



## Harvard Climate Initiative Committee

### Meeting Minutes of March 9, 2023

The meeting convened at 7:36 pm on Zoom

Members: Present: Jefferson Burson, Ellen Sachs Leicher, Deborah O'Rourke, Jaye Waldron, Lucy Wallace, Brian Smith, Rich Marcello

Staff Present: Pat Natoli

Guest:

Stacia Donahue

#### **1 – Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Jefferson moved to accept the minutes of February 23, 2023. Lucy seconded the Motion. Accepted unanimously.

#### **2 – Implementation Plan**

Jefferson attended the March 2, 2023, meeting of the Conservation Commission to discuss the Commission's role in the Natural Resources aspect of the CAP. The Commission is uncomfortable taking on the Lead role as they believe their involvement should be strictly related to wetlands issues, and the scope for the CAP goes beyond this. The Commission expressed a willingness to provide education/outreach on wetlands and invasive species related to that. Jefferson said that the HCIC will take on the Lead role, while the Commission will help where it can.

Other Committees have expressed the concern that being the lead for a particular Focus Area might be outside their purview and not be appropriate for that particular Committee. HCIC Liaisons can step in to help the Committees by taking on more of a lead role. Liaisons can reach out to the Lead Committee to get on their agendas and bring any concerns back to HCIC. Each liaison needs to report back by April 27.

Pat reported that the Hazard Mitigation plan was accepted by the Fire Dept. A warming center will be established when needed and better communications with National Grid are being worked on.

### **3 – Events Update**

The movie “Biggest Little Farm” will be screened tomorrow night at Volunteers’ Hall.

Earth Day presentations will be more robust than last year with 16 locations, at least 20 community organizations/vendors at HES, and 10 vehicles for the “petting zoo.” More volunteers are needed to help at homes such as registering visitors, timing admissions to the houses, directing parking, etc. Senator Jaime Eldridge and Rep. Dan Sena are expected to attend.

### **4- Environmental Assessment**

Discussion ensued on a proposed zoning bylaw amendment submitted by a town resident and private developer for an area on Ayer Rd. The Select Board heard the proposal and sent it to the Planning Board, which will hold a public hearing on March 20. The developer is presenting the amendment at a public meeting on March 16<sup>th</sup>. The Bylaw will need to be presented and voted on at Town Meeting. If the Bylaw passes, the Planning Board will create regulations to implement the Bylaw. However, they should make sure that wetlands and their buffer zones do not count as Open Space.

Ellen and Christiane reviewed the Bylaw through the climate lens of the Environmental Form HCIC has drafted. HCIC members suggested several aspects that the Bylaw should address including additions to make it more climate friendly and in-line with the Town’s climate goals. A climate mitigation or comprehensive climate plan should be added to the Bylaw, if it is not too descriptive.

Rich, Jefferson, Ellen, and Lucy will work on potential additions or changes to the Bylaw. Staci mentioned that comments can be submitted to the Planning Board by the 20<sup>th</sup>.

The Planning Board is almost finished with the Open Space/Residential Zoning bylaw to be presented at Fall Town Meeting.

The Transportation Advisory Committee received a grant for assistance in preparing applications for additional grants, one of which is for gaining access to connect Old Mill Road to Devens for a biking/walking path.

### **5 – Other Business**

Some HCIC members terms expire at the end of June and need to be renewed (approved by Select Board).

Lucy and Staci attended the Science Fair.

A question was raised as to how climate adaptation aspects, such as adding solar to one’s house, could be allowed in the Historic District, other than placing them away from the street where they cannot be seen (which is what the Historic Commission currently allows).

The HCIC will next meet on March 30.

Meeting adjourned: 9:03 pm