

**HARVARD PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 24, 2016
APPROVED: AUGUST 1, 2016**

Chair Kara McGuire Minar opened the meeting at 7:01pm in Volunteer's Hall at 4 Pond Road, under M.G.L Chapter 41 Section 81D

Master Plan Steering Committee Members Present: Lucy Wallace, Didi Chadran, Victor Normand, Jaye Waldron, Doug Ludwig, SusanMary Redinger

Planning Board Members Present: Kara McGuire Minar, Erin McBee and Michelle Catalina

Others Present: Liz Allard (LUB Admin.), Bill Scanlan (Town Planner), Paige O'Brien, Vicary Maxant, Stanley Muphy, John Osborn, Kathy & Pete Jackson, Chip deVillafranca, Ken Swanton, Billy Salter, John Ruark, Tim Hatch, Alice von Loesecke, Kathy Restic, Robert Brown, Matthew Mostoller, Paul & Marty Green, Eric Ward, Danielle Miller, Steve Colwell, Juan Loveluck, Kate Pullano, David Hopper, Doug Thornton, Bonnie Chandler, Regina Fitek, Emma Franzeim, Dana Hollinshead, Bonnie Heudoefer, Nancy Lancellotti and Alice Bartram

Major Findings of the Harvard Master Plan

McGuire Minar provided an opening statement in regards to the background of the Master Plan. McGuire Minar thanked the Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) members, past and present, as well as the Town Planner, Bill Scanlan for the effort put in to complete the Master Plan.

Scanlan presented the PowerPoint© presentation over-viewing the Master Plan. Scanlan stated tonight is the first step in implementing the Master Plan. Scanlan provided an overview the statue under MGL Chapter 41 §81D. Scanlan reviewed the public process to date. Scanlan stated the Plan has four themes; each having goals and an action plan for achieving those goals. After a review of those themes and goals by Scanlan public comments were taken.

Tim Schmoyer, of Stow Road, asked if there is an economic development supplement as required by the statue. It was stated there is not, but the Plan includes the recommendation to complete an economic development plan.

Schmoyer asked about shade trees along rural roads; does the Town have any cost estimates on maintaining trees around power lines. It was sated the Town does not, however recent activity by the Department of Public Works (DPW) to clear brush and tree removal along the roadways has prompted the Planning Board to work with Tree Warden & DPW. Lucy Wallace further explained the Board of Selectmen's authorization for activity within the right-of-ways of the Towns roadways.

Schmoyer asked if the goal within the Action Plan to develop a comprehensive deer management strategy included reducing the spread of Lyme disease. McGuire Minar stated the control of deer populations goes go hand and hand with reducing the spread of Lyme disease. Schmoyer suggested adding reducing Lyme disease to that goal.

Schmoyer asked if someone could define the appropriate mix for Devens and the Town. McGuire Minar stated there is 458 acres available for development within Devens. A recent report from Montachusett Regional Planning Commission detailed the leakage of services that are not available in Town. Harvard's

current commercial district allows for a significant number of uses. The Planning Board is working to expand those uses without over burdening the area. Population and school enrollment have declined across the State; seniors are staying in their houses longer; these trends will require the Planning Board to look at re-codifying the zoning bylaw along with the possibility of integrating Devens back into the boundaries of Harvard.

Billy Salter, of Elm Street, stated the Plan seems to him to fit together and sounds terrific, but there are two problems the Town has had and are getting worse. The first is the painful graph detailing the annual town meeting attendance. The second is the deteriorating state of volunteers. In addition, Salter stated the gorilla in the room is Devens. It is a complicated matter that is going to have to be dealt with. McGuire Minar stated the consultant on the Master Plan, Burns & McDonnell, completed a deeper dive into the implications of Devens. McGuire Minar encouraged all to read that report. Survey results showed residents want a resolution in five years; that is a big task to complete in that time. Harvard needs to be working with the two other towns to write the recommendations for Devens to the legislators.

Ken Swanton, of Fairbank Street, applauds the MPSC for looking at the impacts of Devens to Harvard throughout the Master Plan. Swanton notice the Town of Shirley has worked with Mass Development to achieve certain goals within their town. In the future, the Planning Board may want to think about what the Town needs are and how Mass Development can be a resource to achieve those goals. McGuire Minar stated that everyone agrees that as the Town, with the largest amount of land within the boundaries of Devens, Harvard needs to work together as a community to take advantage of the resources available from Mass Development. Victor Normand stated Devens was designed as a project; at some point the project gets completed; once the development areas are sold off the project is completed. That some point in the future is getting to be soon. What the State or Mass Development considers complete is unclear, but it is important for a date to be set in regards to a determination as to what to do with the historic boundaries of Harvard within Devens. This Master Plan is intended to help move the ball down the field, by providing very helpful information. Making the decision and how to deal with that decision will take years. The Master Plan has provided some clarity on the impacts to Harvard as it pertains to resuming jurisdiction of Devens. This process of doing so needs to be an on-going discussion that spans the life of this Master Plan. Perhaps Devens will be the vehicle on what Harvard will look like in the future.

Sharron McCarthy, of East Bare Hill Road, asked about the Town of Shirley and the land they received from Devens. McGuire Minar stated the situation in Shirley is different than here in Harvard.

John Osborn, of Park Lane, asked about the recommendation to re-zone the commercial district. McGuire Minar stated it has been suggested in order to support smaller businesses that may actually exist in the agricultural-residential district.

Bonnie Heudorfer, of Stow Road, stated she feels the time frame for Devens is aggressive. Heudorfer stated this is the fourth Master Plan that states Harvard lacks diversified housing and she wonders where a suitable location is in Town for this type of housing. Heudorfer expressed concerns with the circulation and access to Devens. McGuire Minar noted the Planning Board is proposing an assisted living facility provision to the Protective Bylaw as an allowed use at the annual town meeting. In addition, the construction of Bowers Brook on Ayer Road adds to the diversified housing stock within Town. Several other initiatives are being sought by the Planning Board for future town meetings, including modifying the Open Space and Conservation – Planned Residential Development provision of the Protective Bylaw, and the addition of an overlay district to allow for the clustering of smaller dwellings.

Paul Green, of Old Littleton Road, thanked the members of the MPSC. Green asked if AirBNB's are allowed in Harvard. McGuire Minar stated currently such a use would only be allowed within the commercial district, but there is a goal to look at expanding the allowable uses within the agricultural-residential district.

Marty Green, of Old Littleton Road, stated that Harvard Help has become aware of local services that were previously in Town that have now extended out of local areas; this needs to be factored into the transportation for seniors. McGuire Minar explained the vision of the commercial district and making it more main-street friendly. Green stated she was talking about connections to Boston and other parts of the State. McGuire Minar explained how funds from the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority can be used for improvements to public transportation.

Nancy Lancellotti, resident of West Bare Hill Road, asked about the development of Devens and how the Town of Harvard is involved in the housing and the zoning of Devens. Normand stated Harvard adopted a re-use plan twenty years ago, which is how Devens is developed. Any approvals for development need to apply to the Enterprise Commission. There is an expectation that the zoning in Devens will remain when and if Harvard takes back its historical boundaries.

Michelle Palmer, of Westcott Road, stated Harvard residents are leaving town to spend money; she wondered what initiatives are planned to bring in the businesses the community is seeking. McGuire Minar detailed the attempts to bring businesses to Town by the Economic Development Committee.

Emma Franzeim, of Eldridge Road, stated there is no momentum in Town to welcome business to Town. Franzeim suggested creating an opportunity to have an open dialog with existing businesses in Town. McGuire Minar explained the potential to create a department that can be pro-active in visioning the district.

Bonnie Chandler, of Prospect Hill Road, stated small ideas have been done with volunteers in the past and can still be accomplished that way, saving the Town money. Chandler would like to see access to Devens and improvements made within the commercial district. Chandler is also interested in the creation of paths to get people from one place to another; for example Still River Road along the causeway.

Approve Invoice

Allard stated the Board has received the following invoice for inclusion on the next bill warrant.

- Burns & McDonnell - \$3776.00

Catalina made a motion to approve the above mentioned invoice. McBee seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Adjournment

Catalina made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:57pm. McBee seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Signed: _____
Liz Allard, Clerk

Document:

Harvard Master Plan Public Hearing PowerPoint©, dated March 24, 2016