

2008 Planning Board Report

Looking Ahead to Harrisville's Future

Harrisville's Master Plan was adopted by the Planning Board in February 2000. The Plan includes policy statements, studies, and recommended objectives for land use, economic development, conservation/open space, community facilities, transportation, housing, and recreation. In 2008, Harrisville applied for a state grant program to begin working towards an update but did not receive a grant. In 2009, we will work with staff at Southwest Region Planning Commission (SWRPC) and others to get advice on updating the Master Plan. We will also work on adding a section to the plan that addresses historic and cultural resources. The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) report is advisory to the Selectmen and identifies needs for capital expenses in future years. The Town each year then sets aside a portion of the money for the future expense. Anne Havill has ably led the CIP committee for several years, refining the report's scope and presentation. 2008 was a transition year as two members, Frank Meneghini and Howard Clark, resigned. We thank them and members Anne Havill and Charles Michal for their dedication and hard work to improve the CIP.

Regulating Land Use

During 2008, the Planning Board responded to several initiatives and decisions from the state legislature, courts, and executive departments. We worked with the Conservation Commission and the Zoning Board of Adjustment to develop proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinances for voting in March 2009. Examples are a revised Shoreland protection ordinance, because of changes in state law, and revised criteria for authorizing variances because of court decisions. The three boards also developed initiatives of their own.

Subdivision Applications and Other Actions in 2008

The Board approved three two-lot subdivisions, disapproved one two-lot subdivision, and approved one boundary line adjustment and one technical subdivision. A Superior Court case, filed in 2007, that appealed the Board's conditions of approval for a four-lot subdivision was withdrawn after the Board approved a two-lot subdivision for the same tract of land. The Board held two preliminary conceptual consultations to discuss potential major subdivisions of large tracts of land. The Chairman approved two Voluntary Mergers of existing lots of record after consultation with the Board.

Operations and Staffing

In 2008, the Planning Board held twelve regular monthly meetings, seven work sessions, and made one site visit. This year, three members: Mike Wilder, Jane Meneghini, and Ranae O'Neil, resigned. We welcomed two new members: Charles Michal and Ned Hulbert. We would like to thank all new, previous, and present members including Noel Greiner, Anne Havill, and Jay Jacobs, for their contributions and dedicated service. Sherry Sims has done an exemplary job with the many administrative aspects of the Board's work that include meeting minutes, agendas, public notices, and mailings. We also appreciate support received from the Selectmen's Office, the Town Clerk's Office, and Town Counsel Silas Little. Board members attended training at the Office of Energy and Planning's spring conference in Manchester, municipal law lectures in Jaffrey by the Local Government Center, workshops in various locations, and the fall dinner hosted by directors and staff of the SWRPC in Troy.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Howe, Chairman