

**Hull Board of Selectmen
Final Minutes
January 30, 2020**

The meeting of the Hull Board of Selectmen was called to order at 7:30 pm on Thursday, January 30, 2020 at Hull High School, 180 Main Street, Hull, Massachusetts.

Present: Jennifer Constable; Vice-Chair; Greg Grey, Clerk; John Reilly, Member, and Kevin Richardson, Member.
Absent: Domenico Sestito, Chair. Also present were Town Counsel James Lampke and Town Manager Philip Lemnios.

APPROVALS

The Board approved the following:

Motion	Grey	To approve a One Day Liquor License for the Hull Knights of Columbus, 440 Nantasket Avenue, on Saturday February 8, 2020 from 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm for a birthday party
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Second Vote	Reilly Unanimous
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Motion	Richardson	To approve a One Day Liquor License for Jim Pitrolo, Nantasket-Hull Rotary Club, on February 26, 2020 from 4:00 pm to 10:00 pm at the Hull Lifesaving Museum for Winter Drink Scholarship Fundraiser
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Second Vote	Grey Unanimous
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Motion	Richardson	To approve the request from Lori West, Town Clerk, re: Approval and Signature and of 2020 Presidential Primary Warrant to be held at Memorial Middle School located at 81 Central Avenue on Tuesday, the 3 rd of March, 2020 from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm for the following purpose: To cast votes in a state primary for candidates of both parties for the following offices: Presidential Preference for the Commonwealth, State Committeeman for the Norfolk and Plymouth senatorial district and Town Committee for the Town of Hull
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Second Vote	Grey Unanimous
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Harriman Associates re: Nantasket Beach Unified Work Plan Presentation

Representatives from Harriman Associates were present at the meeting to make a presentation regarding the Nantasket Beach Unified Work Plan. Constable explained that this plan was the result of an effort started several years ago by both the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board which was funded through a grant from the Community Compact and the Seaport Economic Council. The main purpose of the study was to bring together all of the major stakeholders in the front beach area and also to pull together all of the existing and ongoing plans into one operational document. Harriman Associates was the consultant on the project and they worked together with the Town, the Hull Redevelopment Authority, DCR, and all active committee members. Constable then turned the floor over to Steve Cecil from Harriman Associates, who was the Principal in charge of this project.

Cecil introduced the other members of the Team who were present: Emily Bennett, Director of Planning; Liz Oltman, Senior Traffic Engineer; and Frank Mahady, from FXM Associates. He stated that the purpose of the study was to make sure that all of the plans that have been ongoing over the years were able to work together. He pointed out that studies and plans related to the beach area have been going on since 2000 and have looked at such areas as traffic and circulation, HRA parcel planning, and resiliency planning. It was Harriman's goal to make sure they knew where people were coming from so that they could formulate a realistic list of "to do" items that would help move the Nantasket beach area forward. They set up a steering committee of people from the Town to help with this process. They have conducted a series of investigations, interviews and evaluations and have prepared a draft master plan. Based on the comments they receive this will be finalized to make sure that it is available for future decisions and actions that Hull might take with respect to the beach area.

Cecil stated that there are key findings and recommendations in various categories. A major area that they looked at is Resiliency. Based on new data from FEMA, it is estimated that in the course of a "100-year storm" (and he pointed out that these seem to be occurring with greater frequency and intensity), the Nantasket Beach area could experience 3' flooding. Current regulations do not permit the construction of the old style buildings or even major renovations where the ground floor levels are going to be within the front flood plain without really expensive measures being taken. Most new renovations have the ground floor above the street level. However, if the Town wants a pedestrian area with houses, etc. along the street they will have to use imaginative and careful planning to make sure that this happens. One possibility might be to use the ground level area for parking underneath a raised main structure. He did point out that historic buildings are exempt from these requirements, so buildings that are documented as historic might be able to remain at ground level. However, this would be problematic if the area is subject to frequent flooding. In short, the Town will have to work with property owners to come up with ideas and regulations that will make the area more resilient.

Mahady then spoke regarding current market conditions. He said that there are some positive signs in terms of redevelopment in the area. It is now projected that due to easy access to and from the City by ferry, there will be a healthy demand for professional office space as well as for rental housing. There is also potential for recreational/gaming facilities, although this potential is harder to quantify. The cost of redevelopment is high, but in the long-term could provide a net financial benefit to the Town. He estimated that redeveloping this area could provide approximately 130 jobs, and possibly 120 rental units and approximately 65,000 square feet of retail office space.

Cecil pointed out that Hull's tourism is seasonal and that it is not enough to support sustained growth for the Town. The emphasis of the Plan is to figure out ways to reinforce a year-round community that will still have the recreational opportunities provided by the beach. He feels that the Town will need to look carefully at zoning regulations, especially as it relates to the "ground floor" question and will have to come up with creative ways to solve the flood plain problem.

Cecil stated that in the area of Urban Use and Design, Nantasket has always had clusters of uses that are not necessarily very well connected. It will be necessary to "connect the dots" and to create a clustering of mixed uses that will provide a high quality pedestrian environment. Based on community input, they feel that there is potential for this area to be a great arts and culture district. He stressed that it is important to translate ideas into specific proposals so that there is enough incentive for redevelopment. Otherwise the area could remain stagnant or even regress. He feels that there are possibilities for creative ways to "repurpose" historic buildings for other uses in the area. The Town should advocate with DCR for better use of these historic buildings.

It is Harriman's feeling that the Open Space strategy will be extremely important. They reviewed DCR's proposed use of open space and suggested rearranging some things to make the DCR plan more attractive including adding some landscaping and green spaces. It will be important to have plans for the open spaces and the streetscape improvements to work together. There have already been some good improvements in the area of streetscapes. The key will be to keep the design consistent and to transform the entire area.

With respect to the areas of Transportation, Street Framework, Pedestrian and Bike Networks, and Transit, one of the most critical pieces that came out of the study was the two-way traffic scenario for Hull Shore Drive and

Nantasket Avenue. This scenario exemplifies a lot of the goals that were in a number of the plans that were collected. The overall goal is to have residents and visitors to the beach area come, park once, and then be able to use all of the available amenities without having to move their cars, creating a more inviting atmosphere for people to walk around and more opportunities for transit and shuttles around the beach area. There are currently approximately 2100 parking spaces in the beach area but some of these may be lost when DCR reconfigures its lots and when HRA lots are redeveloped. The goal would not be to replace lost parking spots, but to better manage existing parking. The Town will need to develop tools to handle year-round parking and use it more efficiently. This might include developing an ITS system to let people know where parking is available and also training people to use transit rather than relying on their personal vehicles. The Town should work with DCR to determine what ongoing parking strategies will be.

Cecil stated that Harriman has put together a plan but that the Town will need to develop an organized stewardship which is focused consistently just on the Nantasket area in order to avoid “dropping the ball” on this project. He suggested that the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board organize a committee comprised of Town staff members, representatives from the various Boards, and members of the community, that will bring information together and apply for grants as they come up. It should be the Committee’s responsibility, as well, to report back regularly on any progress that has occurred. He emphasized that this area needs a consistent advocate that will keep all of the various pieces of the plan together.

Constable then said they would take questions from the audience.

One resident asked if Harriman had looked at analogous towns and situations in order to see how things might go in Hull. Cecil said that they did but that this particular area is very unusual and that there weren’t any places that were exactly the same as Hull in terms of geology and geography. Hull is a very narrow place with an emphasis on large public facilities. The closest analogy would be in some areas of Europe where there are clusters of islands that are connected and face the issue of moving from one island to another, which is similar to Hull’s problems in terms of getting from one part of the Town to the other.

Susan Morrison, 118 Bay Street, raised two points. She mentioned that at the moment it appears that HRA land is being used as a storage facility for 18-wheelers and she questioned if this were part of the plan. She also stated that the Greenbush line doesn’t run consistently on weekends, especially over the summer, and wondered if the Town had considered trolley pickup at Nantasket Junction. Lemnios addressed the issue of the 18-wheelers and explained that these are associated with the ongoing renovations at the hotel, which has leased the lot, and it is anticipated that these will be removed by the summer. Constable stated that with respect to the Greenbush line that one of the suggestions of the plan was to make a connection by bus to Nantasket Junction. Cecil said trolleys could also be considered as a way to get people from the train and the ferry to the beach area.

Steven Greenberg, 23 T Street, asked for more of an explanation as to why tourism had been rejected as being a vibrant part of revenue generation for the community. Maxim answered, using the example of Cape Cod. He stated that visitors and tourists to the Cape only make up about 25% of the total economy. Tourism is a huge part of the Cape for about 3 months out of the year and it isn’t possible to base a successful economy on only three months of revenue. The same holds true for Hull. It will be necessary to develop the Nantasket area in a way that appeals to the resident market, including the development of office, retail and rental space. Tourism is essentially “the icing on the cake” for Hull and should not be the main focus of a redevelopment effort. Lemnios affirmed this thought and said that the goal is to create a great place for Hull residents to visit. Cecil pointed out that if Hull residents are excited about the area, more tourists will want to visit.

A member of the audience raised the issue of what would be the most effective ways for the various entities involved in the plan to work together. Cecil again recommended setting up committees to deal with specific areas – transportation, grants, DCR master plan, zoning, etc. By having a small group of people focus on each area over time there will be a greater chance of successfully putting the various pieces together.

Hull resident, Polly Roe raised the issues of the Carousel, which she feels is good for tourism, and the possibility of creating a space for the great Hull artist’s group in town and asked Cecil to speak in more depth about

the process for working with DCR. She also asked wanted to know if the plan is a “done deal.” Lemnios explained that this is a planning document that will be put in place to provide direction and that nothing in it is written in stone. However there are themes within the document that can provide guidance (for example how to improve transportation links). It would be the role of the Committee to determine exactly how these various themes would be worked on and it will ultimately be up to the residents of the Town to decide what they would like to have happen. It is clear that this area is changing but the question is whether the Town will let the changes just happen or whether they will take a proactive approach. The Board will review the plan and determine what elements they want to make actionable and then move forward on those. Tonight’s meeting is the first step in that process.

Cecil emphasized that it is extremely important for the Town to stay on top of DCR. This will require time and patience but in the end DCR will be responsive to political considerations at the state level. He suggested that Hull might want to consider getting in touch with other towns that also have DCR facilities and similar issues and work together to try to have a meeting with the Governor to take a look at how DCR facilities are used. There is a great deal that can be done with these facilities, but it will take a great deal of effort.

The question was raised as to whether adoption of a plan like this can be beneficial to the Town in terms of applying for and receiving grants. Lemnios said that it will be very helpful. The Town is already active in this area on several levels. They have been successful in getting capital grants for infrastructure and have been actively pursuing resiliency grants for both the Nantasket beach area as well as other parts of Town. However, having a document such as this is very powerful when you are putting together grant applications as it shows that the Town has a focus and has done up front work before applying. In many cases when a grant is awarded there is a time line in which the money is to be used and it is helpful if the entity awarding the grant knows that the recipient is ready to move forward once the grant is made.

Another member of the audience said that the numbers in Hull schools is decreasing and that the Town has had problems attracting families with children. It was her feeling that the lack of a Town center was part of this problem and she asked if there was a possibility in the plan for creating an area where residents could come together. Cecil stated that it is a traditional New England concept to have a Town square or center, but that Hull is shaped differently. It is a long, thin area, which makes this difficult. He said it will be necessary for the Town to look at this and possibly to construct several different places that could be easily connected.

The issue of possibly converting Nantasket Avenue from a one-way to a two-way road was also raised. Liz Oltman explained that planning and transportation ideas tend to go in waves. Transportation planners are now starting to move away from the idea of one-way transportation because it limits where people can go. Cecil agreed that two-way roads work better and are more convenient.

Cecil was asked about ways of bringing artists into the area. He said that there is a wide range of things that can be done to attract artists, including co-working spaces and noted that the Town is trying to create zoning that will support multi-use spaces. It might be possible to create living and working spaces in the same building, perhaps with condos on the second floor and a retail/office space/artist studio on the ground floor.

In the area of housing, Cecil stated that it is important to build all types of housing in order to accommodate seniors who might want to downsize as well as families with children who might want to move into the Town. Maxim stated that the creation of affordable rental housing is also important as it provides opportunities for people to live and work in the community. One member of the audience stated that he and his wife had just moved to Hull from the Seaport District in Boston and were able to do this because of the ferry. Without that service they would not have been able to commute to and from the City for work. It was his feeling that there are a lot of other people in his age group (early to mid-thirties) who would potentially move to Hull. He stated that the Unified Work Plan is a great start and a great foundation for the redevelopment of the area.

A member of the audience raised the issue of the lack of consistency in public transportation going to and from the train station. It is difficult getting from one mode of transportation to another in the Town. He also expressed the

concern that converting Nantasket Avenue back to a two-way road would lead to a great deal of congestion. Cecil said that there would need to be some new traffic configurations and that there was no perfect solution. Lemnios said that dealing with DCR and the MBTA is not always easy but that the Town is constantly trying to work with them to get better interconnectivity. This past summer there was a trolley service in the Town and this will be back next summer. Constable stated that having an actual document helps further conversations with the various agencies.

A member of the audience asked how long the Board anticipated the process for implementing the plan would take. Constable said that this would vary, and pointed out that some of the recommendations that emerged in the planning process are already underway. The document also identifies short and long-term action items.

Jim Callahan, Operations Manager of the Carousel, said that it has been a frustrating process. He asked when there was to be a meeting on this issue and who would be going. Chris Dilorio, Planning Board Director, said that there will be a meeting with DCR next week but the time hasn't been set yet.

Constable thanked Cecil for the presentation and stated that the entire effort had come about because they had heard from so many people that they wanted to make the Town better. She also thanked the Planning Board and the Economic Development Committee who had voted unanimously to support the plan, as well as the Chamber of Commerce and the HRA for their participation. She recognized and thanked Rep. Joan Meschino for her attendance at tonight's presentation.

Constable encouraged the Board of Selectmen to adopt this plan. She feels that with the DCR meeting coming up next week it will be important for the Board to make a statement that they are willing to work together and that they have put time, energy and money into this effort.

Reilly stated that he does feel that a major piece that is missing into Nantasket Pier is a water taxi. He feels that this is something that people in Hull might utilize and he asked Representative Meschino to pass this idea along.

Motion	Reilly	To adopt the Nantasket Beach Unified Work Plan with the stipulation that it is a living document, with changes being made as needed.
Second	Grey	
Vote	Unanimous	

Constable thanked the members of the community for attending the presentation and asked that they sign an attendance sheet as they left.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Recorded by Kathleen Fanning

Documents

The following documents were included in the members' packets or were presented during the meeting and area available in the Select Board's office upon request.

- Agenda for January 30, 2020
- Nantasket Beach Unified Work Plan