

Harvard Charter Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2016
Town Hall

Commissioners: Paul Cohen, Cindy Russo, Peter Warren, Rick Maiore, Stephanie Opalka, Charles Redinger, George McKenna

7:00 PM.....Meeting called to order by Chair, Paul Cohen

7:05 PM.....Minutes of September 1 deferred to next meeting

7:10 PM.....Discussion with Planning. Members present: Kara Minar, Chair, Michelle Catalina, Erin McBee & Fran Nickerson.

Responding to Paul Cohen's charge of a unified land use group in town hall, Kara Minar felt that the planning board's broad scope of activities would question a full time planner. She also felt that Harvard's unique growth has protected us from most of the pressure felt by adjoining towns. There is a definite reluctance by PB members to relinquish direct responsibility, however continuing the use of contract assistance on a project by project basis was a definite advantage. Michelle Catalina felt that the cost of a sitting full time planner might be more than Harvard needs. Commissioner Ron Ostberg pointed out that town responsibilities have become more sophisticated for all groups and increasingly require more expertise than is usually available from a volunteer group. Cindy Russo felt there was a definite advantage to have unified direction from a town administrator.

8:15 PM.....Discussion with Conservation Commission: present; Paul Willard, Chair, Wendy Sisson, Don Ritchie, Joan Ward & Jim Burns

Paul Willard felt that communicating wetlands regulations was a big problem; he indicated the commission had to deal after the fact with many issues. He wondered how new people could be made aware of these conditions. Paul felt the Conservation Commission was "working fine," but felt communications could be improved. A full time land development group in town hall also met with some resistance. Wendy Sisson felt that it would marginalize volunteers she thought that volunteers could handle most situations. However she also indicated that if we did decide to hire professionals great care should be given to working with volunteer groups.

9:10 PM.....Paul Cohen announced that the next Charter Commission meeting would be Sept. 22 and the Pond Committee, Library and Park & Rec were the invitees.

9:15 PM.....meeting adjourned