Select Board
Minutes
Tuesday, December 3, 2019 at 7:00pm
Town Hall Meeting Room, Harvard, MA

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chair Alice von Loesecke in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Select Board members Lucy Wallace, Rich Maiore and Kara Minar were in attendance as well as Town Administrator Tim Bragan, Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro and Executive Assistant Julie Doucet. Board member Stu Sklar was absent.

Tax Classification Hearing
Regional Assessor David Manzello and Associate Regional Assessor Mike Saltsman were present for the annual hearing when the Select Board determines the percentage of the Town's property tax levy to be borne by each major property class.

Saltsman explained 15 applications were received for the first year Harvard has implemented a Means Tested Senior exemption. After review of the applications it was determined 11 of the 15 qualify. The estimated amount awarded is $37,474 in total exemptions. .

Saltsman and Manzello recommend the Select Board adopt a single tax rate to be applied to all classes of property. On a Wallace/Maiore motion, the board voted unanimously to adopt a single tax rate understanding 3% additional cost to residential property owners due to the senior tax exemption.

Manzello noted additional communities have begun to opt for the split rate however in Harvard this would negatively impact the farmers. Minar asked Manzello to investigate removal of open space in agriculture from the commercial base.

Permanent Building Committee appointment
Guy Hermann introduced himself as a new resident in town who is interested in giving back to the community. His professional experience as a Master Planner for cultural organizations has given him a strong background in facility planning for cultural and other projects. He is sensitive to budget constraints. On a Minar/Maiore motion, the board voted unanimously to appoint Guy Hermann to the Permanent Building Committee.

Environmental Assessment Form update
Energy Advisory Committee members Ellen Leicher and Brian Smith came to recommend use of the Environmental Assessment Form. They have visited with various boards/committees and received positive feedback. Leicher was happy to report the Capital Planning & Investment Committee decided to begin including the form as part of their process. She is ready to share the form with all boards/committees/departments and is deciding the best location for posting of the information on the town website. The Select Board members support the initiative and encourage others to use the form.

War Monument Restoration Committee update
Committee Chair John Schoenberg said the seven member committee began in 2016 to restore, replace, refurbish or create monuments. They completed restoration of the World War II memorial on the town common. This restoration was funded by grants and private funding. The committee will focus their efforts on the Civil War monument and the tablets outside of the meeting room. The garden club has agreed to assist with grass plaques similar to those found in Littleton Ma.

Minutes
On a Wallace/Maiore motion, the board voted unanimously to approve minutes of 11/5, as presented.

Public Communication
Billy Salter, Elm Street, (Appendix A)

Ron Ostberg, Warren Avenue, (Appendix B)

Paul Green, Congregational Church, (Appendix C)

Resident from Poor Farm Rd, believes it is a mistake to do this project. He likes the ability to just drive in and out onto Still River Road instead of being forced to use just a small entrance area. He expects the new configuration will create a bottleneck and issues for delivery trucks. He is grateful for what Scott Hayward has done for the town center.

Ethan Pride, 14 Ayer Rd, has lived on the common for many years and raised three children who walked many times from the schools. He is a fan of sidewalks however he is not a fan of the proposed plan. Pride is happy to participate in a process to create a plan better suited for the town center.

Bob O'Shea, Old Littleton Rd, served on the Park & Recreation Commission and has been involved in many discussions around the land between the General Store and the church. He thinks a sidewalk would be better served along that parcel of land instead of along Still River Road. A path has already been formed there from children coming down Ministers path from Bromfield and then cutting over to the store.

Pam Marston, Historical Commission Chair, (Appendix D)

Della Jennings, 51 Ayer Rd, expressed concern for the area near CK Bikes. The exit onto Mass Ave is very dangerous. She suggested the sidewalk be continued around the building.

Greg Kilner, Owner of CK Bikes, reiterated what Jennings said emphasizing the importance to improve safety in that area.

Nate Finch, Codman Hill Rd, understands the importance of the parking area to the General Store. Finch noted various communities have installed sidewalks. He too views the town center as very important community resource and it is obvious residents have not been informed well enough on the Complete Streets proposal. Finch asked the Select Board to implement better methods to share information with town residents instead of residents having to come to you.

Trevor Smedley, Depot Rd, commended the community for speaking out strongly with their concerns. He was impressed with the process being used for the Environmental Assessment Form earlier on the agenda and is hopeful this approach will be used in the future. Smedley gave an analogy about the difficulties encountered when you have varied viewpoints but desire the same outcome. He stressed the importance of listening to other perspectives.

Alice von Loesecke read into the official record emails the Select Board received from residents unable to attend the meeting. (Appendix E)

Margaret Nestler, Cruft Lane, expects the Select Board to act as a neutral party and to listen to concerns being expressed. She is disappointed and finds this meeting to be disrespectful. She thinks the plan designed does not make sense for traffic, the community and circulation of pedestrians. She is unhappy there is no connection to the schools.

Von Loesecke gave a brief summary of the history, background and process with respect to sidewalks in the town center. Her presentation included photographs from the 1800's, Master Plan recommendations and a listing of previous committees that have worked on these issues such as the Town Center Planning Committee.
Von Loesecke said the Complete Streets plan basically reflects very well what other previous committees have recommended.

DPW Director Tim Kilhart has been working with the Department of Transportation (DOT) to pass a Complete Streets Policy and develop a Prioritization Plan. His timeline is tight to get bids requests out in anticipation of starting the project in the spring; further delays could jeopardize the grant funding.

Minar reminded members of the public the Select Board members are volunteers who have listened diligently over the past few meetings and ask to receive the same civility they have shown. She asked for civility from members of the public. She would never wish to damage the beauty of our town center however this grant program has awarded Harvard a large amount of money which affords us a great opportunity to final do what has been studies and analyzed but never accomplished.

Von Loesecke reiterated what she said earlier that the proposed plan is virtually identical to previous plans supported by the community. Kilhart gave the plans he had to the engineering firm.

Rich Maiore appeared confused on why the process proposed by Ostberg could not be followed however realized further delay could result in a loss of grant funding which he agreed was not ideal.

On a Wallace/Minar motion, the board voted to approve 50% construction plans dated 11.12.2019 for the Complete Streets project in the center of Harvard at the intersections of 111/110 with an understanding sidewalk width will be 4ft as opposed to 5ft. Wallace thanked Kilhart for all his hard work.

Maiore expressed his frustration with the continued issue about lack of communication. He is unhappy with the process and plan but will vote favorably in an effort to not lose the funds being granted.

Minar pointed out how impossible it is to address issues that take on a life of their own on the neighborhood network Next Door Harvard. She agrees a better communication plan is necessary. Von Loesecke added the Town Charter instructs the Select Board to focus on policy and delegate work to be done which is exactly what was done in this situation.

The Select Board decided to hold an additional meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 10th when they can finalize details such as paver styles and concrete tinting. Kilhart will invite the engineering firm to attend as well.

Per their policies and procedures, the board voted unanimously to continue the meeting past 10:00pm as posted but will not act on agenda items; Select Board goals or reports.

Town Administrator Report

- DPW Director has informed me that all of the tests done on well #5 since they super-chlorinated it have come back negative for coliform and the well is back on line. Kudos to Tim and Ron for working with all involved to rectify the issues with this well.
- Ann Lee Road Field was completed before Thanksgiving.
- An energy company has sent out a mailer soliciting residents to sign up for green energy. This is not the Town's contractor. Residents do not have to do anything in order to get green energy with the Town's vendor.
- Resident Lucas Thayer will hold an outreach meeting the week of December 19th for a marijuana cultivation site to be located in Harvard. Once official notice is received it will be shared.

- After 32 years of service, Lt. Greg Harrod – is retiring from the Harvard Fire Department – Julie has prepared a proclamation that needs your signatures.
- Scenic Road update
- Town Hall will be closed on Wednesday, December 18, 2019 at 12:30 for the annual Town Employee Christmas gathering. We will also close at 1:00pm on Christmas Eve Day, Tuesday December 24, 2019 and will be closed on Christmas Day, December 25, 2019 and will reopen at 10am on Thursday, December 26, 2019.
- Transfer Station Holiday Hours: The Transfer station will be closed on December 25th and January 1st but will be open on Thursday, December 26th and Thursday, January 2nd from 6:30am - 11:30am.
- Just a reminder that the Annual Licensing Renewals will need action at the second meeting in December.
- The Moderator is currently looking for two people to serve as Associate Members on the Finance Committee.

Old Library Accessibility Project – Final payment
On a Wallace/Maiore motion, the board voted unanimously to approve final payment to Rinaldi Inc. for $27,142.00.

Old Library course of action
Sobalvarro reported after review of the report from Gale Associates on the slate roof and masonry wall evaluation the Permanent Building Committee (PBC) are seeking direction from the Select Board. The members were in agreement full replacement of the roof is the direction to take. They are aware the cost is high.

Open Space Committee Representative
On a Wallace/Minar motion, the board voted unanimously to nominate Rich Maiore as the Select Board Rep. on the Open Space Committee.

**** On a Wallace motion, the Board voted unanimously by a roll call vote:
(Maiore – Aye, Minar – Aye, von Loesecke – Aye) to enter into executive session at 10:37pm, as authorized by Chapter 30A, Section 21.3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. The Board will reconvene into open session only to adjourn. ****

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15pm.

Documents referenced:
Tax Classification Hearing – FY2020 dated 12.3.2019
Hermann vol form – dated 1.9.2019
Environmental Assessment Form – dated 12.3.2019
Old Library pay request – dated 11.18.2019
Old Library Gale Report – dated 11.18.2019

Appendix A

Presentation to the Select Board, December 3, 2019,
concerning "Complete Streets," by Billy Salter

When Harvard was established in 1732, the common area was about 30 acres, encompassing land well beyond what we think of as the Common. By 1782, it included only about 16.5 acres, due to gifts to Ministers, use for municipal and religious buildings, and the like. And in 1831, it was down to under 10 acres. Indeed, Nourse, in his *History of Harvard*, published in 1894, lamented that "Harvard early began an unwise alienation of portions of her common to private uses, in apparent disregard of the bequest from the Lancaster proprietors; thus sadly diminishing the extent of her public park (p. 130)." A century and a quarter after Nourse's criticism, we risk making a similar irrevocable mistake.

The Town Center Historical District was made a local Historic District in 1975, and placed on the National Register in 1997. Such honors also confer obligations, obligations which the DPW "Complete Streets" plan ignores.

It is the geographic, functional, and historic center of town: roads radiate from it to neighboring towns like spokes on a lopsided wheel; municipal buildings, religious institutions, businesses and gathering places are clustered there; people use the Common for picnics, sledding, and spontaneous play; and town events take place on it. And, of course, the town center contains a dense tapestry of historic New England architecture, from the early 1700's to the late 19th Century.

Paradoxically, the Common's central location and frequent and varied uses can lead us to take it for granted: there it is, and there has it always been. Nevertheless, we all know that the town center in general and the Common in particular are invaluable historical gems; realtors invariably show potential buyers the center and Bare Hill Pond, as they should.

The Complete Streets Funding Guidance distributed by DOT recognizes the importance of such historical elements; indeed, it seems to give their preservation rhetorical priority. It says: "The overall goal of this approach is to preserve and enhance scenic, aesthetic, historical, and environmental resources while improving or maintaining safety, mobility, and infrastructure conditions."

It also says that: "As part of the evaluation process, municipalities may also wish to consider potential impacts to right-of-way, environmental resources, cultural/historical resources, and environmental justice as criteria."

Our "Signed Complete Streets Policy" was responsive to this guidance. "Transportation infrastructure may be excluded from this policy, upon approval by the Selectmen, where documentation and data indicate that … construction would create significant adverse impacts to streams, wetlands, flood plains, or scenic and historic resources."

And it goes on to affirm that: "Harvard has a beautiful and historic Town Center and many of its rural roads are designated as Scenic Roads under G.L. c. 40, §15C. Accordingly, all proposed projects and improvements will be evaluated in the context of Harvard's

community character and quality of the neighborhood. Complete Streets principles include the development and implementation of projects in a manner that is sensitive to the community's physical, economic, and cultural setting. The context-sensitive approach to process and design shall consider the needs and values of both stakeholders and the community and encourage participation of those affected in order to gain project consensus. The overall goal is to preserve and enhance scenic, aesthetic, historical, and environmental resources while improving and maintaining safety, mobility, and infrastructure conditions."

To achieve this, Harvard promised that the Complete Streets planning process "shall work in cooperation with other departments, state and federal agencies, and adjoining towns to implement Complete Streets." ("Shall," in this contractual document, has the defined meaning of a legal commitment, not just a sincere intention.) And that "The Town will promote inter-departmental coordination among all Town departments to achieve the most responsible and efficient use of resources for activities within public rights-of-way."

But, in fact, there have been no efforts to "consider … significant adverse impacts to scenic and historic resources." Or to evaluate the plan "in the context of Harvard's community character and quality of the neighborhood." Nor any evidence of attempts to be "sensitive to the community's physical, economic, and cultural setting" or to "promote inter-departmental coordination among all Town departments." Though Harvard promised a "context-sensitive approach to process and design [that] shall consider the needs and values of both stakeholders and the community," we have not done so. And the town further promised to "preserve and enhance scenic, aesthetic, historical, and environmental resources while improving and maintaining safety, mobility, and infrastructure conditions." But, again, there have been no efforts along these lines.

In addition, the plan distributed for tonight's Select Board vote is inconsistent with what several Board members have said about the sidewalks. In particular, the plan shows 5'6" sidewalks plus curbing along Ayer Road. However, several Board members have said the sidewalks will remain 4', perhaps with the addition of interior curbing. How can this confusion persist? What are you voting on tonight, then?

This critique is different from objections to specific aspects of the plan, although individuals and groups with relevant expertise have a number of such objections.

In summary, then, the town has ignored its obligations to consider historical context in developing the Complete Streets plan or "the needs and values of both stakeholders and the community." Well over 200 such stakeholders from the community have signed a petition in support of the citizen engagement protocol Ron Ostberg will soon describe.

In order to accept this grant, we believe that the town must rectify these serious failures. We will suggest a community engagement protocol than can achieve this rapidly enough to meet the planned schedule. But that will require both approval by the Select Board of such an approach and active participation of those who have been driving the process. We urge the Select Board to begin this process tonight.

Appendix B

Presentation to the Select Board
Town Center Complete Streets Project
3 December 2019

We come before you tonight to reiterate our concerns about the proposed changes to our Town Center Historic District. At your November 5th meeting we implored you to extend the process and make modifications to incorporate community input to ensure that the final product both enhances safety and is fully consistent with the historical character of our Common.

That evening we proposed that you convene a meeting to identify the issues, define an engagement protocol, and create a work plan that incorporates it. The purpose of the engagement protocol is to include a broad spectrum of citizen expertise and concerns in the process and make it consistent with the contractually binding Complete Streets Policy signed by the town to qualify for the grant.

You have not responded to our request. However, in the materials provided for tonight's Select Board meeting, a schedule was included, which has enabled us to develop a detailed description of an *engagement protocol which, we believe, is consistent with that schedule*. We ask that you delay your approval of the DPW plan this evening and vote to adopt a robust citizen engagement protocol, either in the form we provide or in a mutually agreed upon variant.

Goals

- Ensure safe pedestrian and vehicular networks
- Preserve the historical integrity and serenity of the Common
- Establish project parameters: opportunities and constraints, schedule, standards, etc
- Adhere to both the letter and the spirit of the Signed Complete Streets Policy
- Take full advantage of the significant opportunity provided by the grant

Process

1. Conduct an Open Meeting
    a. Project representatives present the proposed design
    b. Project representatives identify project parameters: opportunities and constraints, pertinent contract provisions, schedule, estimates, cost/benefit studies.
    c. Citizens, including Boards/Commissions with relevant expertise – whether or not they have official jurisdiction –state their concerns and present their ideas.
    d. Project representatives, including consultants, respond to these concerns and ideas. Discussion would follow.
    e. The group as a whole would identify alternatives to be studied and the evaluation criteria that would be applied to them.
2. The project representatives, including consultants, work with the citizen representatives team to study the alternatives and assess their relative merit.
3. Conduct a second Open Meeting at which consensus will be established.
4. Make modifications, as necessary, and develop a final plan for submission to the Central Register by mid-January, 2020.
5. Open bids on or about March 1, 2020.
6. Award bid to lowest qualified bidder by mid-March, 2020.
7. Construction to begin on or about April 1, 2020, depending on weather.
8. Project completion by the June 30, 2020 grant deadline.

Appendix C

Town Center Safe Streets

A quorum of the Congregational Church of Harvard Property Committee met on Sunday to walk the site of the proposed changes, discuss our concerns, and vote on a group response. I was asked to represent views of the committee. These statements represent our consensus viewpoint.

1. In our opinion, the process followed by the town was faulty. You may have followed the legally-mandated procedure but you made little effort to truly engage with abutters, neighboring residents, or Harvard residents. In the future, we'd like to see the town establish a working group composed of representatives drawn from multiple interested parties to tackle similar projects.
2. Multiple church members not on our committee offered their comments to us. Not a single person supported the proposed plans.
3. We insist that the town hire a professional surveyor to mark the boundary between our church and the highway right-of-way and between our church and the General Store parking lot. This work must not be delegated to the contractor, town employee, or anyone who is not a professional surveyor.
4. We respectfully, and strongly, request that you make every effort to protect our two memorial trees that are placed on the grassy berm in front of our building! One is in honor of Robin Kennedy. (I am still researching the 2nd tree). We expect that both trees will be fully protected. We will look to the town to compensate us should there by any damage to either tree by the workers or their equipment.
5. We note the loss of 2 parking spaces along 110.
6. We intend to closely monitor the users of our driveway once your project is complete. We are concerned for the safety of people and vehicles using our driveway and parking spaces. Should conditions warrant, we may declare the connector between our driveway and the General Store parking lot to be one-way out of our property. We also reserve the right to close the connection entirely.

Paul Green
Old Littleton Rd, Harvard

Appendix C

Town Center Safe Streets - PG Personal Remarks

The following comment is my own personal addition, as I did not have time to run it past the Church Property Committee for their consideration.

1. With the addition of these proposed new sidewalks, I estimate that Harvard will be responsible for around 2000 feet of sidewalks, including the sidewalks alongside the two school properties, around the public library, on the Common, from the Bromfield School up to the Congregational Church, and now in front of the General Store and Congregational Church. While it may be acceptable to not clear some of these sidewalks of snow in the wintertime, since the professed purpose of the sidewalks is pedestrian safety, and since pedestrians are present and active all year, I believe that it is now time to ask the Harvard DPW to clear snow off of these walks in the winter months. If they already have the appropriate equipment, great! If not, I strongly recommend that the Select Board work with the DPW Director to select the appropriate piece of power equipment for approval at the next Town Meeting. I specifically request that the Town repair the walkway which proceeds from the Bromfield School, alongside the Center Cemetery, and up past the Congregational Church. The church's section was rebuilt in 2008 and is in good condition. The Town's section is in terrible condition due to the presence of many tree roots. The walk from the Bromfield School parking lot to the church takes about 90 seconds; to the General Store is probably around 2 minutes. This lot is an excellent overflow lot for the Town Center.

Paul Green
Old Littleton Rd, Harvard

Appendix D

November 20, 2019

Dear (members of Select Board)

We are writing to express our concern regarding the process by which the proposed Complete Streets project in the Town Center was developed. None of the commissions or boards on which we serve were consulted as the project was being designed or asked about its potential impact on the Town Center, one of the Harvard's most important and vulnerable assets. In fact, some of us were actively discouraged from becoming involved.

Failure to consult with the very boards and commissions that are charged with protecting town assets, including the Town Center runs counter to the agreement governing the project as outlined in the "Complete Streets Policy" signed on March 21, 2017 by Kenneth Swanton on behalf of the Board of Selectman. This policy provides a roadmap of how the Town of Harvard will work to "provide safe, convenient and accessible routes for all users" under the Complete Streets program. A substantial portion of the document is devoted to best practices and includes the following language:

> *Harvard has a beautiful and historic Town Center and many of its rural roads are designated as Scenic Roads under G.L. c. 40, §15C. Accordingly, all proposed projects and improvements will be evaluated in the context of Harvard's community character and quality of the neighborhood. Complete Streets principles include the development and implementation of projects in a manner that is sensitive to the community's physical, economic, and cultural setting. The context-sensitive approach to process and design shall consider the needs and values of both stakeholders and the community and encourage participation of those affected in order to gain project consensus. The overall goal is to preserve and enhance scenic, aesthetic, historical, and environmental resources while improving and maintaining safety, mobility, and infrastructure conditions.*

We maintain that the spirit of these guidelines was not followed. Certainly the process did not "encourage participation of those affected in order to gain project consensus".

We are not writing to determine how the process failed or to assign blame, but rather to ask the Select Board to pause the project and allow input from those responsible for the preservation and enjoyment of the Town Center as well as other stakeholders and the community, as originally promised. If, as stated in the Policy, the "overall goal is to preserve and enhance scenic, aesthetic, historical, and environmental resources while improving and maintaining safety, mobility, and infrastructure conditions" then surely it makes sense to involve more than the very few who have made decisions about this important matter.

HHC chair

citizen

Parks & Rec chair

Appendix E

Citizen Emails on Sidewalks

"I am writing to express my support of the Complete Streets program. Thank you for your work and the work of Select Board members for your effots toward safer and more accessible travel options. Being able to walk, bike, and drive in town center is important to me. Not that it takes first hand experience to have empathy, but I DO have first hand experience with mobility problems. I learned to highly value level sidewalks and accessibility enhancements.

Safe *level* sidewalks and clear travel lanes and crosswalks are important for safe access to town center. I believe sidewalks will offer more access to our beautiful and quaint town center. While I do not wish to diminish the parking available to the General Store nor Fivesparks, the benefit clearly outweighs the risks. Curbing and level sidewalks will hardly urbanize the town center that I know and love.

I drove through Barre, MA this afternoon after my child's basketball game.
We both noticed that Barre has lovely and accessible sidewalks in their town center.

Barre is more rural that Harvard. Sidewalks in no way, shape, or form contribute to the urbanization of Barre, MA. I recommend members of the Select Board take a drive out there or see if there are any Google Earth images. It looks great and helps many with accessibility."
Jen Manell
Stow Road

"This may be a moot point by now, but in case it isn't, I would like to be a voice in support of the planned sidewalks in the town center. We're talking about safety and accessibility, both of which are laudable concerns. Times change, and our town should change with it when it makes sense to do so. I believe this is one of those times."
Liz Ruark
12 Orchard Hill

"We are writing in support of the sidewalk project at the center of town. We believe the Selectboard would be doing the right thing by voting to approve the $370,000 "Complete Streets" grant, and to use these funds to provide safety for our children and walkers through the building of sidewalks and safe crosswalks, as previously recommended by several town studies over the last decade."
Jennifer and Brian Sundeen
35 Scott Road, Harvard

"Looking towards our future as a town, our senior population is increasing, and accessibility will be an issue sooner than we all want. But seniors shouldn't be your only concern. Disabled, those on crutches, those using walkers, those pushing strollers, and the general safety of every resident and visitor should be at the forefront of your minds.

In the Town Center Action Plan, it was noted as imperative that we make our town center pedestrian centric, not vehicle centric. I believe that making the town center intersection safer meets this goal. Further, I believe that adding sidewalks and improving existing sidewalks is a must. I have walked in the street with my children and felt unsafe. I have walked in the mud, as I know you have as well. Not supporting the needs of all of our residents would be negligent.

I implore you to support the Complete Streets grant as proposed. This is an opportunity we have been given, and we should be grateful for the chance to make the improvements we so need."
Jennifer Finch
165 Codman Hill Rd

"We elect select board members to make executive decisions, and/or appoint others to do so. The town voted 12 years ago to give the control of sidewalks to the select board. In my opinion, this is not some shadow campaign to disenfranchise Parks & Rec, or the Historic Commission - it is town law. If the citizens want to change the law, there are mechanisms to do so - but a concerned citizens mob is not that mechanism.

Thank you all for all of your efforts in helping run the town. I'm sorry that you have to deal with angry mobs from time to time.

In summary - I support the sidewalk plan, since I will use it on a daily basis due to my proximity - but ultimately support your obligation to make the final decision."
Ben Guthro
13 Fairbank St.

Subject: Land Use - Conservation, Planning & Zoning Board of Appeals
Message:
"I would urge the Planning Board and the Parks and Rec Board to consider the impact that failing to implement the improvements proposed in the town center sidewalks plan will have on future grant applications and the walk-ability of the common. I believe that any future state grant to repave and reconstruct Mass Ave or Ayer Road would also be from the Complete Streets Program, and as such a refusal such as the one proposed now would set a dangerous precedent and jeopardize funding for what would be a much more expensive and important project. Additionally, any such Mass Ave or Ayer Road reconstruction under complete streets would also include and impose the same sidewalk requirements; the stretch proposed encompassing the general store site would be the linchpin connecting the two, without which there is no continuous sidewalk from the Ayer Road commercial district, from town hall, to the town center.

The Town center sidewalk project provides important, critical handicapped accessibility to the town common. Even if Harvard's rural character doesn't want to consider an non automotive centric mode of travel, it should not

impose a burden by inaction. This requires no property takings; the General Store Lot is town property. It should be done, with state funding. This short stretch of sidewalk is in the middle of the most walkable part of town. Impaired automotive access to the general store should not stop Harvard from encouraging pedestrians, of any age or ability. Therefore, I urge the town to look past the cries of those who won't accept a 21st century reality, and instead focus on what is needed."

Jeffrey Lin
cc'd - Parks and Rec, Select Board
283 Littleton Road

Feedback from Congregational Church

Town Center Safe Streets

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