

**HARVARD PLANNING BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
July 31st, 2023  
STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION**

**Members Present:** Richard Cabelus, John McCormack, Doug Thornton, Stacia Donahue and Arielle Jennings, (departed at 9:20pm)

**Others Present:**

Frank O'Connor (Town Planner) and Vittoria Konstantinidis (Administrative Assistant for Land Use Dept)

**1. Review Policy & Procedure**

- Planning Board Handbook (inserts) – existing members received necessary supplements
- Attending Citizen Planning Training Collaborative Training Sessions – These sessions are offered throughout the year and provide an annual conference in March at Holy Cross. Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) Sessions – These are also available throughout the year. Affordable Housing session is on October 5<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am – 12:00pm. Funding is available for members/staff to attend.
- 1-on-1 Training with new members/Role of the Staff – Staff is always available to provide necessary training and guidance to the board members.
- Social Media – Members were reminded that the Town has a website that is used to disseminate any necessary information pertaining to the Planning Board. Best not to react on social media – keep it simple and direct to website if necessary. Next Door Harvard may be a place to try and recruit new members and possibly post something in our own words prior to Fall Town Meeting.
- Improve Planning Board applications and instructions (§133) – Goal is to have applications correspond with rules and regulations. Due to the fact that Frank and Vittoria are the first line of engagement, they will prioritize which rules and regulations are most compelling. Goal is for board to revise one a month. John suggested that we should establish a tracking method related to how many site plans, special permits, erosion control, etc. have gone through Planning Board.

## 2. Master Plan

- Reviewed Progress of Implementation
- Need estimated budget by end of the year – (what did it cost in 2016? How much did town spend? Where did money come from? Capitalization?)
- John will take the lead with organizing for Master Plan update
- Review Select Board FY2024 Goals – There was no overlap regarding Select Board, nothing related to Planning Board.
- Recruit staff to create master plan – who will be on the committee?

- **Funding for 2026 update**

Determine what 2016 Master Plan cost. Next step prepare budget – need to bring to Spring Town Meeting for a vote. Need to recruit from other committees, (Peter organized last time). Select Board should carry after Planning Board starts ball rolling. Rich will take to the Select Board. Frank will speak with Tim Bragan regarding the procedure and needs to be put on agenda - recurring. Frank will also speak with Jared regarding budget from 2016. Doug can find a list of people who participated. Frank and Doug can form committee, (Frank will look at costs and Doug will look at who was on and how they got recruited). Timeframe benchmark – November 1<sup>st</sup> 2023.

- Review Select Board FY2024 Goals  
There is nothing on Select Board relating to Planning Board
- List Planning Board Priorities and Goals for FY2024  
In PB Meeting: 1.) Master Plan, 2.) Recruiting and Revision 133, 3.) Design Review Board  
In Town Mtg: 1.) Open Space Bylaw, 2.) MBTA Overlay district Bylaw, 3.) Ayer Road Vision Plan and 4.)Town Center Zoning.
- Future Direction and Vision
  - Frank noted water/sewer issues limit Harvard’s growth
  - PFAS treatment will impact all private and public water supplies
  - If a private developer connects to Devens, how will that impact Ayer Road? Who can connect? How will they connect?
  - How does Town regulate water supply? Can the Town regulate?

## 3. Proposed Harvard Center Overlay District ( for Subordinate Structures )

- John asked about establishing a real boundary around the town common and Harvard Historic District.
- Frank voiced concerns about the 2’ setback in the proposal.

#### **4. Transportation Advisory Committee**

- Try to bring back shared use path
- Possible MART van from Hildreth House and COA to Littleton Train Station in Climate Action Plan and Master Plan
- Arielle mentioned that Newton put it in writing that a shuttle runs every 10 minutes to train, (something to think about with Ayer Road Overlay but will not run as often).

#### **5. Ayer Road Corridor**

- Mass DOT Transportation Improvement Project (TIP)
  - 75% meeting for TIP (approved money for engineers and lawyers)
  - We need to put in our Bylaw to address traffic
- C-District: Water – Economic Development
  - Both Staci and John asked if Minco will bring water to Ayer Rd.
  - Frank added that if a developer brings water, then the Town needs to negotiate to help more than just the single developer if possible.
- Vision Plan – Phases 2 & 3 with UTILE
  - Frank and Vittoria met with them via zoom. They will have a schedule. Want to meet with the board and/or a small group of people initially to get a sense of what the town wants. Will be coming out in early September to take a drive around and meet with Frank.

#### **6. Housing Production Plan/ Inclusionary Bylaw**

- Housing Choice Initiative Program
  - Affordable Housing Committee needs to engage them according to Arielle. No capacity to look at SHI. DSD is responsible for getting numbers from Fed's.
  - Need professional help / John is concerned about the numerator in the calculation for SHI.
- 40B development at Old Mill & Ayer Roads (Robbin Lane) parking.
  - Frank spoke about how each unit gets 1 ½ parking spaces. This will not be enough, especially as their children get older and get their license and when people come to visit or someone delivers items.

**7. Protective & General Bylaw Amendments**

- Fall Annual Town Meeting 2023
  - Ayer Road Form Based Code
  - Possibly (3) others, (OSC-PRD?)
  
- Spring Annual Town Meeting 2024
  - John would like something for the MBTA overlay district
  - Potential MBTA-3A overlay district
  - Town Center Zoning District (125.18-2 – (Proposed) Harvard Center Overlay District for Subordinate Structures) See attached matrix for agreed upon schedule of bylaws/town meetings.

**8. Appoint Liaisons and Representatives**

- Montachusett Regional Planning Commission – Stacia Donahue
- Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee – Stacia Donahue
- Design Review Board – Richard Cabelus
- Historic Commission Nominee – Richard Cabelus
- Climate Initiative Committee – Stacia Donahue
- Harvard/Devens Jurisdiction Committee – John McCormack
- Open Space Committee – Doug Thornton
- Transportation Advisory Committee – Stacia Donahue
- Master Plan Implementation:
  - Water & Sewer Commission – Richard Cabelus
  - Conservation Commission – John McCormack
  - Community Preservation Commission – Doug Thornton
  - Municipal Affordable Housing Trust – Arielle Jennings
  - Energy Advisory Committee – Stacia Donahue
  - Select Board – Richard Cabelus
  - Bare Hill Pond Watershed Management Committee – Arielle Jennings
  - Board of Health – Doug Thornton
  - Parks and Recreation Committee – Arielle Jennings
  - Department of Public Works – Richard Cabelus
  - Historic Commission – Richard Cabelus

## 9. Miscellaneous Items

- Relocation of Land Use Boards & Building Department Office
  - We do not have an exact moving date. Waiting for phone system to be installed.
  
- Associate Member(s)
  - We have lost Brian Cook and need to have an associate.
  - May advertise on Next Door Harvard
  
- Design Review Board (vacancy)
  - Brian Cook?
  
- Montachusett Regional Planning Commission
  - Meeting in person on Thursday
  - Want help with grant writing
  
- Grants
  - List of grants we are responsible for.
  - Broken down and review every quarter

John MacCormack made a motion for the meeting to be adjourned at 9:40pm. Staci Donahue seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion by roll call, Arielle Jennings, (left at 9:20pm); Doug Thornton, aye; and Cabelus, aye.

Planning Board Annual Goals FY24

Bylaws

Prioritize	Goal	Description	Timeline	Lead(s)	Quality Metrics
#1	Amend Open Space bylaw (OSC-PRD)	Finalize amendment. Bring to Fall ITown meeting.	Fall 2024 Town meeting		
#1	Engage in community outreach about Open Space bylaw (OSC-PRD)	Secure grant funding to build capacity to conduct community outreach. Create an outreach plan. Execute plan.	August to Fall 2024 Town Meeting		
#2	Multifamily Zoning bylaw and overlay district	Establish the overlay boundaries. Finalize draft of bylaw.	Boundaries - Dec 2023 Bylaw draft - Dec 2023  Bring to Spring 2024 Town Meeting  December 2025 must be fully complete	Stacy and Frank	

#2	Community Outreach and Engagement for the Multifamily Zoning bylaw	Secure funding to support capacity for outreach, create plan, execute plan.		By 2024	1000 hours
#3	Ayer Road Vision (Phase 2)	Continue and complete Phase 2 that was started last fiscal year.	January 3, 2024		
#3	Ayer Road C-District Form Based Code Vision (Phase 3)	Begin and fully complete Phase 3 to develop Form Based Code	June 2024  Bring form based code to Fall 2024 town meeting		Phase 2 complete  Phase 3 complete  Proposal prepared for Fall town meeting
#3	Ayer Road Vision Community Outreach and Engagement	Create a plan for community outreach and engagement to raise awareness about Ayer Road Vision project and Form Based Code	June 2024 - Fall Town Meeting		
#4	Town Center Overlay District Zoning Bylaw	Develop draft overlay district bylaw.	Draft complete July 2024  Bring to Spring 2025 Town Meeting	Rich	

Fall 2023

- Open Space Bylaw

Spring 2024 Town Meeting

- Multifamily Zoning and District

Fall 2024 Town Meeting

- Ayer Road Vision Form Based Code
- Possibly 3 others

Spring 2025

- Town Center Overlay

In Meeting

Priority	Goal	Description	Timeline	Lead(s)	Quality Metrics
#1a	Form a Master Plan Implementation & Evaluation Committee	Determine project lead. Examine past recruitment processes and methods and develop a recruitment approach. Recruit members.	November 1	Doug	# of committee members
#1a	Develop budget and procure funding for Master Plan	Determine costs from last year and solidify the funding amount. Prepare a budget for the 2026 Master Plan. Engage with the Finance Committee. Vote at	Spring Town meeting	Frank	SB approval of budget and funding

		Spring Town meeting			
#2a	Revise Chapter 133 Rules and Regulations	Streamline and modernize the rules and regulations for Planning Board rules, applications and instructions. Update website and applications to reflect changes.	1 per month Complete by end the fiscal year	Frank and Victoria	11 sections completed  All website changes made  All application changes made