

Hardwick Planning Commission
August 13, 2024
Hybrid – In Person and Via Zoom
Minutes

HPC Members Present: Shari Cornish; Jim Lewis; Larry Fliegelman; Ken Davis; Bud Stevens; Dave Gross, Chair; and Kole (1st Alternate).

Also Present: Kristen Leahy, Hardwick Zoning Administrator; and Gillian D’Acierno (Prospective Alternate).

Absent: Michael Haveson (Kole assumes his vote).

Chair Dave Gross opened the meeting at 6:30 pm. Ken Davis moved to approve the agenda as written. Shari Cornish seconded. All members were in favor. Ken Davis moved to approve the July 9, 2024 meeting minutes as written. Larry Fliegelman seconded. All members were in favor.

Updates from the Community Development Coordinator – Tracy Martin (not in attendance)

The LVRT – downtown loop proposal was amended to reflect the current paving and construction conditions and presented to the Select Board at their July 18, 2024 meeting. The Select Board approved a motion to pursue the implementation of the recommendations. However, the flooding on July 11, 2024 changed the River corridor within downtown Hardwick. The existing conditions for the Pedestrian Bridge were altered from the engineering plans. In addition, the bids to install the Pedestrian Bridge were significantly higher than anticipated. At this time, the Pedestrian Bridge project is on hold and the funding for the LVRT/Downtown Loop is a component of the project. Tracy is meeting with the funders to see what will be the best approach for pausing the Loop and the Bridge. If elements from the amended proposal can be accomplished with limited funds, they will be prioritized.

Motion: N/A

Updates from the Bylaw Modernization Consultant – Heather Carrington (not in attendance)

The Select Board will hold a Public Hearing on the Unified Development Bylaws Amendment/Update on Thursday, September 5, 2024 at 5 pm. This is a hybrid hearing with Virtual and In-Person (3rd Floor, Memorial Building) options.

Motion: N/A

AARP Walkability Studies:

The South Main Street AARP Walkability Study (with labels) was presented to the Select Board on August 1, 2024. The proposal for the possible crosswalk was verbally rejected by the Road Foreman (Tom Fadden) and members of the Select Board as the location cannot be made handicap accessible. A verbal agreement was introduced to paint a temporary sidewalk (on South Main Street) and perhaps install a crosswalk near Lower Cherry Street. The draft minutes from the Select Board do not reflect this conversation. Shari Cornish will review and possibly request an amendment or discuss again in the Old Business component of the 8/15 meeting of the Select Board.

Motion: N/A

Lori Ferland contacted the Zoning Office and suggested that an AARP Walkability Study be conducted on Wolcott Street. The HPC will conduct a study on September 23, 2024 at 10 am. The review will begin at the Hardwick Fire Station parking lot. Kristen will provide Lori with this information and invite her to attend.

Flood Recovery – Hazard Mitigation projects:

The Town of Hardwick is currently in the process of pursuing a large number of Flood Recovery, Hazard Mitigation, and Floodplain Restoration projects. The projects range from buyouts of Floodway properties to flood proofing of Wolcott Street businesses to extensive floodplain restorations. The projects encompass the entire town and will hopefully assist in making Hardwick more flood-resilient. The HPC received a comprehensive explanation of the current list from the Floodplain Administrator (Kristen). No action was needed at this time.

Motion: N/A

Long Term Community Recovery Plan:

The FEMA self-help guide for the LTCRP (Long Term Community Recovery Plan) requires towns to identify, evaluate, and prioritize LTCR projects (see above). There are four categories – High Recovery Value Projects, Moderate Recovery Value Projects, Low Recovery Value Projects, and Community Interest Projects. The Planning Commission reviewed the parameters of the categories and found that only two met the threshold of the Moderate Recovery Value - the elevation assistance for 7 properties and the generator in the Police Station/Supply and Support Center/Senior Center. The remaining projects are in the High Recover Value category. No Low Recovery Value or Community Interest projects have been identified at this time. A draft version will be initiated in the next month.

Motion: N/A

Phases I and II:

N/A

Motion: N/A

Short Term Rentals:

N/A

Motion: N/A

Hardwick Ecological Inventory:

N/A

Updates from Commission Members or the Zoning Administrator:

N/A.

Motion: N/A

Motion: To conclude the Hardwick Planning Commission Meeting.

Ken Davis made the motion and Kole seconded. All members were in favor.

The meeting ended at 8:20 pm.

The next HPC meeting will be at 6:30 pm on September 10, 2024 on the 3rd Floor of the Memorial Building and via Zoom. This meeting will be recorded to comply with the new State Rules.

~ Respectfully submitted, Kristen Leahy, ZA