



## **SELECT BOARD**

Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 6, 2022

7:00 PM

Room 204, Acton Town Hall and Virtual

**Present:** David Martin, Dean Charter, Jim Snyder-Grant, Fran Arsenault, Town Manager John S. Mangiaratti, and Assistant Town Manager Mark Hald

**Remote Participation:** Himaja Nagireddy

**Absent:** None

Mr. Charter called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

### **I. Regular Business**

#### **1. Resident Concerns**

Jennifer Morazes, Central Street – noted that she has canvassed rentals units as part of Climate and Housing Justice for Acton and rented in Acton. Climate and Housing Justice for Acton are putting together a report which will be shared with the town soon. She sent an email to the Board previously noting outstanding issues with renters. Communications should be translated into all languages and shared on all platforms to ensure people know of existing town resources for renters. She requested the Select Board add a renters' advocate position. Renters voices should continue to be centered.

Terra, Mass Ave – Part of the Green Acton Land Use Committee, Environmental Justice is a focus

Bill Klauer, Piper Road – look into the property off of Knox Trail that used to connect with Independence Road which was the former W.R. Grace site, and the report written by the Acton Citizens for Environmental Safety regarding the properties.

Carol Reed Walkins, Strawberry Hill Road – asked if there will be a public comment available for the Climate Action Plan.

Charlie Kadlec, Paul Revere Road – asked if comments will be allowed on item 6.

Cheryl Kennedy-Grace – spoke in support of the renters advocate position and noted the poor conditions of some apartments overseen by some corporate management companies

Madeline Cruz, Townhouse Lane – asked if public comment will be allowed during the Goal Setting item

Nancy Corcoran – congratulated Ms. Nagireddy on her recent graduation, thanked Leslie Johnson's continued work to acquire adaptable bikes at NARA Park, Austin Cyganiewicz's application for the grant, and Melissa Reir's work on receiving the bikes.



Chris Lopez, Central Street, member of Climate and Housing Justice noted what the renters advocate position would look like: contracted position, part-time hours, legal representation for renters, dissemination of information for renters, and being a voice for renters, potentially for homeowners as well.

Michelle – first time hearing of renter’s hotline, concerned there is no communication for renters from property management and requesting a rental advocacy position.

2. Chair Update/Town Manager Update/Members Minutes

Mr. Mangiaratti thanked the Veterans Officer and Celebrations Director James MacRae and Gail Sawyer for the job done on the Memorial Day Parade. Bon Journey band playing Friday night. Ribon cutting ceremony at the North Acton Fire Station on Friday morning and the ActOn Climate Festival on Saturday.

Mr. Charter attended funeral services for Keith Robinson, retired firefighter and good friend. On Wednesday, June 8<sup>th</sup> Acton will be receiving a Tree City award and is Acton’s 25<sup>th</sup> year as a Tree City USA town.

Mr. Snyder-Grant mentioned the Acton Climate Coalition will be holding climate café at 10 am at Villageworks in West Acton with the topic of air source heat pumps, also at 7 pm a zoom meeting on Acton’s Water Cycle with Acton water experts, noted that two members of Acton Climate and Housing Justice were unfortunately involved in a fatal accident recently.

Ms. Arsenault encourages residents to join Town boards and committees - please send applications to the Volunteer Coordinating Committee.

**Public Hearings**

3. Select Board Annual Goals – Public Listening Session

Mr. Charter outlined the rules of the listening session to allow comments for up to three minutes and encourages comments to be sent to the Select Board email.

Madeline Cruz, Townhouse Lane – develop a Code of Conduct for Town Employees and elected officials, support Renters Advocate Position, develop a policy on mold, have Board of Health produce an inspection list before conducting home inspections, develop a policy on building inspections and accountability for safety violations, and invited Select Board members to canvass with renters and see the conditions she lives in.

Christopher Hardy – suggests a senior tax break, supports the renters advocate position, wants to see more town people volunteering in community activities, and wants to bring back the three-day Acton Jamboree.

Dave Lunger, Wampanoag Drive – recommended town begin preparations for the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Captain Isaac Davis’ march to Concord in three years to coincide with the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Independence Day.

Carolyn Reed Atkins, Strawberry Hill Road – set climate goals, gather info on, for example, how many people have installed ground source heat pumps, and add a renters advocate position.



Alissa Nicol, School Street – noted last year's goals that were met and those that were not, recommends the SB establish a system with regular progress reports for the selected goals of FY23. Encourages more coordination between Acton Water District and the Town.

Franny Osman, Half Moon Hill – supports a renters advocate position, increase sidewalk installation and funding sources, public transportation and signing up with Uber and taxi companies for after hours – bring back rail shuttle and additional CAT service.

John [not sure of last name and address] – wants a code of conduct and renters advocate

Terra, Mass Ave – Wants a housing trust, community center, celebration/jubilee, renters advocate, Asa Parlin, preserving land and trees especially where greenery is already sparse

Charie Kadlec, Paul Revere Road – encourages the Board to think about the future beyond one year regarding planning and preparing for an unknown future.

Ramachandran, Old Village Road– improve sidewalks and transportation, progress reports to the Select Board

Cheryl Kennedy-Grace– public transportation in town has been helpful but can be improved

John– improve senior and disability transportation services

Christopher Hardy – need a plan on the future of the Kmart property

Franny Osman, Half Moon Hill – consider the long-term lease for the 30 Sudbury property.

Michelle - supports having code of conduct, renters advocate, cab service and other public transportation, and sidewalk development

Ruth Bendig - Reminded the board of the letter from West Acton Baptist Church in support of the renter's advocate

Stella Ko – consider climate consideration on all the goals, continue outreach to all different members of the community and to be accessible, and periodic updates of the Select Board goals.

4. Site Plan Special Permit #3/18/2022-484, 42 Knox Trail

Mr. Charter read the public hearing notice. The Petitioner requested an extension to June 27, 2022. **Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Mr. Snyder-Grant to reschedule to June 27, 2022 at 7:10 PM and voted unanimously by roll call vote.**

5. Traffic Rules and Order Amendments, One Way Streets, River Street from the Intersection of School Street to the Intersection of Chadwick Street

Mr. Charter read the public hearing notice. Mr. Managiaratti noted a public hearing at the last Board meeting and have since addressed the many questions from Board members and the public. Mr. Managiaratti spent the following morning on River Street to experience the traffic concerns many residents have complained about for three hours. Corey York, DPW Director summarized to the Board about the possibility of the three-way (multi-way) stop sign, that the analysis regarding the



installation meets the certain criteria on which way has the right of way, as well as crash data. An engineering study has not been conducted but can investigate. He can consider the sidewalk installation on Chadwick Street. There was a question on changing the speed limit, a traffic study would have to be conducted and submitted to MassDOT and the registry for approval. The park at 53 River St could be considered as a safety zone which would be 25 MPH.

Mr. Mangiaratti is looking for the Board to consider the traffic rules and order approval for the one way streets as a short term matter. Some implementations that can be done are narrowing the lane and adding pedestrian barriers and would work with Police in implementing the change, and adding portable speed signs to remind drivers of the posted speed limit.

Mr. Martin asked Mr. York if River Street would qualify as thickly settled – the new posted signs do not qualify for thickly settled. His goal for the three-way stop is to safely turn left out of Chadwick Street onto School Street and should move forward with the engineering study.

Mr. Snyder-Grant noted concerns from residents and also the residents in favor of making the roads one way but to also consider a three-way stop sign intersection. Heather Morton, River Street – questioned the climate impact of taking some part of a road for sidewalks and one section would add 3000 miles in travel which would increase emissions and would like to see some accountability and allow input from the Sustainability Director.

Ramachandran, Old Village Road – noted the end result of the traffic change is reduction of speed encourages moving forward with the project.

Jane Roberts, Park Street – encourages delaying making a decision until the Main Street corridor study is done and the River Street dam is completed.

Daniel Gilfix, Vanderbelt Road – reminded the Board that the goal wasn't to make it one way but to have a continuous sidewalk which if it means to have the traffic pattern changed to move forward, and encouraged Board to approve the traffic change.

Kendra Wilson, River Street – changes are important for safety, supports the one way change.

Heather Sheehan, River Street – supports the change but commented that more change needs to happen.

**Mr. Snyder-Grant moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault that the Traffic Rules and Orders adopted by the Select Board under date of September 22, 2014, are hereby amended by adding the following street to Article VI, Section 1 (One-Way Streets): River Street, from the intersection of School Street to the intersection of Chadwick Street. The designated on-way vehicular travel on River Street from School Street to Chadwick Street shall be eastbound and voted unanimously by roll call vote.**

## **II. New/Special Business**

6. Consider Adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (HRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism



**Ms. Arsenault moved, seconded by Ms. Nagireddy to approve the proclamation and approved unanimously by roll call vote.**

7. Climate Action Plan Preview

Andrea Becerra, Sustainability Director introduced the Climate Action Plan. The presentation was conducted by MAPC members Charles Goohue, Hannah Stroud, Julie Curti, John Carter from ERG, and Van Du. The complex technical topics discussed were the Climate Emergency Declaration the passed at Town Meeting June 2020, the Climate Action Planning Process, the community engagement timeline, the CAP Blueprint Actions for analysis, the current steps that have been completed by the town, the CAP Phase II process, the mitigation approach by strategy, and the breakdown of 2030 emissions remaining after mitigation. Mr. Snyder-Grant questioned what would the scenario of meeting climate goals and questioned about the analysis what it would take to meet Acton's goals. Mr. Carter from ERG the ultimate goal would be net zero emission, the estimates are particularly aggressive and eliminate the need for fossil fuels, and de-carbonizing the electricity supply (within the goals of 2030). Ms. Becerra noted the takeaways for the town included energy efficient upgrades and heating improvements save homeowners money, incentives for landlords to install EV chargers and implementing energy efficiency programs, retrofitting older properties may require additional support for residents and the town to enact, additional advocacy and education will be important to secure funding from both state and federal government, and passing a state-wide policy moving to net-zero.

Terra, West Acton – question the use of the ten million estimated to the municipality is to be spent has control over versus spending on looking for grants or educating people looking for advocacy. Ms. Becerra noted the reconciliation of the money is for electric vehicle and building upgrades, not advocacy programs.

Karen Watkins, Strawberry Hill Road – requests the final document model, what immobilization is and consider an energy advocate to coordinate communication to the public.

Mr. Martin feels the goal of net-zero by 2030 is a difficult but achievable goal. And mentions that cost will be a serious issue and will have to rely on state and federal money and this plan allows us to be ready to receive grants

Mr. Snyder-Grant commented on the solution of achieving this goal is to stop burning fossil fuels. The economics of the goal depends of the changing availability of supply chain, planet changes. On a bigger scale, spending money to divert climate disaster is important. On a local scale, Acton inspires other communities with its efforts, and feels it is worth the risk on what the town can do now.

Ms. Nagireddy noted the importance on how the plan to be framed regarding the financial portion of the cost of the CAP, and what collaboration does the town have with the school district's climate action initiatives. Ms. Becerra noted the school district's findings were included in the CAP blueprint.



8. Announce Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) Agreement with Webo Solar Partners, LLC for Solar Project at 248 High Street and 16 Knox Trail

Mr. Mangiaratti announced to the Board that the town has reached an agreement doing the second Acton Water District project which will generate \$30,050 which will be utilized to invest in energy efficiency measures.

9. Approve Clarification to the September 13, 2021 Board Vote for ARPA Allocation to Revenue Replacement

Mr. Mangiaratti updated the Board the allocations of the ARPA funding the Select Board voted on in September. Some of the items that specifically were allocating money towards revenue replacement. **Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Mr. Snyder-Grant to use a portion of the \$400,000 ARPA funds approved by the Board on September 13, 2021 as follows for Fiscal Year 2022: \$196,000 for the COA facility lease, \$65,000 for Sewer Enterprise capital expenses and \$4,000 for public safety. The remaining \$135,000 will be carried over to reduce requests for ARPA revenue replacement funds in future eligible years, if needed and voted unanimously by roll call vote.**

10. Review Liaison Assignments

Board members were comfortable in keeping current liaison assignments. Mr. Martin noted that the South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee has not met in quite some time and has absorbed by the Transportation Advisory Committee. **Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Mr. Snyder-Grant to disband the South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee and transfer its function to the Transportation Advisory Committee was approved unanimously by roll call vote.**

11. Discussion of Board Communication Procedure

Mr. Charter noted two years ago, communication from the public was responded to from the Chair. With the summer, and if no one is around, the proposal would be he who responds to emails to the Select Board, and would acknowledge the email and include a Board member who would be most knowledgeable on the subject matter. The Board members generally agreed to the proposed communication procedure.

**III. Consent Items**

**Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Mr. Snyder-Grant to approve consent items 12-23 inclusive and approved unanimously by roll call vote.**

**Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Ms. Arsenault to adjourn and approved unanimously by roll call vote. Meeting adjourned at 11:10 PM.**

**Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting**

- Agenda, June 6, 2022
- Toole Design Feasability Study
- Proclamation



- Climate Action Plan
- Select Board Liaison Assignments
- RHSO Intermunicipal Agreement Amendment
- Acton Boxborough Farmers Market Application, 1634 Meadery, LLC
- Acton Boxborough Farmers Market Application, Aaronap Cellars
- Acton Boxborough Farmers Market Application, Blisspoint MEadery
- One Day Alcoholic Beverage Application, Rahul Srinivasan
- One Day Alcoholic Beverage Application, Anita Gajjala
- Accept Gift Memo, Recreation Department from Cambridge Savings Bank Dated May 23, 2022
- Accept Gift Memo, Recreation Department from Cape Cod Repellants/Marketing Dynamics Dated May 19, 2022
- Accept Gift Memo, Recreation Department from Oak Hill Mulch Company Dated May 19, 2022
- Accept Gift Memo, Recreation Department from Visiting Angels Dated May 23, 2022
- Accept Gift Memo, Recreation Department from Various Donors to Support the Acton Dog Park Dated May 23, 2022
- Accept Gift Memo, Recreation Department from Friends of the Gardner Field Dated May 12, 2022