

**HARVARD PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 16, 2014
APPROVED: JULY 14, 2014**

Chairwoman Kara McGuire Minar opened the meeting at 7:30pm at the Town Hall meeting room under M.G.L. Chapter 40A and the Code of the Town of Harvard Chapter 125

Members Present: Kara McGuire Minar, Erin McBee, Joe Hutchinson, Tim Schmoyer and Don Graham

Others Present: Liz Allard (LUB Admin.) and Bill Scanlan (Town Planner)

Board Member Reports

Schmoyer thanked the members of the Planning Board for coming out on Saturday to attend the Economic Development Committee (EDC) public forum; with a special thanks to the Chairwoman for reaching out to the EDC Chair. The Town Planner was praised for his PowerPoint presentation at the forum. The information exchange with residents was great. The EDC looks forward to seeing how things will go from here.

McBee reported the Hildreth House Improvement Committee (HHIC) has asked for an opinion on the proposed driveway as part of the Phase I improvements; McBee has not had been able to review the plan and the Bylaw as of yet. The HHIC is currently determining the phases for the work to be completed; McBee will send the information that she has received to date. McGuire Minar requested Scanlan to reach out to Council on Aging Director to see where the process is at.

Hutchinson stated the Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) is still waiting for revised draft on transportation and circulation working papers. The cultural and natural resources papers have been reviewed by Historic Commission and other folks; the MPSC approved it. There were 235 responses to the Master Plan survey that closed on Friday. Hutchinson has asked the MPSC to consider workshops in the fall for Devens, town center and the commercial district. MPSC agreed to a workshop on Devens. Hutchinson will press to have a workshop on the commercial district.

Planner Report

Scanlan had previously distributed information on the Sustainable Communities Act, also know as Zoning Reform, to the members; he noted the Act has minor tweaks and authorizes site plan approval; municipalities have two years to be come compliant with the changes. In addition, the Act allows for impact fees from developers. McGuire Minar asked if the impact fees apply to Chapter 40B projects. Scanlan stated they would. Another significant change to the Act is to Variances, which makes the requirements to obtain a variance more flexible. Approval Not Required plans now have a two year window that allows for change in use, this would no longer be allowed under the new Act. Finally, Towns could establish voting requirements to adopt zoning and for special permits.

McGuire Minar asked what Scanlan thought were some of the negative impacts to the changes. Scanlan stated some of the changes require approval from the regional planning commission; municipalities feel this is another hoop to jump through. McGuire Minar asked if Scanlan had any sense of other Towns opinion. Scanlan stated he did not. Schmoyer felt most of the changes were opted in options and not mandatory. Scanlan agreed that many of the changes are local options and some are not.

Scanlan noted there is a new grant program from the Department of Housing and Community Development for Planning Assistance Towards Housing. It was suggested Scanlan pass the information onto the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust to see if they have any interest in the grant.

Scanlan noted the Protective Bylaw amendments from Town Meeting have been approved by the Attorney General, with the exception of adult entertainment provisions, which is still under review. There was a comment from the AG in regards to the cell tower amendment and members discussed if there is any value in pointing out that this is how it is in Charlton. Scanlan stated he did not believe so as it does not deter the Town from being able to co-locate on the Town, it just points out that they are responsible for the cost to do so.

Meet with Planning Board Nominee to the Historic Commission – Ken Swanton

Ken Swanton, the Chair of the Historic Commission, and the Planning Board's nominee to the Commission was present to update the members on the Commission's activities. Swanton gave details on his background. Swanton explained the Commission is responsible for the two historic districts in Town and that changes to homes in those districts need to come before the Commission. Typically the Commission has four to five applications a year for such activities. The Commission has been involved in the re-building Powder House and has been working with Town Hall Building Committee on the renovations to Town Hall. The Commission has established a new website, which contains a list of historic places in town. Also, the Commission has actively been removing the trees around the Shaker cemetery to aid in its preservation.

Swanton stated the Commission will be working towards a demolition delay bylaw, such as that in Bolton. This bylaw requires there to be a specific time delay in demolishing a historic structure, in which an applicant must wait, in order to attempt to preserve historic sites and homes. Swanton wants to be certain the Commission irons out all the details before bringing it before the Planning Board.

Swanton noted he had seen the Planner is working on design guidelines for Town Center; he asked that the Planning Board keep in mind that the Historic Commission has design guidelines on their website, which apply to structural design only. In addition, the Historic Commission is an advocate for the historic Town Center. McGuire Minar asked if the Commission has considered including the Hildreth House in the historic district. Swanton stated it has been talked about, but the Commission feels it has been well maintained and are working the Hildreth House Improvement Committee on the renovations.

In a personal plea, Swanton requested, as a resident of the Town Center, that the Planning Board not change the town center from residential to commercial.

McGuire Minar asked that Swanton visit the PB annually to update them on the activities of the Commission.

In a final point, Swanton stated the Commission will be rolling out a plaque program real soon for houses that have significant historical value here in Town.

District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Update

Scanlan reviewed the tasks on the scope of work outlined by Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC). MRPC has requested Scanlan be the liaison and to work with them to set up public forums. Scanlan stated if the members have any comments or suggestions to let him know and he will get them to MRPC. It was stated that maybe this work can better aid in the Master Plan efforts to gather information on the Town Center. Scanlan stated there will be the need to determine the boundaries of Town Center for this study, whether it be the historic district and/or sewer district or some

variation there of. Schmoyer agrees that it should include the sewer district. Scanlan stated the current zoning has made everything in the town center non-conforming and they should work from there when determining the boundaries of the town center. The goal is to try and bring what here into some reasonable zoning changes.

Approve Invoices

Allard stated the following invoices have been received for payment on the next bill warrant.

- William Scanlan - \$2280.00 (Town Planner)
- RKG (MPSC Consultant)

Schmoyer made a motion to approve the invoice for Scanlan for inclusion on the next bill warrant.

Graham seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

After a brief discussion, McBee made a motion to approve the payment of \$3200.00 for public communication only for RKG for inclusion on the next bill warrant. Hutchinson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Approve Minutes

Schmoyer made a motion to approve the minutes of May 5, 2014 as amended. McBee seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

McBee made a motion to approve the minutes of May 19, 2014 as amended. Schmoyer seconded the motion. McGuire Minar abstained from the vote. The final vote was 4-0.

Graham made a motion to approve the minutes of June 2, 2014 as amended. McBee seconded the motion. McGuire Minar and Hutchinson abstained from the vote. The final vote was 3-0.

Right of First Refusal – 121 Old Littleton Road

Allard stated the Conservation Commission (Concom) is working along with the Harvard Conservation Trust (HCT) on a possible purchase of the land at 121 Old Littleton Road. The Concom and HCT will be meeting again on June 19th. Scanlan asked if there is any interest from the Planning Board in regards to Master Plan goals that would make it of interest. Members agreed to table the discussion until the Concom and HCT have made a decision.

Discuss Role & Responsibility of Liaisons/Representatives

At the last meeting members discussed three choices as to how to handle this item. Hutchinson stated a fourth choice maybe a handbook similar to the one Stow has completed. Scanlan thinks the easiest thing to do would be to amend Chapter 133, Planning Board Regulations. The members discussed adding language for consultants to the general information of Chapter 133 and remove from Special Permits, as to cover all decisions made by the Planning Board. McGuire Minar asked Scanlan to look at other Towns language for liaisons. In addition the members discussed adding a section about the first meeting after an election being that of a strategic planning season for the upcoming fiscal year.

ZBA Thank You Letter

McGuire Minar stated the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) had sent a letter to the Planning Board thanking them for the effort they put forth to amend 125-3 of the Protective Bylaw. McGuire requested permission from the members to draft a letter back to the ZBA. All agreed to the request

Adjournment

McBee made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:36pm. Schmoyer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

The meeting was re-opened at 9:36pm on a McBee/Schmoyer motion to request members to send summer vacation schedules to the Land Use Administrator. The meeting was re-adjourned at 9:38pm on a McBee/Schmoyer motion.

Signed: _____
Liz Allard, Clerk