

Hardwick Planning Commission
December 11, 2018
Hardwick Memorial Building

HPC Members Present: Diane Grenkow; Jim Lewis; and Ken Davis

HPC members Absent: Cynthia Grant; Dave Gross; and Joyce Mandeville

Also Present: Kristen Leahy, Hardwick Zoning Administrator (ZA), Rachel Kane and Judy Bellairs, Hardwick residents – regarding the establishment of a Conservation Commission.

Vice Chair Davis opened the meeting at 6:33 pm.

Lacking a quorum, the Commission did not make a motion regarding the draft minutes of October 2018.

Rachel Kane and Judy Bellairs attended the meeting to introduce the idea of creating a Conservation Commission in Hardwick. The existing Hardwick Town Plan supports this idea and encourages the Planning Commission to assist with the endeavor. Ms. Kane and Ms. Bellairs have already brought their proposal to the Select Board. The Select Board will include an article at the Town Meeting. Ms. Kane explained that the proposed Conservation Commission might provide education opportunities, plant trees, monitor rivers, and monitor invasive species. They envision a core group of people paying attention to the environment and mitigating potential problems. The actual focus will depend on the composition of the Commission members. They would like to begin with 5 members (statute allows for 3-9 Hardwick residents). Their goal would be to enhance and collaborate with other existing boards and commissions in the area.

Vice Chair Davis stated that he has concerns as he is an owner of land resources. He does not wish to see additional regulations on his land. He does, however, see the merits of the stated bullet points in the handout (attached).

Ms. Kane and Ms. Bellairs reiterated their stated goals of assisting other boards and addressing projects such as creating a natural inventory of the town. When they presented their idea to the Select Board, the Emerald Ash Borer preparedness plan was mentioned. This could be a possible area of initial focus.

The Planning Commission lacked a quorum to issue an official vote of support but will return to the issue in January (which will allow ample time to convey the vote to the town at Town Meeting).

The Zoning Administrator contacted the affected land owners in the potential zoning boundary amendment area near Gates Salvage. One resident responded with questions about value and property taxes. Mr. Davis suggested that the boundary amendment include the area along Route 15 to the boundary of Wolcott and Hardwick. The Zoning Administrator will map the proposal and compare the affected area (zoned Rural Residential) with a zoning change (Highway Mixed Use).

Mr. Davis reported on his attendance to the Municipal Education summit.

The editing of the 2014 Town Plan framework will continue in the January meeting. The next HPC meeting will be on January 8, 2019.

Board adjourned at 7:36 pm. - Respectfully submitted, Kristen Leahy, ZA