



## **SELECT BOARD**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, May 23, 2022**

**7:00 PM**

**Room 204, Acton Town Hall and Virtual**

**Present:** David Martin, Dean Charter, Jim Snyder-Grant, Fran Arsenault, Himaja Nagireddy and Town Manager John S. Mangiaratti

**Absent:** None

Mr. Martin called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

### **I. Regular Business**

#### **1. Resident Concerns**

Terra Friedrichs, West Acton – People of privilege are already well-represented on the Board and requests to choose a Chair who has shown clear support for inclusion and justice. Requests that notices be sent to Hayward Road abutters before deciding what to do at Hayward and Main intersection. Requests that the West Acton Citizen's library trustees be treated with respect during any reorganization.

Virginia Loftus, Windsor Ave – requests that renters need to be heard

Ruth Thatcher – reiterated letter sent to the Board from the West Acton Baptist church in support of tenant advocacy position

Peter Berry, – requests use of rotation system for choosing officers as it is non-partisan and helps avoid political divisiveness in what is supposed to be a non-partisan board.

Mike Gowing – Keep with the rotation system in assigning officers.

Lauren Morton – Dean Charter should be the next chair.

Tom Hilfer, Orchard Drive – support and inclusion for renters, please. Mr. Snyder-Grant should be chair.

Leslie Johnson, Windsor Drive – Supports a renters advocate position. The disabled and senior citizens need an advocate.

Danny Factor, Davis Road – noted the hotline is good but more is needed. Suggested the Board have a forum to discuss further regarding the need. Suggests the Chair be someone inclusive, likely to listen well, and be open to new ideas.

Sheryl Kennedy–Concerned about renters and living conditions and suggests consulting with Housing and Climate Justice for Acton group.

Simon Morton – Requests more support for tenants.

Christopher Lopez –Noted that renting an apartment in Acton is stressful. Responses from management company has been absent or unhelpful.

Jennifer Morazes – Thought the initial reactions from the Town for the Housing and Climate Justice group were disrespectful and unsupportive. Learning from other towns about what can work: reaching out through schools, faith communities and



more to build trust. Our group has now canvassed over 1000 people and can provide information

Franny Osman, Half Moon Hill – requests improvements for Zoom participants by adding a camera to show the in-room audience and keep the rotation of officers.

Clare Siska, Stow Street – Commented that the current chair hasn't been consistently including public participation during meetings.

Carole Enwright – Recently informed regarding rental issues. Suggests mediation and intervention by the Town.

Madeline Cruz, Townhouse Lane – Concerned about inaction from Board member Mr. Charter following her public statement on October 18, 2021

Bob Van Meter – Thanks the Town for improving communication and supporting tenants and feels there should be more done.

Ann Chang – Concerned on adding an additional staff position to support renters reporting to the Town Manager

## 2. Chair Update/Town Manager Update/Members Minutes

David Martin – Grand opening of new addition to Household Goods. The A-B schools have a new mascot: "A-B Revolution". Habitat for Humanity had a groundbreaking for their new home on Carlisle Road including solar panel installation, all-electric, and have high standards for air sealing and insulation.

John Mangiaratti – Memorial Day will be celebrated with a march from the schools to Woodlawn Cemetery, with a brief ceremony at the Town Hall, and a longer ceremony at Woodlawn. The group that was hired to help structure additional support for diversity, equity and inclusion will be reporting their findings at a Zoom meeting on Tuesday May 31<sup>st</sup> at 8:15. An announcement will be sent out.

Himaja Nagireddy – The West Acton Citizens Library Board of Trustees will be meeting this week with AML and the Town Manager to figure out how to adjust operations for the summer and determine long-term structural changes to WACL's leadership to make operations more sustainable. Thanked residents with their contribution toward Select Board goals suggestions.

Mr. Snyder-Grant noted that on May 28 the adaptive bike program, will start up at NARA park. Three different bikes available for use on the bike trail and around NARA. Community groups can once again reserve room for meetings at town facilities, including Memorial Library, Town Hall, and the Public Safety building. The use of Town Hall on weekends requires a Board member be available to unlock and lock up the building.

## **II. Public Hearings**

### 3. Traffic Rules and Order Amendments, One Way Streets, River Street from the Intersection of School Street to the Intersection of Chadwick Street



Mr. Martin read the public hearing notice. Mr. Mangiaratti updated the Board regarding the requests for sidewalks and public safety issues, and looked into amending or changing the traffic pattern on River Street before adding a sidewalk. DPW Director Corey York presented the engineering study by Toole Design for the proposed traffic rules and order amendments for River Street from School Street to Chadwick Street. Residents had raised concern in the past about speeding on River Street and had requested the installation of sidewalks. The traffic engineer recommended the new traffic flow. The current pattern flow at peak hours was 230 vehicles that would be diverted onto Chadwick Street. The traffic flow plan received support from public safety and the Transportation Advisory Committee. The sidewalk would be planned for the School Street side since the Fort Pond Brook side has a drop-off, and would tie in the sidewalk from the river side to the (53 River Street) park for a longer continued stretch of sidewalk. Mr. Charter questioned if there would be a possibility adding a sidewalk to Chadwick Street, Mr. York noted it was part of the original survey to possibly add the sidewalk. Mr. Martin questioned about trimming the foliage at the end of Chadwick to promote a better site line upon approach and Mr. York commented it would be part of the traffic rules amendment. Ms. Nagireddy questioned about tree removal if additional signage were to be added, Mr. York noted that it wouldn't involve any tree removal, however it would be a possibility if sidewalks were to be constructed.

Franny Osman, Half Moon Hill, and Chair of Transportation Advisory Committee – noted that TAC recommends this change, and the addition of adding sidewalks on the riverside of the street and will help connect the BFRT and the ARRT

Dan Gilfix, South Acton – supports the one-way change and sidewalks, but concerned about the one-way on River Street will increase the amount of speeding and changing the speed limit amount, include Chadwick and School Street for sidewalks

Sam Williams, Chadwick Street – concerned about not receiving notification of the hearing until this past Friday and urges to not make a decision tonight, suggests Mr. York transcribe his statements, concerned about River Street one way and may increase speeding.

Sheryl, intersection of River Street and School Street – requested clarification for making River Street one way to incorporate a sidewalk.

Stephanie Krantz, River Street – suggesting a 4-way stop, concerned a one-way implementation for River Street will increase driver's speeding.

Heather Sheehan, River Street – optimistic about the change, feels the ongoing traffic calming measures is the oncoming cars on River Street forces people to slow down and making it one way will increase speeding, supports the three-way stop signs

Jay Roberts, Parker Street – encourages Board to not make the change at this time, feels need more information and notification, concerned about the removal of the 53 River Street Dam, concerns about speeding and decreasing the speed limit.

David Honn, School Street – commented the sidewalk is more sensible on the south side of the road, has safety concern and supports a stop sign at Chadwick and School Street, and generally in support of the proposed change.



Lisa Ruggerio, Chadwick Street – concerned about speed and site lines, concerned that it doesn't make sense to divert traffic onto Chadwick and turn left onto School Street

James Convoy, Parker Street – suggests another option such as a temporary speedbump similar to downtown Maynard on River Street with warning signs

Alissa Nicol, School Street – questioned if there would be contra-bikelanes installed going against the flow of traffic, feels the one way designation is a rational decision and have the sidewalk installed on the river side of the road, lower speed limit

Rob Hamilton, School Street – concerned about installing a contra-bikelanes, suggested adding speed bumps, slight redesign of River at School Street, install traffic calming measures

Kim, 122 School Street – feels there needs to be more thought on the safety aspects of the project

Bettina Abe, School Street – supports River Street one-way, consider sidewalking Chadwick

Terra, West Acton - agreed with previous speakers concerns and suggestions

Heather Morton, River Street – requested copy of traffic report, concerned about speeding on River Street, not supporting River Street becoming a one-way, or make it temporary

Gabriel Brutton, River Street – concerned about speeding on River Street and intersection at School Street, concerned about inconvenience, feels it is a safety concern, doesn't support project until there is more information

**Ms. Nagireddy moved, seconded by Mr. Charter to continue the public hearing until the next available time, and approved unanimously**

4. Change in Manager, Les Lyonnaise from Gerard Labrosse to Joan Labrosse, 416 Great Road, Acton

**Mr. Charter moved, seconded by Mr. Snyder-Grant to close the public hearing, and approved unanimously by voice vote. Mr. Charter moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault, to approve the change in manager, and approved unanimously.**

5. Site Plan Special Permit, #3/18/2022-484, 42 Knox Trail (continued from May 9, 2022)

Mr. Mangiaratti provided a brief update on the remaining issues for this hearing.

**Mr. Snyder-Grant moved, seconded by Ms. Nagireddy, to continue the public hearing until June 6, 2022 at 8 pm, and approved unanimously.**

### **III. New/Special Business**

6. Board to Elect New Officers

Mr. Martin directed the Board on the nomination process.



Mr. Snyder-Grant nominated Mr. Charter as Chair, seconded by Mr. Charter, Ms. Arsenault nominated Mr. Snyder-Grant as Chair and seconded by Ms. Nagireddy. Each nominee advocated for position of Chair, as well as Board members commenting on each nominee's capability in the leadership position.

**Ms. Nagireddy and Ms. Arsenault nominated Mr. Snyder-Grant as Chair, Mr. Snyder-Grant, Mr. Charter, and Mr. Martin nominated Mr. Charter as Chair. The vote was 3 -2, Mr. Charter voted in as Chair.**

**Mr. Charter nominated Mr. Snyder-Grant as Vice Chair, seconded by Mr. Snyder-Grant. Ms. Nagireddy nominated Mr. Martin as Vice-Chair, seconded by Mr. Martin.** Each nominee advocated for the position of Vice-Chair, and the Board discussed the responsibilities of the Officers with respect to the Acton Leadership Group and relationships with other major committees. **The vote was 5-0 that Mr. Snyder Grant be Vice-Chair of the Select Board.**

**Ms. Arsenault moved, seconded by Ms. Nagireddy to nominate Ms. Nagireddy Clerk and approved unanimously**

#### 7. Review Hayward Road Intersection Reconstruction 75% Plan and Provide Comment

Mr. Mangiaratti updated the Board as to the progress with the Hayward and Main Street intersection. DPW Director Corey York has been working with the design team and updated the Board.

A 25% design hearing was held; staff picked the design accordingly and have been working with engineers to get it to 75% completion. The draft plan showed the land configurations and new road linings. Included in the proposed design are signals for traffic (vehicles and people) and sidewalk extensions. The team is working to try to preserve large trees, and prior to the public forum, Mr. York wanted feedback from the Board to prevent any issues that could surface.

Mr. Snyder-Grant commented that the Board supported the 25% design concerned that there may be pedestrian or vehicle safety issues that may still be unaddressed. Mr. York will consult with the Engineering firm.

Mr. Martin commented on the plan adding that the left-hand turn lane and the right-hand turn lane are well-designed and the sidewalks are integrated well; in addition to the crosswalk, the bicycle safety through the intersection is improved.

Mr. Charter favors the new plan, and suggested town staff notify abutters well in advance of the public forum. Mr. York will work with the town Manager and it staff to post notification of the public forum on the town website, and reach out to the School District.

Terra, West Acton – suggested that people who are most vulnerable are those who live right in the area, range of abutter notices should go out - reach out via mail, online, and to mail out notifications to be inclusive.



Mr. Snyder-Grant commented regarding traffic issues and if traffic is reduced, fewer people cut through Jefferson Road and if adds backup, traffic backs up to backstreets. Suggested widening up the streets.

Mr. Mangiaratti plans to follow up regarding the next steps.

#### 8. Consider Installing New 25 MPH Signs (MA-R2-9B Signs)

Mr. Mangiaratti noted that the town is working to improve signage across town. Currently, statutory speed limits in thickly settled unposted roads can be established by town Select Boards of 25 mph. Signs will be installed at all gateways to Acton (17 locations). The town would put up advisory signs up for notification. Select Board approval is required for putting up 25 mph signs for thickly settled unposted roads.

Mr. York noted that he is working with the Police Department to erect the signs which will help reinforce the new speed limit, and the signs would apply to all unposted roads.

Terra, West Acton - suggested the town can put in place a safety zone on a state highway.

Madeline Cruz, Townhouse Lane - requested to have a sign installed near Yankee Village

Mr. York will discuss with MassDOT to see if advisory signs could be installed, and considering also Kelley's Corner

**Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to approve the installation of the 25 mile-per-hour MA-R2-9B signs in appropriate locations as determined by the Public Works Director and unanimously approved.**

#### 9. Review Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Wayfinding Design

Voted unanimously to support the wayfinding design, and on authorizing the Town Manager to sign an agreement with Concord about these signs, which will be in both Towns.

Mr. Mangiaratti updated the Board regarding the town received a grant to approve the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail design. to the town must spend the grant money by the end of fiscal year. A survey was published last week and one hundred thirty-five people responded. The Planning Division and the Economic Development Director along with an internal working group came up with preliminary design concepts, and the final Wayfinding signs will have a Dragonfly theme, and looking for any feedback and support from the Select Board.

**Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to support the wayfinding signs and approved unanimously.**



**10. Approve Revised Building Permit Fees Related Energy Efficient Windows and Solar Panels**

Mr. Mangiaratti commented on the town's stand on sustainability policy and declaring a climate emergency and the efforts put forth by town staff. The Building Commissioner identified two ways we can be more sustainable - (1) establish maximum amount of charge and fees for the inspection of energy star certified windows and (2) capping fees charged for rooftop solar installations for consideration

Mr. Snyder-Grant expressed consideration for future changes to the fee schedule which would reduce fees for rehabilitation and shift towards new construction, and continue the process of rewarding those who chose more sustainable materials.

**Mr. Snyder-Grant moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to approved the proposed Building fee schedule and unanimously approved.**

**11. Approve Intermunicipal Agreement for a Shared Electrical Inspector with the Town of Littleton**

Mr. Mangiaratti updated the Board on a project regarding the towns of Littleton and Acton utilizing similar staffing for electrical inspections. The proposal would be assisting the cover the cost of employment working 55% of their time for Acton, or 22 hours/week. The Select Board needs to authorize the Town Manager to enter into this municipal agreement for the first year.

**Mr. Snyder-Grant moved, seconded by Mr. Martin to authorize the Town Manager to move forward with this intermunicipal agreement with Littleton, and leave it open to the Town Manager to choose a one to three year agreement and unanimously approved.**

**12. Discuss Select Board Participation in the DCR's Urban & Community Forestry Program Tree City USA Event Being Held at NARA Park**

Mr. Charter noted that Acton is being honored this year due to having been a Tree City USA for the last 20 years. Credit is due to the Public Works Director Corey York and Tree Warden Ryan Hunt. DCR Urban and Community Forestry program requested to hold the event at NARA Park and requested a Select Board member and Town Manager to speak at the June 8<sup>th</sup> event.

**13. Discuss Non-Resident Membership for Land Stewardship Committee**

Mr. Snyder-Grant explained that for proper liability insurance coverage, land stewards are generally brought into the Land Stewardship Committee as 'associate





committee members' so that they are considered special town employees for the purposes of the Town's liability insurance.

The Land Stewardship Committee has identified a possible steward for a parcel near the Town boundary, and the potential steward lives over that boundary in a different town.

The Volunteer Coordinating Committee has looked into the question of non-resident committee members. Their conclusion was that except for a few special boards and committees chartered by state law that specifically require residents, the Select Board can choose to appoint non-resident committee members.

Mr. Snyder-Grant wanted to make sure the Board was comfortable with this general idea for the Land Stewardship Committee before having the Volunteer Coordinating Committee run through the interview process with this person.

Mr. Charter recommended that associate members can be non-residents, but not voting members. Mr. Martin noted a letter from staff suggesting that associate member terms on the Land Stewardship Committee be raised from one year to three years. Mr. Snyder-Grant suggested that initial terms be one year, but that subsequent terms could be longer. Mr. Charter recommended that he and Mr. Snyder-Grant work together on bringing back an edited Land Stewardship Committee charter to the Board that includes these changes.

## **II. Consent Items**

**Mr. Snyder-Grant moved, seconded by Mr. Martin to approve consent items 14-15 and 17-21 inclusive and approved unanimously.**

**Mr. Snyder-Grant moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to approve consent item 16 and approved 4-0-1, with Mr. Martin abstaining.**

**Ms. Arsenault moved, seconded by Ms. Nagireddy to adjourn and approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 10:50 PM.**

## **Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting**

- Agenda, Select Board, May 23, 2022
- River Street One-Way Feasibility Study, Toole Design, Staff Comments, and Record of Vote
- Change in Manager Application, Les Lyonnais
- Site Plan Special Permit Public Hearing Notice, 42 Knox, LLC
- Main Street at Hayward Road Intersection Improvements, Howard Stein Hudson
- Accept Gift Memo, Recreation Department from Acton Pharmacy Dated May 10, 2022





- Accept Gift Memo, Recreation Department from David Martin and Miriam Lezak Dated May 10, 2022
- Accept Gift Memo, Recreation Department from Rapsallion Table and Tap Dated May 10, 2022
- Accept Gift Memo, Recreation Department from Various Donors Dated May 9, 2022
- One Day Alcoholic Beverage License, Boston Area Gleaners
- One Day Alcoholic Beverage License, Rebecca Higgins/Bull Spit Brewing Company
- Accept Contribution to Sidewalk Fund Memo, Planning Division Dated May 17, 2022