



## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 5, 2021 *Amended July 26, 2021*

7:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

**Present:** Jon Benson, Dean Charter, David Martin, Joan Gardner, Jim Snyder-Grant, Town Manager John S. Mangiaratti

**Absent:** None

Mr. Benson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM after exiting from an Executive Session. It was a virtual meeting with no Board members in physical attendance and it was broadcast via Zoom.us virtual meeting platform.

### I. Regular Business

#### 1. Citizen Concerns

Several members of the public commented on events that occurred leading up to the recent elections specifically regarding negative criticism towards the Chair on social media platforms, as well as comments of support for the Chair; interest in purchasing the Weatherbee Street parcel to preserve the property for conservation space, questions raised about select meeting attendance hosted by Visions with concerns about costs to taxpayers.

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

Mr. Benson announced a joint Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee meeting to be held April 6, 2021 at 6 PM. The next Select Board meeting will be April 12, 2021 to review and approve the Town Manager's Budget. The next regular meeting will be April 26, 2021.

Mr. Benson commented on his experience regarding the recent town election and his disappointment regarding social media posts. *He accused elected and other community leaders of a lack of response to negativity, specifically making allegations against State Senator Jamie Eldridge, Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee members Evelyn Abayaah-Issah, Kyra Wilson Cook, and Amy Krishnamurthy; along with Mike Rothbaum and Leela Ramachandran.*

Mr. Mangiaratti discussed two upcoming meetings for discussion and development of a common understanding. Twenty-one people are invited to the meetings, with goals to understand the state of the town with respect to diversity and equity, to develop steps promoting a more unified and inclusive way to communicate with residents. The first two meetings will not be public, but will lead to a future public forum.



The Annual Town Meeting Warrant has closed and three Citizens' Petitions were received. The draft list of warrant articles will be ready to review at the April 26, 2021 meeting.

There will be a virtual public forum for the Powder Mill Corridor Study on April 8, 2021.

The town received two grants:

- Housing Choice Community Capital Grant from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
- Shared Winter Streets and Spaces Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). This grant is to create new connections to the Nathaniel Allen Recreation Area and the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail by building a sidewalk on the north side of Harris Street connecting the new North Acton Fire Station to the existing sidewalk on Main Street.

There is a grant tracking list on the town website for public viewing at [www.actonma.gov/townmanager](http://www.actonma.gov/townmanager).

Mr. Snyder-Grant announced the retirement of Dr. Edward A. Bouquillon, Superintendent of the Minuteman Regional Technical High School. The Acton Water District has drilled two new wells in Acton Center for future water use. The Water Resources Advisory Committee will be meeting to discuss an upcoming water study.

Ms. Gardner praised Eva Szkaradek, Gail Sawyer and Austin Cyganiewicz for their hard work during the election.

Mr. Charter commended Mr. Benson for his years of service to the town.

## II. **New/Special Business**

### 3. 7:10 PM Utility Pole Petition, 7 Craig Road

Christine Cosby representing Eversource Energy requested the board approve a new pole to be installed at 7 Craig Road to provide new service for a solar project located at 7 Craig Road.

**Ms. Gardner moved, Mr. Charter seconded and it was unanimously voted by roll call to close the hearing:**

**(Aye: Mr. Snyder-Grant, Ms. Gardner, Mr. Charter, Mr. Benson, Mr. Martin)**

**Ms. Gardner moved, Mr. Charter seconded and it was unanimously voted by roll call to approve installing one pole 217-5A in Acton located at 7 Craig Road:**

**(Aye: Mr. Snyder-Grant, Ms. Gardner, Mr. Charter, Mr. Benson, Mr. Martin)**

### 4. Site Plan Special Permit #09/28/2020-480, 67 Powder Mill Road

Mr. Benson read the updated public hearing notice. The applicant has requested a continuance to April 26, 2021



**Ms. Gardner moved, Mr. Martin seconded and it was unanimously voted by roll call to continue the hearing to April 26, 2021:  
(Aye: Mr. Snyder-Grant, Ms. Gardner, Mr. Charter, Mr. Benson, Mr. Martin)**

5. COVID-19 Response Updates

Mr. Mangiaratti announced there are currently 28 residents that are in quarantine, down from 38 earlier in the month. The total cumulative number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Acton is 876. The Acton Memorial Library started in-person browsing by appointment on April 5. Mr. Mangiaratti requested Sheryl Ball to speak with the Board of Health regarding opening Town Hall to the public starting on May 3. The Board of Health wants to ensure that employees have the proper protective equipment, plexiglass barriers in place, and safety signage. It also wishes to have a process in place in the event of exposure in the building, and to maintain social and physical distancing. The Town introduced a voluntary testing protocol for employees that provides responses within 24 hours.

6. Announce Housing Choice Grant Award

Mr. Mangiaratti announced the town received its second Housing Choice Grant Award. The \$233,819 will support the Main Street and 446 Mass Ave planned affordable, senior and disabled housing. Additionally, Mr. Mangiaratti announced that Acton was awarded \$285,730 from the Shared Streets and Spaces Grant from the Commonwealth to connect the Harris Street sidewalk to the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail as part of the current construction of a sidewalk on Harris Street connecting the North Acton Fire Station portion to Main Street.

7. Presentation of Reuse Options for the Asa Parlin House

Mr. Mangiaratti updated the Board regarding the public hearing in October. Selective demolition on the rear of the building is complete. A working group was established to re-envision the future use of the building. Karle Packard from Red Hawk Studio presented to the Board offering two architectural concepts for the building. Next steps will be a more detailed design to present to the Board at a future meeting. The Board listed several comments from the public.

8. Presentation from the Friends of Gardner Field (FGF)

Recreation Director Melissa Rier, Paul Swydan and Kara Lafferty presented the proposed Gardner Field playground renovation. The FGF has raised \$65,000 towards refurbishment, not including the \$30,000 awarded in Community Preservation funds last year. Several members of the public commented on the design. Ms. Rier presented three funding options regarding the Community Preservation Application to be vetted and considered for funding at the Annual Town Meeting. The request is for \$350,000. The FGF has also submitted requests for earmarks to the state. The Members took several comments from the public.



9. Approve Preservation Restriction for Millplace Condominium Trust, 140 Main Street, Acton, MA

Mr. Mangiaratti commented that the restriction would protect the Town's investment in the property as previous Community Preservation funds were used to update the facility's steeple. The facility is currently condominiums and was formerly a church. The building is not part of the historic district. In return for the CPC funding, the town received a permanent preservation restriction on the property's exterior features.

**Ms. Gardner moved, Mr. Charter seconded and it was unanimously voted by roll call to approve the preservation restriction:**

**(Aye: Mr. Snyder-Grant, Ms. Gardner, Mr. Charter, Mr. Benson, Mr. Martin)**

10. Board to Proclaim April 22, 2021 as Arbor Day in the Town of Acton

**Mr. Charter moved, Ms. Gardner seconded and it was unanimously voted by roll call to approve the Arbor Day Proclamation as written and to claim April 22, 2021 as Arbor Day in Acton:**

**(Aye: Mr. Snyder-Grant, Ms. Gardner, Mr. Charter, Mr. Benson, Mr. Martin)**

11. Next Steps regarding the Town Charter Change to Rename the Board of Selectmen to Select Board

Ms. Pickering-Cook updated the Board on the process of changing the name of the Board of Selectmen to Select Board as a result of the recent March election, which ratified the Town Meeting vote to make the name change. This was the final step to officially change the name of the Board. The Selectmen are now "Members of the Select Board". The Town Charter will need to be updated, and certificate of name change will be sent to various State agencies, including the Attorney General's Office. Implementing the name change in the Town's General and Zoning Bylaws will require subsequent Town Meeting votes.

12. Discuss Appointment of Metropolitan Area Planning Council Representative

The appointment is for three years. Mr. Mangiaratti recommends appointing a full member and one alternate member. The Board decided to wait until the election of the new Select Board member to decide on a Select Board Member to be the alternate representative.

**Mr. Charter moved, Ms. Gardner seconded and it was unanimously voted by roll call to appoint Kristen Guichard of the Planning Division as Acton's representative on the MAPC Council:**

**(Aye: Mr. Snyder-Grant, Ms. Gardner, Mr. Charter, Mr. Benson, Mr. Martin)**

**III. Consent Items**

**Ms. Gardner moved, Mr. Snyder-Grant seconded and it was unanimously voted by roll call to approve Consent Agenda items 13 through 15:**



**(Aye: Mr. Snyder-Grant, Ms. Gardner, Mr. Charter, Mr. Benson, Mr. Martin)**

**Ms. Gardner moved, Mr. Martin seconded and it was unanimously voted by roll call to adjourn at 9:45 PM:**

**(Aye: Mr. Snyder-Grant, Ms. Gardner, Mr. Charter, Mr. Benson, Mr. Martin)**

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

- Agenda, March 15, 2021
- Pole Petition, 7 Craig Road, NStar d/b/a Eversource and Verizon
- Site Plan Special Permit #09/28/2020-480 Application and Request for Agreement on Time Extension
- Housing Choice Grant Letter Dated March 23, 2021
- Email from Town Manager Regarding the Update of the Asa Parlin House Reuse Dated March 17, 2021
- Presentation of Reuse Options for the Asa Parlin House
- Presentation from Friends of Gardner Field
- Preservation Restriction Agreement for Millplace Condominium Trust, 140 Main Street
- Arbor Day Proclamation
- Email from Heidi Anderson from MAPC Regarding Appointing a Council Representative Dated March 23, 2021
- Meeting Minutes, March 15, 2021
- Amended Meeting Minutes, October 4, 2021
- Executive Session Minutes, March 4 and 24, 2021
- Recommendation for Committee Appointment, Alissa Nicol for Open Space Committee
- Recommendation for Committee Appointment, Alissa Nicol for Historical Commission
- One Day Alcoholic Beverage License Application, Hannah Szydlo, September 19, 2021
- One Day Alcoholic Beverage License Application, Susan Walbridge, June 5, 2021