

**HARVARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
JANUARY 19, 2012  
APPROVED: April 19, 2012**

Chairman Paul Willard called the meeting to order at 7:00pm in the Town Hall Meeting Room

**Members Present:** Paul Willard, Charlie Gorss, Jim Breslauer, Don Ritchie, Wendy Sisson, Jaye Waldron and Patrick Doherty

**Others Present:** Liz Allard (LUB Admin), Ken Swanton, Joe Theriault, Mary Traphagen, Matthew Day, Worth Robbins and Steve Strong

**Historic District Commission Appointment**

Under the charter of the Historic District Commission (HDC), the Conservation Commission (Concom) is tasked with submitting nominees to the HDC for the appointment of one member to the seven-member board of the HDC. The current chairman of the HDC, Ken Swanton, was present along with Joe Theriault, to request that the Concom recommend Mr. Theriault to the Board of Selectmen as their nominee to the HDC.

Mr. Theriault provided his volunteer application to the Concom, along with his general background. Mr. Theriault is a retired electrical engineer, who has resided in Harvard for the past 27 years. Mr. Theriault served on the Harvard Historical Society from 1988 to 2000, where he held the office of vice president and president. Mr. Theriault has done extensive historical research on a number of different topics.

The Concom thanked Mr. Theriault for his interest in being appointed to the HDC as the Concom representative. With that said, Jim Breslauer made a motion to recommend to the Board of Selectmen, Joe Theriault as the Conservation Commission's representative to the Historic District Commission. Don Ritchie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

**Request for Determination of Applicability – Mary Traphagen & Matthew Day, 146 Still River Road, Harvard#0112-01. Opened at 7:30pm**

**Allowable Uses for the Ruben-Reed Land**

Paul Willard explained to the members that over the years he has expressed concern about a parking area on the Ruben Reed land on Mass Ave. When the property was deeded to the Town a stipulation was there was to be no parking of any kind allowed. The parking area has increased by the adjacent property owner. Mr. Willard suggests the Commission investigate the opinions for having the payment removed and re-establish the grass. It was recommended that letter be sent to the abutting property owner, Harvard Realty, explaining the situation and with the understanding that this is a property that has recently changed hands and the new owner may not be aware of the violation. A question of who should pay for the work needed to restore the area was discussed. Mr. Willard suggested the Commission pay for the restoration as this has been an ongoing issue that could be impossible for the Commission to determine who conducted the work. Ken Swanton was present and is an abutter to the Ruben Reed land and is willing to help clean the area up to make it look nicer. The Commission thanked Mr. Swanton for his assistance. Wendy Sisson made a motion to support the suggestions made by Paul Willard this evening as previously stated. Jim Breslauer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

**Harvard Solar Community Garden Request to Discuss Possible use of Conservation Land**

Worth Robbins was present to discuss the potential of using Conservation Land for a community solar garden. Mr. Robbins stated this is not a presentation or proposal but a discovery discussion. Mr. Robbins explained Harvard's Green Community designation. Mr. Robbins stated

the number of home owners that wanted solar in Town is vast, however there where many who did not have suitable locations on their property. New England Breeze, the company who is implementing Solarize Harvard is unable to take on the project of a community solar garden, so Steve Strong has been brought on to handle the task. Mr. Robbins stated Phase I is 235kW system. There are many interested individuals who are looking to take part in this project. The solar gardens will have the same incentives as those received by Solarize Mass. There is a new phase of grant opportunities that opens tomorrow.

Mr. Strong stated that a system of 250kW will need about an acre and a half to 1¾ of an acre for its installation, as well as be within phase three power. Ideal conditions would be 100 – 125 kW per acre. There are individuals who are interested in being an investor in these gardens to net the electricity back to others, such as the Town.

Mr. Robbins has identified a few viable locations that are Conservation Land, including the Sprague land on West Bare Hill Road and the Steven's land off Stow Road. Jaye Waldron does not believe that you can do something on Conservation Land that will benefit only specific individuals. Patrick Doherty thinks it has to be beneficial to all in Town as well. Don Ritchie would be for the proposal if it could be some place that is not that much of a presence. Paul Willard is also okay with the proposal. Jim Breslauer stated it would depend on the land and its features. Mr. Doherty would not be opposed to the proposal; however he is stuck on the benefits to one but not all in Town. Ms. Waldron has concerns of people profiting from a process that is being done on Conservation Land. Wendy Sisson stated that private investors that are going to be making money on it by selling it back, even to the Town, would not be suitable. Ms. Sisson stated she would like to have more solar energy and we have to take a look at the balance of clean energy and open space. The location of a system would have to take into consideration the areas values such as habitat. Members felt the credits for the solar should go to the Town if on Town land. Charlie Gorss stated this is not a simple trade off, asking whether cutting the forest to do this type of project is a gain or a loss. The question is can this type of activity take place on Conservation Land. If not, can the land be transferred as surplus Town owned land, which could take a few years to do.

Jim Breslauer left the meeting at 8:43pm

Mr. Robbins requested the Commission to take a look at the inventory of Conservation Land to determine which sites may be a suitable location for a community solar garden. The Commission stated they would want to know if it is allowable activity on Conservation Land before moving forward with review of inventory. Mr. Strong state that an area or combination of areas in the range of 12 –15 acres could be suitable to meet the Towns needs for electricity.

Liz Allard will contact the proper individuals at the State level to determine if this is an allowed use of Conservation Land.

#### **Notice of Intent to Foreclose – Shaker Hill Golf Course**

Liz Allard informed the members that the Commission has received notice of the foreclosure at the Shaker Hill Golf Course. Members asked Ms. Allard to find out more information about how the foreclosure process works.

#### **Follow-up to Site Walk at Transfer Station**

On January 9<sup>th</sup> members of the Conservation Commission meet at the Transfer Station to review the site with the Director, Richard Nota. Concerns with the site and the abutting wetlands have been outlined in a letter that has been sent to Mr. Nota. The Commission looks forward to hearing from Mr. Nota on improvements he intends on making to the area.

**Approval of Minutes**

Don Ritchie made a motion to approve the minutes of May 19, June 2 and November 3, 2011 as amended. Jaye Waldron seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

**Request to Amend Meeting Dates**

Liz Allard requested that the Commission change the April 5<sup>th</sup> meeting to March 29<sup>th</sup> as she is planning on being out on April 5<sup>th</sup>. Charlie Gorss made a motion to change the April 5, 2012 meeting to March 29, 2012. Don Ritchie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

**Land Stewardship Subcommittee Request for Allocation of Funds**

Wendy Sisson requested that she be allowed to purchase a Global Positioning System for use by the Land Stewardship Subcommittee for the purpose of locating trails on Conservation Land, to aid in the development of additional trail maps. Patrick Doherty made a motion to allocate the necessary funds for a Global Positioning System. Charlie Gorss seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

**Adjournment**

Patrick Doherty made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:28pm. Don Ritchie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Allard  
Land Use Administrator/  
Conservation Agent

**Harvard Conservation Commission**  
**Request for Determination of Applicability Hearing Meeting Minutes**  
**Mary Traphagen & Matthew Day, 146 Still River Road, Harvard#0112-01**  
**January 19, 2012**

Chairman Paul Willard under the Harvard Wetland Protection Bylaw, Chapter 119 of the Code of the Town of Harvard in the Town Hall Meeting Room opened the public hearing at 7:30pm

**Members Present:** Paul Willard, Wendy Sisson, Charlie Gorss and Janet Waldron

**Others Present:** Liz Allard (LUB Admin)

This hearing is for a Request of Determination of Applicability filed on behalf of Mary Traphagen and Matthew Day for an addition to an existing structure within the 100' wetland buffer zone at 146 Still River Road, Harvard.

Mary Traphagen explained to the members that she is proposing to construct an addition to her existing home. The 7 x14 addition will be constructed on concrete piers with a roof sloping to the south. An isolated wetland on the property places the activity within the 100' wetland buffer zone. Paul Willard reviewed the site and explained to members that the land slopes away from the resource area and the work will have no adverse impact. Jaye Waldron questioned if the area could be a vernal pool. Mr. Willard stated if so, there still would be no impact to the pool as a result of the addition. Ms. Traphagen stated she would allow the Commission to review the site in the spring to determine if the area is a vernal pool.

With no further questions or comments, Wendy Sisson made a motion to close the hearing and issue a Negative#2 Determination of Applicability. Don Ritchie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Allard  
Land Use Administrator/  
Conservation Agent

## **DOCUMENTS & OTHER EXHIBITS**

### **Request for Determination of Applicability – Mary Traphagen & Matthew Day, 146 Still River Road, Harvard#0112-01**

- WPB Form 1 Request for Determination of Applicability, dated January 10, 2012

### **Historic District Commission Appointment**

- Volunteer Application for Joseph R. Theriault, dated 19 December 2011