

**Harvard Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
December 21, 2009
Approved: January 25, 2010**

Joe Sudol opened the meeting at 7:37pm in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

Members Present: Joe Sudol, Kara McGuire Minar, Craig Bardenheuer and Lisa Fox

Others Present: Liz Allard (LUB Admin), Franklyn Carlson (Ag Adv Comm), Al Combs (Ag Adv Comm) and Tim Clark (BOS)

Proposed Amendment to Chapter 125-41 Signs

Al Combs and Franklyn Carlson were present to discuss with the Board an amendment to the Sign Bylaw within the Protective Bylaw, Chapter 125-41. Combs stated the amendment would unify the Board of Selectmen (BOS) provision for u-pick signage and the Protective Bylaw provision of off site signs. Sudol asked if signs in regards to agricultural use were covered under the Right to Farm Bylaw. Combs stated no, because these are off site signs. Due to the lack of uniformity of existing off site u-pick signs the BOS asked the Agricultural Advisory Commission (Ag Adv Comm) to intervene. The u-pick provision is a 4 square foot sign allowance, which the farmers are happy with, at least the ones that attended the meeting. The amendment to Chapter 125-41 would change the off site directional sign to 4 square feet for farms.

Sudol personally feels the signs are not consistent with the quaintness of the Town of Harvard. Clark stated this all started with a u-pick off site sign request. Several complaints were made in regards to an excessive amount of u-pick signs, so at the beginning of this season the BOS came up a simple list of conditions. Mid-season it was noted that a lot of these signs were not consistent with the provision, along with another request to erect an off site sign that was in excess of Chapter 125-41. This request was denied and the question was why since no others off site signs meet the requirements.

Clark read the BOS regulations, approved December 1st. As for directional signs they may stay up year round, you pick are to be removed by December 31 of each year. As explained by Clark, on the rural roads directional signs help delivery drivers find the location they are attempting to get to. Clark's version of the proposed amendment includes a link to the State definition. Combs and Carlson agreed that the State definition should be included. The Board members just want to be certain that the farmers are happy with this change.

Directional signs will be contained within the four square feet. Combs stated a couple of farms will need to change there signs to meet that requirement. The amendment would not affect on-site signs. Bardenheuer asked if this is to head off an on coming issue or an existing issue. Combs stated they want to put the brakes on a small issue that could be come a larger issue.

Sudol asked about the signs in the center of Town on the Common. Clark stated that area is regulated by the Park and Recreation Department, which has their own policies. The Planning Board is willing to bring this amendment to the Annual Town Meeting.

McGuire Minar joined the meeting at 8:00pm.

Affordable Housing Plan Update

Sudol stated he has received comments from Lucy Wallace of the Board of Selectmen. Most of Wallace's comments were taken care of at the December 5th meeting. Wallace reviewed the entire document and provided recommended changes.

Executive Summary was amended editorially.. The housing short fall was based on 2004, so Sudol updated the numbers to agree with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) report of 2009. Bardenheuer stated housing units and number of residents are not consistent throughout the document. Sudol did not want to change any of the numbers based on the census data. McGuire Minar thinks the reference to home prices rising should be changed to reflect the present economy. Combs believe if you are going to re-write the document in its entirety you are not going to get it done in time. Combs further explained what was decided months ago. McGuire Minar thinks a comment should be made in regards to the current market conditions. Clark asked if you could just foot note it. Sudol reminded those present that the goal is to not do a complete update of the document, but to only make the necessary changes it to meet DHCD's new requirements.

Sudol recommended changes to the Existing Affordable Housing numbers based on the Sep 09 DHCD report. Sudol also identified new projects as projects in the works . The Ayer Road Village Special Permit recently issued.

Affordable Housing Goals numbers have been updated. Affordable Housing Strategies deleted the two parcel reference. Sudol took out references to Phase Two housing in Devens. Sudol sent everyone the five year housing plan for Devens which is set to start in 2010. The Introduction did not change much. Bardenheuer asked why the numbers are not matching here. Sudol stated back in the Executive Summary it matches 2000 census and the other matches the assessor information. Members feel the numbers should consistent with the 2000 census. Under Organization is where Sudol revised the DHCD guidelines of 2008.

In the Housing Needs Assessment Sudol identified everything as the 2000 census data. The only thing Sudol changed is Table 2.1. Sudol added as of September 2009 and removed Harvard Commons. Table 2.4 was updated to September 2009. Allard noted there were two Table 2.1 and that one should be labeled 2.1A.

Allard asked why Appendix A does not include the MHOC Ayer Road Comprehensive permit issued in 2008. Sudol thought the project has not received a Comprehensive permit. Allard will adjust the table to include this in 2013. Sudol changed Table 2.5 to

proposed, under construction and existing. Sudol will incorporate all of the comments and changes and send it out for review. All changes that need a zoning change or town meeting vote were categorized as a Priority 2, were as all others were Priority 1.

Sudol will make a final presentation at the BOS all Boards meeting on January 5, 2010.

2009 Annual Report

Sudol request that Allard send last years report to the members. The topic will be discussed further at the next meeting on January 4, 2010. Reports are due by January 15th.

Fiscal Year 2011 Budget

Sudol explained the Fiscal Year 2011 (FY11) budget requirement to the members. The Finance Committee is requiring the submittal of two budgets for FY11. The first is a level funded budget and the second should reflect a 5% decrease of the over all budget for each department. In order to reach the 5% LUB staff hours will need to be reduced from 40 to 38. A letter has been drafted and circulated among the three boards chairman explaining what services may be affected by this reduction. Budgets are due by January 4, 2010.

Adjournment

McGuire Minar made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:35pm. Bardenheuer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Signed: _____
Lisa Fox, Clerk