

**HARVARD PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 3, 2020
APPROVED: DECEMBER 7, 2020**

Chair Justin Brown called the meeting to order at 7:02pm virtually in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, under M.G.L. Chapter 40A and Code of the Town of Harvard Chapter 125

Members Present: Justin Brown, Fran Nickerson, Stacia Donahue, Jane Biering, Gwen Leonard and Becca Kelley (Associate Member)

Others Present: Christopher Ryan (Director of Community and Economic Development), Beth Williams (Council on Aging) and Matthew Flokos (Harvard Press) David Tivnan (Verizon Wireless) and Rick Maiore

Review Proposals for Outside Consultant for Cello Partners Application at 12 Woodchuck Hill Road & Schedule Site Walk (Public Hearing to open on August 17, 2020)

The Board discussed the proposal for peer review of this application in conjunction with the Zoning Board of Appeals. The public hearing is scheduled to open on August 7th. After concluding Ryan should check references and follow up on a few of the scope items, Leonard made motion the Planning Board engage Isotrope, LLC for the peer review of applications for 12 Woodchuck Hill Road before both the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals, once Ryan approves their references and receives confirmation of written report and scope as part of the proposal. Donahue seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion by roll call vote; Donahue, aye; Nickerson, aye; Biering, aye; Leonard, aye; and Brown, aye.

Ryan will send out a doodle poll for a site walk next week and will provide a map to the site.

Updating the 2005 Town Center Action Plan

The Planning Board discussed the need to update the 2005 Town Center Action Plan to allow for uses on smaller lots without the need for a variance, such as the addition of garage. Ryan noted some of the action items within the Plan had been completed; whereas the more complex items have not been achieved. Ryan suggested a form-based code for a Town Center bylaw. Ryan recommended the development of a Town Center sub-committee. Ryan estimates six months to update of the Plan with the assistance of a consultant. Assistance from Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) was suggested. Once the Plan is updated the Board can proceed with recommended zoning amendments. In regards to assistance from MRPC, District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) grant would be the likely source, but the quality of that product may be in question; it was agreed DLTA could be used as an alternative to an outside consultant.

Brown stated this sub-committee should include stake holders from Town Center. Ryan stated some of the original members from the 2005 committee were still in Town and might be willing to volunteer again. Biering feels that spending more money on another study might be a waste when we already have a study. Ryan suggested that maybe just having an implementation committee. Biering does not feel like another report serves the Town well at all. Ryan stated having a consultant and/or sub-committee would assist in moving this forward, as staff is already overstretched. Both Brown and Biering agreed that distilling the Plan down to some clear action points and seeking assistance with the action plan by sub-committee may be the best direction. Lucy Wallace, Ron Ostberg and Erin McBee should be consulted to determine where the Plan was last left.

Round Robin with New & Existing Board Members

Brown suggested a round-robin format for discussions between current and new members of the Board in order for the new members to get up to speed on Planning Board activities. Members

agreed to this idea. Allard will send out pairings tomorrow and it will be up to the members to find a time to meet.

Housing Initiatives Outreach

It was recommended the Board reach out to Arm and Arm, Council on Aging and the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust for partnerships in reaching housing goals in Harvard.

Board Member Reports

Nickerson will meet with Beth Williams, from the Council on Aging, to discuss the Senior Residential Development bylaw.

Biering has made initial connections with the boards/committees she is the liaison for in regards to Master Plan implementation.

Leonard has begun discussion with those around Town in regards to the scenic road bylaw and making it stronger.

Director's Update

Ryan reported his attempts to re-start an economic development group has not received any traction, but hopes that something might get rolling soon.

Ryan stated he hopes the Climate Resiliency Working Group will turn into a more permanent Sustainability Group, such as that in other communities.

In regards to proposed bylaw amendments for Special Town Meeting in October, Ryan stated the more complex the bylaw, the more time is required prior to taking it forward to meeting. Ryan shared his Open Space Residential Development timeline and list for how to proceed.

Approve Minutes June 1, 2020

Donahue made a motion to approve the minutes for June 1, 2020 as amended. Nickerson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion by roll call vote; Donahue, aye; Nickerson, aye; Biering, aye; Leonard, aye; and Brown, aye.

Review Draft Transportation Advisory Committee Charter

Donahue's comments from last time have been incorporated. Some additional amendments were made to make sure that more Harvard residents, members-at-large, are included; especially North Harvard will need to be included. Nickerson pushed back on this, as all transportation activities would impact all of Harvard's residents. Ryan added an additional line in the charter stating the committee should consider community outreach in areas to be impacted by various projects. Ryan will share the draft charter with other committees to get additional feedback.

Draft Senior Residential Development Bylaw

Ryan stated removing the affordability section may assist in getting the bylaw passed at Town Meeting. A separate bylaw for affordable housing could be dealt with at a later Town Meeting. Nickerson stated most seniors in Town do not qualify for the low income/affordable component. Donahue asked Nickerson if she was for or against breaking out the affordability section as its own bylaw? Nickerson was unclear in her response.

Ryan reviewed the tables and development sizes that were adjusted to allow for smaller projects on parcels that are 2-5 acre in size. Brown noted that some of the provisions in this Bylaw mirror that of the Open Space Design Bylaw; concerned that if the two bylaws are conflicting there would be an issue at Town Meeting. Ryan reviewed the density bonus section to give developers options and flexibility. The Board felt this is good as each project is going to be different. Beth Williams, from the Council on Aging, stated some seniors had pointed out that limiting to 2-bedrooms did not work if there were possibly seniors living together plus a live-in home health aide; would prefer to have three separate bedrooms. Leonard stated a lot of houses on small

acreage might be tricky; having a hard time trying to figure out how to protect Harvard's rural character and open space when you are cramming a lot of houses on a small lot. Ryan stated he hopes our design guidelines and design review process would lend itself to warding off the bad layouts and bad designs. Williams stated we need to watch the local preference, as these developments could become occupied by non-residents. Ryan is optimistic that this Bylaw can be on the warrant for the Fall Town Meeting.

Draft Open Space Design Bylaw

See Director's Update

Adjournment

Nickerson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:24pm. Donahue seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion by a roll call, Donahue, aye; Nickerson, aye; Biering, lost communication; Leonard, aye; Brown, aye.

Signed: _____ Liz Allard, Clerk

DOCUMENTS & OTHER EXHIBITS

- Planning Board Agenda, dated August 3, 2020
- Expert Review of Wireless Facility Applications, Isotrope, LLC, 503 Main Street, Medfield, MA 02052, undated
- CityScapes, Consultants, Inc. Proposal for Third Party Review and Evaluation, Verizon – 12 Woodchuck Hill Road, dated July 16, 2020
- Director's Update, August 3, 2020
- Draft Planning Board Minutes of June 1, 2020, prepared by Liz Allard
- Harvard Transportation Advisory Committee, undated
- §125-58, Senior Residential Development, V2, undated