

Harvard Council on Aging
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, June 6, 2017

Present: Deb Thomson, Hank Fitek, Beth Williams, Victoria Hayao, Bruce Dolimount, Sue Guswa, Fran Maiore, Carol Lee Tonge, Katie Petrossi
COA Director Debbie Thompson, recorder/alternate Connie Larrabee,
Friends of the Council on Aging representative Sharon Briggs

This special meeting of the COA Board of Directors was convened at 4 p.m. at Hildreth House. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the likely impact of proposed plans for renovation or new construction of Hildreth Elementary School.

Deb Thomson opened the discussion by expressing her concern that the high cost of the elementary school project would delay consideration and approval of the Hildreth House Phase 2 renovation/expansion plan indefinitely.

Deb invited each board member to express an opinion about what the COA's position on the school project should be. In general, the board members all agreed that the school project is inevitable in one form or another, and that the COA should support it with the expectation that younger voters will support the Phase 2 project in turn.

The board further agreed that the COA's main objective now should be helping seniors deal with the tax implications by identifying and promoting creative and flexible ways to ease the tax burden on older residents. While they remain committed to advocating for Phase 2, board members agreed nothing would be gained by pitting the school and Hildreth House projects against each other.

As a start, Katie agreed to work with Debbie on creating an easily digestible guideline of existing tax-relief programs and services for seniors. Deb, Victoria, and Carol Lee will help with that project. Further discussion of this issue will be on the board's June 20 agenda.

Sue Guswa and Hank Fitek agreed to attend the June 6 selectmen's meeting when a discussion of the school project was scheduled. Sue consented to present the COA's views during the public comment period.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Connie Larrabee, recorder