfy the requirements of City Ord. § 15-3.0701, including that the development and operation of the proposed meat processing facility would:

**"...be in harmony with the purposes of the Unified Development Ordinance and the Comprehensive Master Plan; that it will not have an undue adverse impact upon adjoining property; that it will not interfere with the development of neighboring property; that it will be served adequately by essential public facilities and services; that it will not cause undue traffic congestion; and that it will not result in damage to property of significant importance to nature, history or the like;"**

To date, there has not been a single formal impact study provided by Strauss, or required by the City of Franklin, before giving approval of this project to move forward.

The Indian Community School (ICS) has stepped up to conduct the environmental impact study both Strauss and the city failed repeatedly to provide. Despite being censored, and not being recorded on the YouTube stream, one of the speakers at the December 15th Common Council meeting summed up this issue quite brilliantly:

**"Am I the only one in this room that feels deeply embarrassed and remorseful, that between Strauss and the city, we couldn't find a way to produce an objective study to address the concerns of this school and so many of our citizens? Seriously folks, a grade school had to take on the responsibility? "**

Franklin Community Advocates will continue to advocate for equality, transparency, holding city officials accountable and growth within the community. Please join us in making a difference. As a non-profit organization, we depend on donations to fund our operations and keep us going. Donations can be made at [Franklincommunityadvocates.org](http://Franklincommunityadvocates.org)



## “Major Deviation” Encroaches Wetlands

Strauss also appeared before the Planning Commission on December 17th to address remedying a 2015 expansion of the parking lot at their existing facility that “impacted conservation easement areas on the property including wetland setbacks.” The encroachment was noticed while reviewing the file for the site and current aerials of the property after April of 2020 when the applicant contacted the Department of City Development.

A city staff report said, “The nature of the encroachment is serious, as it is into a recorded conservation easement which constitutes a legal commitment by the applicant to protect natural resources.

To use the words of Randy Strauss, CEO of Strauss Brands, “If history is an indicator for the future we will manage our new facility as we have done with the old...” We cannot blindly trust this company to build a massive new facility designed to slaughter initially up to 500 head of

live cattle per day, near upscale residential areas, with wetlands and several significant watersheds nearby. The new facility as approved would initially be 152,035 square feet. Strauss also intends to seek an expansion of the new facility in the relatively near future so as to add an additional 112,000 square feet of operational space and an additional 47,000 square foot truck maintenance facility. This is a total of 311,035 square feet, which is in excess of 7 acres of building.

## “We All Feel Used” Former Employee Tells Her Story



reported on a former employee alleging she contracted COVID-19 at Strauss, because they failed to implement required protections.

“They found the perfect moment to fire us. ... They used us. We all feel used. They knew the situation. They knew everything about our lives. They said there was no problem,” she says. “Why is it that when someone complains about their rights, they get fired?”



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## Join Us Volunteer Opportunities

As a nonprofit working to advocate for community, we depend on motivated, and passionate people to help spread our message.

We are always looking for volunteers but currently seeking individuals with specific skills, or students looking for experience in the following:

- Event Planning
- Journalism
- Blog Writing
- Photography
- And More...

[franklincommunityadvocates.org](http://franklincommunityadvocates.org)

## Strauss’ Current Plant Shut Down

### “Egregious Violation of The Humane Handling Requirements.”

December 10th, USDA released documents on their website showing a “Humane handling and Slaughtering” violation occurred on November 23rd, 2020 at Strauss’ existing facility that resulted in operations being shut down for two days. The letter from the USDA stated “The observations detailed above indicate an egregious violation of the humane handling requirements.”

The following is an excerpt from the USDA’s letter of suspension. “The lamb was hung head

down to facilitate exsanguination for the initial portion of the rail. At the right-angle juncture of the rail, the lamb was placed on a new gambrel and inverted so that it now was hung by the front legs.

The FLS was standing at the jigger’s station as the lamb moved towards her. She noted the lamb



made several efforts to stretch its chin towards its chest, exhibiting a righting reflex. The lamb opened its mouth and vocalized more than once. The FLS touched its corneas. The lamb blinked and was deemed conscious.



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### Donate

Want to join our efforts but not sure where to start? Make a Donation and take advantage of this incredible opportunity to lend your support. It's a great way to contribute to our cause, and every little bit counts towards paving the path for a better tomorrow. Get in touch with us today for more details about how you can help.

### Check

Payable to: **Franklin Community Advocates, Inc.**  
7867 S 83rd Street  
Franklin, WI 53132

### Debit, Credit card or PayPal

Please visit:  
[franklincommunityadvocates.org](http://franklincommunityadvocates.org)

## Upcoming City of Franklin Meetings\*

### [Agendas & Minutes](#)

The YouTube channel "City of Franklin WI" will be live streaming the Common Council Meeting so that the public will be able to watch and listen to the meeting. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8tEtPPK3JPRd51pTjTjK-w/featured/>

- [Common Council](#)

**Common Council Chambers**

Tuesday, January 5, 2021 @ 6:30 PM

Tuesday, January 19, 2021 @ 6:30 PM

**Meeting Dates:** 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of the month

- [Plan Commission](#)

**Common Council Chambers**

Thursday, January 7, 2021 @ 7:00 PM

Monthly on the first Thursday

**Meeting Dates:** Thursdays of the same week as Council

- [Board of Zoning and Appeals](#)

**Lower Level Conference Room**

Wednesday, January 20, 2021 @ 6:30 PM

**Meeting Dates:** Monthly on the third Wednesday

\*This is not an all inclusive list. Full listing of meetings can be found on the City of Franklin website at:

[City Calendar- https://www.franklinwi.gov/Calendar.htm](https://www.franklinwi.gov/Calendar.htm)

