

Workshop Meeting Minutes

Town of Adams Board of Selectmen

Board of Selectmen Workshop Meeting

June 25, 2014

On the Above date the Board of Selectmen held a meeting at Town Hall at 6:30 p.m. Chairman Harrington presided, and present were members **Arthur Harrington, Joseph Nowak, Richard Blanchard, John Duval, and Jeffrey Snoonian.**

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Harrington.

Workshop Discussion

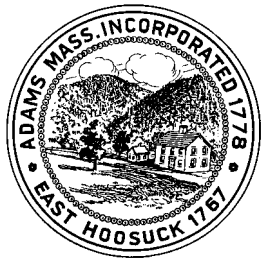
Federal Forest Designation

Tom Matuszko from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission put on a presentation regarding creating a Federal Forest Designation. The following information was discussed:

Federal Forest Designation: A map was presented to represent an area to be considered for the designation of Forest Land for harvesting, logging, recreation operations, natural based resources, and forest products, such as wood crafts. The presentation was to see if there was any interest to be generated in the Adams Community to capitalize on having a Forest Land designation for economic and land conservation reasons. The intention is also to entice the Government to provide resources for these two goals.

Government Funding: The intention is to get government funding toward forest products, using the forests as a resource for land conservation to create a partnership of Federal Government, State Government, Municipalities and Land Owners to come together on this topic. The Berkshire Regional Planning commission is serving as a technical resource for Towns for planning, community development, transportation, and acting as a Municipal Consultant. He works with Energy and Environmental Affairs and also the Franklin Regional Council on Government currently.

Forest Management Practices: This is a potential opportunity to do more forest management practices, and to get the resources to accomplish it. Additional uses include capturing the value of forest products, such as creating a wood pellet processing plant to be used as a source of wood heat for municipal buildings and schools, to cut down on oil and gas heating costs. Things that can be done with Forest Lands are wood crafts, and using forestry products for other things such as wood based products mixed with polymer to create light weight products. A Demo Forest could be put into place to create a Living Laboratory to advance forestry practices, and they are looking for a good place for a Demo Forest.



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Tax Revenue and Grant Opportunities: The purpose of the organization is to also make sure the community doesn't have a loss of tax revenue for Forest Land being taxed at a lower rate, which would impact the Town and Land Owners financially. It would give an avenue to work with State Legislature to create special conditions because it is a special area that may give future grant opportunities.

Eminent Domain and Restrictions: The Federal Government would not have the right of Eminent Domain, and there would be no conservation restrictions; since conservation restrictions are in perpetuity, legislation would make them more flexible or adaptable in the future.

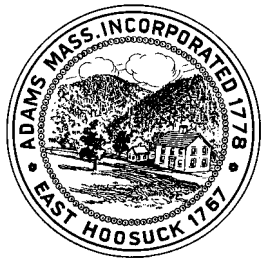
Recreational Opportunities and Tourism: The suggestion is to look at this potential for recreational opportunities, specifically for Greylock Glen, and to help manage the resources there. The additional suggestion is that recreational opportunities would aid the Town in promoting for Tourism purposes, such as hiking, hunting, snowmobiling etc. and it would serve as an educational center as well.

Designation Requirements: The Town's input would be to determine what area would be appropriate to designate for this purpose. Tom Matuszko met with 20 towns and is establishing an advisory committee made up of participants from each town. The Advisory Committee would be able to make the desires and concerns of the Town known.

Pilot Program Details: This project is a pilot program and is breaking new ground; their intention is to prepare a plan, file special legislation in the State and have the State submit the legislation to the Federal Government to pass. This would support the Forest Service in creating a new way to do business.

Formula for Land Value: The formula would be an appraisal for the full fair market value including the value of the development potential, the value of the resource base, and the difference would be what the land owner would receive. Chapter 61 is Forest Land Designation, Chapter 61A is Agricultural Land, Chapter 61B is Recreational Use, and applying to the Assessor would help to get a lower tax bill to reduce the tax burden on the property owner.

Responsibility of a Town Entering Forest Land Designation: Any Town agreement like this would be a voluntary transaction and the Town would then have the responsibility to make sure it is not violated, to monitor it so that deed restrictions on the property can be transacted. Town, State, and Land Trusts can hold restrictions. A decision to enter into the agreement, however, would be a permanent decision.



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The Process for Land Owners to Take Advantage of the Initiative: It is at the initiative of the property owner and is a designation for eligibility, not a mandatory assignment of status; if the area is not designated as Forest Land the Forest Service cannot provide resources there.

Landlocked Land Owner Challenges: For landlocked individuals whose neighbors have chosen the Forest Land Designation, it is more difficult to get agreements through to cross their land and for recreational access continuity for trails.

Community Inclusion for Designation Status: Unsure how many communities are needed for this Designation to go through; not all Towns have to opt in to make it happen, but if they were spread out and not in a close geographical proximity it may not work and there must be logic to the Designation Area.

Payment in Lieu of Taxes: Regarding continuous forest inventory, and the stress forests are under in with damage from pests such as the Ash Borer and Acid Rain, if the Pilot Program doesn't work how does the money return? The Quabbin has payment in lieu of taxes, but they are a watershed for Boston. Pilot programs have been a problem for a long time.

Beaurocracy Levels: There would not be another level of beaurocracy to go through to get things done, but the Town must comply with requirements if they get grant money.

Advisory Committee Representative: Chairman Harrington recommended the Board Members think about which member would be an appropriate person to appoint as a person on the Advisory Committee, and have further discussion at next week's meeting.

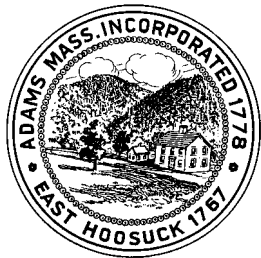
Contact Info: Tom Matuszko at Berkshire Regional Planning Commission at www.berkshireplanning.org

Official Business

Town Administrator Search Committee

There were 15 Candidates for the Town Administrator Search Committee.

Chairman Harrington requested the Board Members consider the option of having the two Department Heads in town on the Search Committee Applicant List to be automatically placed on the Search Committee and to fill the rest of the seats with other applicants as voted by the Board Members.



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Members Blanchard, Nowak, and Snoonian were not in agreement, so the voting process was put in place for all applicants equally.

Each Board Member voted on a grid that held the names of each applicant, and gave 7 points for their first choice of the 7 applicants, and 6 points for the second choice, etc. down to 1 point for the final selection of their 7 desired applicants. Points were tallied and the 7 candidates receiving the highest points are as follows:

Jeffrey Grandchamp, with 22 points
Carol Corrigan, with 19 points
Erica Girgenti, with 19 points
Jim Brosnan, with 14 points
Jeff Lefebvre, with 14 points
Michael Ouellette, with 12 points
Richard Tarsa, with 12 points

Other applicant point tallies are as follows:

Steve Melito, 10 points
Joseph McGovern, 5 points
John Cowie, Jr., 4 points
James Bush, 3 points
Don Sommer, 3 points
Robert Armata, 2 points
Ryan Biros, 1 point
Jason Snizek, 0 points

Letters shall be sent out to thank those who were not chosen for their interest and desire to serve the Town, and a Survey Monkey will be sent to those chosen to select an appropriate meeting time for all Committee Members to meet.

Motion to Adjourn by Member Nowak
Second by Member Blanchard
Unanimous vote
Motion passed

Meeting Adjourned at 7:40 p.m.