

Harvard Agricultural Advisory Commission (HAAC)

Town of Harvard, MA

Minutes of Meeting March 27, 2019
Approved: April 24, 2019

Present: Kerri Green (chair), Rob Duzan, Laura McGovern

Green called meeting to order at 7:15. Minutes of January 30, 2019 were read and approved. Motion to approve minutes brought by McGovern, second by Duzan. Approved.

Green advised of membership with the Massachusetts Farm Bureau and associated cost of \$25.00. Motion to approve invoice for \$25.00 brought by McGovern, second by Duzan. Approved.

Commission reviewed all present members compliance and receipt of ethics training.

Green reported on 2020 budget meeting. Discussed requesting a future meeting with Don Ludwig, Chair of Finance Committee and Rich Maiore from the Select Board.

Commission discussed the MVP program with a focus on the shortcomings of the MVP workshop. Commission discussed and agreed 2nd workshop did not provide any new information from the 1st workshop and was rather a simple 101 introduction.

Commission discussed upcoming MVP workshops scheduled for April 11th and April 25th. Commission agreed the workshops should focus on; range of vulnerabilities, hazards, goals, actions and priorities.

Commission reviewed the protective bylaws concerning the Groundwater Overlay. Discussed the State's position that wells, even if inactive, cannot be removed unless decommissioned by the State.

Commission reviewed and discussed changes to the protective bylaw and heard concerns from members that the bylaw does not indicate where data for the overlays has come from.

Commission reviewed State's position on protective bylaw redlines and disagreement thereof. Current redlines do not meet the requirements of a groundwater compliant community.

Commission reviewed State's proposed draft suggesting zoning requirements apply to new uses and not existing uses. Commission discussed concerns over broad and ambiguous language in the protective by-law.

Commission members advised of concerns over whether manure is classified as a hazardous material as defined in the protective by-law.

Commission discussed the need to withdraw the current protective by-law from the town meeting and revisit the first redline version.

Commission further discussed concerns over the Town's proposed ability to enter properties in the overlay district.

Member Nicole Schmidt – present 7:59 p.m.

Commission revisited concerns over baseline measurements for groundwater data. The commission further discussed and agreed the current draft regulations are redundant with regulations at the State level and overly burdensome.

Commission reviewed and discussed possible ramifications for Town of Harvard's noncompliance with groundwater standards. Commission discussed and reviewed concerns regarding composting relative to ground water protections and hazardous material definition.

Commission discussed and reviewed current draft of Erosion Control bylaw. Commission agreed current draft is redundant and overly burdensome. The commission agreed that the current permitting process has sufficient erosion control protections. The commission further discussed concerns over lack of definition into categorizing minor vs. major permits.

Commission discussed the need for a "shall issue" minor permit. Commission discussed and reviewed members concerns over adding to the draft bylaw protections language that would prevent developers from creating and then abandoning foundation dig outs.

Schmidt brought motion that the Commission present recommendation that the current Erosion Control draft is redundant, unreasonable, and overly burdensome to the homeowner. McGovern 2nd motion. Approved. Green will meet with Planning Board to provide the Commission's aforementioned input.

Commission discussed and reviewed members' desires to invite Ag business owners to express concerns and how the commission can provide assistance and advocacy. Commission agreed to table discussion until next meeting so that members could further brainstorm on potential business owners.

8:48 Motion brought to close meeting. Seconded. Approved.

Submitted: Rob Duzan