

**HARVARD PLANNING BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 17, 2014  
APPROVED: DECEMBER 15, 2014**

Chairwoman Kara McGuire Minar opened the meeting at 7:11pm in 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, Don Graham and Michelle Catalina

**Others Present:** Liz Allard (LUB Admin.), Bill Scanlan (Town Planner), Maren Caulfield (Harvard Press), Sam Lawton (MRPC), Rochelle Greayer and Jon Bishop (Nashoba Publishing)

**Board Member Reports**

Graham stated the Economic Development Committee has not met, therefore there are no updates.

The Municipal Affordable Housing Trust (MAHT) had a public forum last week in regards to the development of affordable housing at 166 Littleton Road (aka The Poor Farm). The feedback from the general public at the forum was not good; people are very angry and not happy with the number of units being proposed for the location. The Request for Proposals only received one bidder, a non-profit company known as Metro West Collaborative Development, Inc. As proposed all of the units would be rental and affordable. The Chair requested the Land Use Administrator obtain a copy of the proposal from the MAHT. This is proposed as a Local Initiative Project; therefore it will come before the Planning Board for that process.

**Planner Report**

Scanlan stated he has drafted revisions to the Adult Entertainment provision of the Protective Bylaw. Those revisions have been sent to Town Counsel, who has replied with comments. The Attorney General (AG) indicated they would want to see either a by-right use rather or a special permit with specific criteria to remove Planning Board discretion. The by-right provision may not be well received in Harvard. Scanlan suggested he send the revised provision to the members for any comments and then to AG for review. McGuire Minar asked if any other towns have a bylaw that fit the new criteria. Scanlan believes the only issue with the AG's office is the requirement of a discretionary Special Permit, thereby revising the provision to be by-right should satisfy the AG's concern. Members agreed to review the revisions for discussion at the next meeting.

**District Local Technical Assistance Grant Survey Results**

Scanlan gave an overview of the program, which was administered through Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC). The program looked at the current uses in the commercial district, along with future use of the district. A survey was sent to the property and business owners within the district. Sam Lawton, of MRPC, was in attendance to present the final report to the Board. Lawton noted the survey was sent to property owners and business owners rather than the Town residents as it was geared toward what would make the district more user friendly to businesses rather than what types of business would be desired in the district.

Members began discussing language changes, but opted to pause the discussion to discuss the next agenda item. The discussion continued once that item was completed.

### **Discuss Final Members for the Commercial Design Standards Task Force**

McGuire Minar stated Rochelle Greayer was in attendance to discuss an appointment to the Commercial Design Standards Task Force. Greayer stated she is a landscape designer, who has studied in England for 12 years, is an author, editor, magazine writer, blogger and has been employed in the development and management of large software projects in the aerospace and defense, publishing and communications industries. An overview of the task force's charge was discussed. Greayer asked about available material to work from. Catalina stated in 2010 there was a visual survey completed of what people may want to see in the commercial district; which she will make available to the Board and the members of the task force.

Graham made a motion to appoint Rochelle Greayer to the Commercial Design Standard Task Force. Catalina seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **District Local Technical Assistance Grant Survey Results (Continued)**

Lawton stated there were five tasks in the scope of work, the report mirrors that scope. Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) contacted the Town of Ayer to determine what, if any, development they may have in the works that would compete with Harvard. Maps of business in commercial district, assessment of parking, and site observations were included in the report. MRPC also reviewed building permits and assessor's information, and conducted business and property owners' survey. The matter of the low return rate on surveys was discussed in the context of is the information gathered useful with such a low response rate.

The Board would like to see the report revised to include an effort in determining what the businesses are in the commercial district. The Board requested the Town wide map be removed, as it may not be completely accurate. The information gathered in regards to the building permits needs to be clarified; it appears the information contains more than just building permits from the commercial district. The Board would also like to have the assessor's field cards for the commercial district. Catalina stated she would like the report to have a table of contents, a summary of the results, and overall summary of each section. After further discussion it was agreed upon to remove the building permit information until it is determined why it is relevant to the commercial district. In addition, the information the Board is seeking from the assessor's should be a snap shot of the values.

Lawton agreed to return to the Board on December 15<sup>th</sup> with a revised report as discussed this evening.

### **Approve Invoice**

The following invoices have been received for payment on the next bill warrant:

- William Scanlan - \$2400.00 (Town Planner)
- Hamwey Engineering - \$900 (188 Ayer Road Review)

Graham made a motion to approve the invoice for William Scanlan. McBee seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

McBee made a motion to approve the invoice for Hamwey Engineering. Catalina seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **Approval Minutes**

McBee made a motion to approve the minutes of November 3, 2014 as amended. Graham seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **Update on Community Preservation Act Funding**

With Hutchinson absent this evening and is the Board's liaison to the Community Preservation Committee the Board agreed to table this discussion until the next meeting.

### **2015 Protective Bylaw Amendments**

The Town Planner reviewed the potential Bylaw amendments for the 2015 Annual Town Meeting. Those amendments include: Adult Entertainment District; Storage of earthen materials; wellhead protection areas; defining grocery store; 125-18 Accessory Apartments (requested by ZBA), Zoning Map and amending cross references and fixing typos throughout the Protective Bylaw.

Allard explained the ZBA will be meeting on December 10<sup>th</sup> to review the proposed changes to Chapter 125-18 Accessory Apartments, at which Scanlan will be in attendance and can report back to the Board on December 15<sup>th</sup>.

McGuire Minar stated there have been efforts put forth to draft a warrant article for the creation of a Planning Department to include a full-time planner; McGuire Minar is not sure the timing and amount of work in front of the Planning Board is sufficient enough to call for such a position. McGuire Minar would like to discuss this further when Hutchinson is available. Catalina asked if there has been a joint discussion with the other land use boards on this matter. McGuire Minar stated there has not. The subject will be further discussed at the next meeting.

### **Approve & Sign Decision for Global Signal, 47 Poor Farm Road**

Scanlan stated the Board has still not received the required bond from the applicant. The Board agreed to hold off on signing the decision until the bond has been received.

### **Approve & Sign Site Plan Approval – 188 Ayer Road**

Scanlan had previously distributed the Site Plan Approval for Samantha Realty Trust, 188 Ayer Road. The members had no questions or comments on the decision as drafted. McBee made a motion to approve the Site Plan Approval for 188 Ayer Road. Graham seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **Revisions to Chapter 133/Policies & Procedures**

With Hutchinson absent this evening the Board opted to table this discussion until the next meeting.

### **Administrative Planning Board Matters**

McGuire Minar reviewed the guideline for planner and is looking for a way to keep a handle on the process of what is going out the door and what products are being produced. Scanlan thought by creating a process that may be difficult; it could discourage other committees or boards to seek assistance from the Planner. McBee suggested a scheduled time for meeting the Planner each week. Catalina wants the boards to be flexible in the timeframe to get things done. McGuire Minar feels there is not enough accountability right now and would like to tie that down.

### **Adjournment**

Graham made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:02pm. McBee seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Liz Allard, Clerk

## EXHIBITS & OTHER DOCUMENTS

### **District Local Technical Assistance Grant Survey Results**

- Business Conditions Assessment in C District, prepared by Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, November 2014