

Katie Green

The **Historical Commission** met on December 9th. Mary Ann Ashton gave the Commission an update on the archaeological survey of the Ice House and Robbins Homestead foundations at Morrison Farm. The expert will give a full presentation on his findings to the Morrison Farm Committee at a later date. The Commission also discussed some of the CPC projects and they voted to send letters of support for Acton Congregational Church's projects to preserve their stained glass windows and to create a Master Plan.

The **Acton Leadership Group** met on December 10th. There were no significant updates from either the town or the region on FY'16. The group reviewed changes to the spreadsheet including changes to the overlay and new growth numbers and the preliminary Minuteman Tech assessment. There was a discussion of the Special Town Meeting. The group also agreed to postpone consensus on revenue projections until we have more information at one of our January meetings. We also discussed OPEB in light of the latest report from Segal on the town's OPEB liability. The town's liability is currently \$19.972M and the report noted that if we continue to fund OPEB at \$600k/year, they anticipate our liability will be \$31k in 21 years.

The **Acton Boxborough Regional School Committee** met on December 17th. The Superintendent presented his initial FY'17 budget proposal. There is a lot of detail available in the [packet](#) for the meeting on the School Committee's website. The high level overview is that the proposed budget includes a 4.1% increase in expenses with an overall assessment of \$67,506,593 to the two towns. This is a 5% increase over FY'16. Acton's assessment would be \$55,919,171, or a 5.2% increase. Boxborough's assessment would go up 4.2%. The proposal includes using \$200k from E&D and it assumes an 8% increase in health insurance and a 6.4% increase in Middlesex Retirement costs. The presentation also included information about enrollment trends and how the administration is proposing to address class size issues at some of the elementary schools. Overall, the budget includes a net of 4.6 new FTEs with 6.6 FTE positions added and 2 elementary classroom sections lost. There will be another budget presentation at the Committee's January 14th meeting followed by the region's Budget Saturday on January 23rd. Also during the meeting, the Superintendent proposed moving up the timeline for the second phase of the district's capital needs study. The study was split into two parts last year with the second part slated to be funded in the FY'17 budget. The Superintendent would like to get that second part started earlier and is proposing a 60/40 split for the second phase with 60% of the funding coming from the FY'16 budget. He and Clare will discuss where that money could come from and will ask the Committee for a vote on the proposal at their next meeting. The Committee also voted to approve the Superintendent's senior leadership restructuring plan. This plan included making the Director of Pupil Services the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services (they are currently hiring for this new position); changing the Director for Curriculum Assessment to Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning and appointing Deb Bookis to the position; and changing the Director of Personnel and Administrative Services to the Deputy Superintendent and appointing Marie Altieri to the position.

Peter J. Berry

CPC - In the process of vetting all applications for funding. Met with ACHC, AHA, Open Space Committee and Town admin. staff. Meeting on 12/17 with South Acton Congregational Church and the Acton Congregational Church. Questions about BoS voting recommendations will be on the Selectmen's agenda for Jan. 4.

CPA Study Committee - Met with Stuart Saginor, Ex. Director of the statewide Community Preservation Coalition. Meeting with representatives of affordable housing, historic preservation, open space, and recreation interests. Solicited input from all Town Boards and Committees. Will be reporting to the BoS on Feb. 8th.

KC Steering Committee: Finalizing proposed zoning amendments, design guidelines and KC infrastructure improvements. Planning process for public rollout and input leading up to Town Meeting.

Planning Board - Scheduling public hearing for KC zoning amendments for the end of February.

Green Advisory Board - Hass drafted new charge to broaden scope to include all green initiatives. Will be requesting BoS approval.

Site Plan Special Permit Review Committee - Has been meeting to gather information and formulate recommendations to present to the BoS in February.

Janet K. Adachi

Acton Community Housing Corporation, Monday, 12/14 – Presentation about proposed "friendly" Chapter 40B development of 10 townhouses and 2 duplexes at 12 Powder Mill Road, on Maynard border. Developer has met or will be meeting with some Town permitting boards; next step is review of proposal and comment by Town departments. Various updates, including about Town proposal to sell Morrison Farm house with carved-out 20K ft2 lot that will require Town Meeting rezoning approval; ACHC proposed report to CPA Study Committee about benefits to ACHC of Community Preservation Act funding; interest of Andy Richard of Miracle Field in increasing housing for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Acton Water District, Monday, 12/7 – Ms. Adachi missed meeting due to Board meeting at same time. Agenda included appointment with Town of Concord regarding Concord's request for connect to AWD on Knox Trail, to provide water service to former W.R. Grace parcel in Concord, which Town of Concord now owns.

Finance Committee, Tuesday, 12/8 - Update presentation by Doug Halley, recently retired Health Director who continues to work on local transportation matters: comments including need to reduce subsidy-cost to Town of door-to-door service amounting to 11-12 rides daily; possibility of pursuing contributions from businesses and other destinations served by the various transportation options. Update about FY17 point-of-view document, which still awaiting breakdown for municipal FY15 of budgeted and actual numbers; FinComm will post final POV, long-range plan, etc. on Town website. Liaison, other updates: Minuteman; South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee (proposed landscaping for Assabet River Rail Trail will cover some of area that SATSAC recommended for train station at 185K, so should reduce cost to operating budget); Acton Nursing Service (revenues for first half of FY16 at 84K, or under 200K annualized, which signifies increased cost to Town since 2015 Town Meeting; seems on target to cost Town 2M over 5 years; unknown what ANS Task Force is doing; FinComm to seek further information from Town Manager); Local meals tax (27K for 1st quarter FY16, or 108-110K annualized, which is lower than projected revenues in budget).

Land Stewardship Committee, Tuesday, 12/15 – Discussion of OARS (Organization for the Assabet, Sudbury and Concord Rivers) proposal for trails off Old High Street, on northerly side of Assabet River impoundment area, that would connect to existing Maynard trails. New website under development on Wordpress; suggestion to link website to LSC Facebook page. Work continuing on potential locations for Wright Hill trails; Sudbury Valley Trustees assisting with conservation restriction (other conservation areas fairly well-protected, with just a few remaining issues to address).

Minuteman Regional Vocational School District, Wednesday, 12/17 – As of this 12/17 writing, meeting of member-Town Selectmen-representatives scheduled to discuss

latest proposal regarding amendment of regional agreement, and proposed special town meeting to vote on amended regional agreement. To 2014 proposed amended agreement, add the following:

- 1) "Boxborough protocol," listing members whose Boards of Selectmen have indicated that members wish to withdraw from District, with withdrawal to be effective following unanimous approval by District approval by MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education agreement; and providing that withdrawing communities will not be responsible for any debt incurred after 12/15/2015. (Section X)
- 3) requirement that non-member communities seeking to send students to Minuteman pay tuition, capital and other costs equal to or greater than what members pay, except by 2/3 vote of School Committee to modify requirement.
- 4) change in minimum-enrollment requirement from 5 students to 1 student (Section IV(d)(2)(a).
- 5) change in provision pertaining to location of school to allow school to remain in a given community even if host community withdraws from District (Section III).

Water Resources Advisory Committee, Wednesday, 12/16 – Discussion of suggestions to provide Selectmen regarding WRAC's original mission, predating WRAC's diversion by Board in 2009 to work on two stormwater bylaws, the 2d of which Special Town Meeting approved in November. (Note: Original WRAC mission was to implement recommendations of 2004 Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan, which evaluated water-quality conditions in Town—drinking water, stormwater systems, wastewater systems-- and identified/prioritized areas of Town where water quality at higher risk, particularly with respect to wastewater systems; one result was unsuccessful effort in 2009 to expand Sewer District to locations in West Acton. Concerns that CWRMP identified with respect to wastewater management remain unaddressed.) WRAC believes Town needs overarching strategy for addressing water-related issues. WRAC could help to increase public, Town board/committee awareness of water-related issues. Will need to recruit new members once Board affirms mission. Ms. Adachi noted that Board would want guidance from new Land Use/Economic Development Director, Matt Selby, who will start in January. WRAC members eventually would like to meet with Mr. Selby.

495/Metrowest Partnership, Tuesday, 12/15 –Annual conference, The International, Bolton. Dr. Michael Harrison, Framingham State, presented results of 3d annual 495/Metrowest employer survey: slightly more positive outlook, more hiring and fewer layoffs planned; transportation/mass transit is top concern (last year was healthcare costs), also labor concerns (quality labor is top reason companies move to area but also is major challenge). Comments of keynote speaker Lt. Governor Polito included kudos to CrossTownConnect and Littleton Town Administrator Keith Bergman, and to Community Compact towns, including Acton. Employer-panel included Genzyme (acquired by Sanofi 2011), FIBA Technologies (manufactures containers for compressed gas), GE Healthcare Life Sciences. Genzyme representative noted challenge of hiring in

sciences due to numerous biotech/biopharma businesses in area; FIBA representative noted erroneous perception that manufacturing is dead in MA, and challenge, with aging workforce on manufacturing floor, of filling machinist and other "blue collar" positions.

AAA Northeast, Wednesday, 12/9 – Ribbon-cutting for new location at Acton Woods Plaza (Great Road and Route 27). Ms. Adachi offered remarks on behalf of Board (and self as long-time AAA member). Representatives of Acton Police Department (Deputy Chief Burroughs and Detective Prehl), Chamber of Commerce also present. Member services at Acton location include MA driver-license renewal (updated photo, etc.).

Acton-Boxborough Regional Proscenium Circus, "The Man Who Came to Dinner," Saturday, 12/12 – Attended with husband and friends, thanks to complimentary tickets that PC generously provided to Board members. Mr. Berry and Ms. Osman also attended. Very entertaining production, with impressively high-calibre student performances, as always.

Franny Osman

Council on Aging 12-7-15

Use of the center, legislative issues, and how to elicit ideas from the public on space needs in the new Senior Center were discussed. The Mission statement was approved and will be posted with the goals on the website:

“The mission of the COA Board is to serve as an advocate for seniors, aiding them to maximize their independence and quality-of-life through the support of programs and services to meet Senior Citizens health, economic, social and cultural needs.”

Collaborative Grant, Acton Health Department 12-8-15

The group continued to flesh out the ideas for reaching the isolated people in our community.

Finance Committee presentation about Transportation Measures 12-8-15

Doug Halley gave the same presentation to the Finance Committee as he gave to the Board of Selectmen recently.

Route 495/MetroWest Partnership Annual Meeting at The International Club in Bolton 12-15-15

It was quite interesting to hear presentations by Lieutenant Governor Polito and from three local companies about their needs, their hiring hurdles and successes, and what drew them to this area: GE Health Care; FIBA Technologies; and Sanofi-Genzyme. Hiring at all levels is important to these companies, and the high level of nearby employees is one factor. FIBA of Littleton is heavy industry and a native MA company.

Senior Center Study Committe (SCSC) 12-14-15

Staff including the Town Manager and directors of the Human Service departments attended to discuss the inclusion of the Human Service wing in the Center plan. They all seem to feel very positively about the plans. The SCSC will come to the Jan. 4 Board of Selectmen meeting and one thing we will do then is vote to confirm the Arlington St. property and the inclusion of the Human Services wing, which I don't believe we ever did at the last meeting the SCSC came to.

North South Rail Link 12-14-15

Politicians, architects, business people, labor leaders, continue to educate others about this project and its economic effects on the region. As I said last time, the second week of April there will be an education session in our area, including Mike Dukakis.

Commission on Disability 12-15-15

Putting off decision about buying a banner for now; it was learned it would cost \$720 for a banner similar to what Acton Nursing put up.

Two members did an inventory of the files.

Mark Hald will be facilitating installation of automatic openers for the doors on Town Hall and the Public Safety Facility's doors' automatic openers installed soon.

Danny Factor is writing a letter on the behalf of Commission on Disability about the CAT bus not being an accessible vehicle.

Joan Burroughs volunteered to be in touch with the Beacon and the Acton Unlimited about submitting a monthly update of Commission activities.

495/MetroWest Partnership Transportation Committee 12-16-15

Astrid Glynn, MassDot Rail and Transit Administrator, spoke about the difference between Transportation Management Associations and Regional Transit Authorities, and specifically commented on the useful work of CrossTown Connect. Ed Carr, MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) Administrator, described that region's growth from a couple of shuttles to a whole system. He mentioned that Demand Response (seniors, people with disabilities) within the MWRTA costs the same (4 million a year) yet represents only 20% of the ridership (I don't know if this is unduplicated riders or trips). Trying to make that system more efficient is a challenge. At the same time, he noted that the disabled community has 70% unemployment. Forty percent of calls to the call center are from people with disabilities. Both Astrid and Ed talked about bus rapid transit. Ed has a vision of the heavy freight vehicles (which do 10,000 times as much damage to the roads as cars, not sure if this is per vehicle or total) going in one lane and tolling that lane separately. Director Paul Matthews has an article in MassBenchmarks on "Fixing our Transportation System is Important for the Entire Commonwealth: A View from 495/MetroWest."