

## Hanscom Area Towns Committee (HATS) December 21, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerks of HATS member towns, the HATS meeting convened virtually by Zoom video conference on December 21, 2023 at 7:04 pm.

### **Present:**

**Select Board Members:** Doug Lucente, Lexington Select Board and outgoing HATS Chair; Mark Sandeen, Lexington Select Board and incoming HATS Chair; Emily Mitchell, Bedford Select Board; Jim Hutchinson, Lincoln Select Board.

**Other HATS Members:** Margaret Coppe, Lexington at-large; Charles Hornig, Lexington Planning Board Member; Gary Taylor, Lincoln Planning Board Member; Ephraim Flint, Lincoln Planning Board Member; Terri Ackerman, Concord Select Board.

**Guests:** Amber Goodspeed, Massport; Anne Calhoun; Anne O'Connor; Glen Kernusky, Hanscom AFB; Kati Winchell, Save Our Heritage; Barbara Katzenberg, Lexington Town Meeting Member; Janet Rothrock, Concord; Lois Suarez.

### **Administrative Items**

Doug Lucente called the meeting to order at 7:04pm. Doug Lucente moved to approve Minutes from June 22, 2023, Second by Jim Hutchinson. Roll call vote in favor of motion was unanimous, including both Doug Lucente and Mark Sandeen. Next Doug Lucente announced his retirement from the Committee and introduced Mark Sandeen as his replacement as the Select Board representative from Lexington. Doug Lucente then called for a nomination of a new Chair to replace him, and Jim Hutchinson moved to nominate Mark Sandeen as Chair, seconded by Doug Lucente. Mark Sandeen accepted the nomination and the roll call vote in favor of the motion was unanimous. Mark Sandeen then took over as Chair of the meeting.

### **Municipal Updates**

**Lincoln:** Jim Hutchinson talked about how Lincoln has come up with 5 different options for complying with Housing Choice Act and residents, using a multiple choice voting mechanism, had just approved at a December 2, 2023 Special Town Meeting moving forward to further develop the zoning bylaws that would go around the option that had the 3A zones all clustered around our train station, which will be voted on at Annual Town Meeting in March. Lincoln also similarly considered 3 different options for developing a Community Center and voted to proceed with planning of the full price option, with a vote on the more fully fleshed out plans and bonding for the project also to occur at March ATM. Lincoln is also actively discussing and pursuing its DEIR initiative, as well as finalizing its Climate Action Plan and pursuing first steps of that plan. Gary Taylor and Jim Hutchinson added that Lincoln is discussing Town Meeting process and considering various changes to that process. Jim Hutchinson mentioned that many changes to Town Meeting had already occurred to try and streamline it, including heavy use of consent calendar, shifting some presentation time to other prior nights, and providing live streaming so that residents could follow Town Meeting remotely and come join in person when they wished, but that more significant measures such as remote voting and "Australian ballot" (where deliberation occurs on one day and voting on another) were of interest to residents but Lincoln has been advised would require a home rule petition since those changes would be contrary to Open Town Meeting laws in Massachusetts.

**Bedford:** Emily Mitchell talked about Bedford also conducting HCA work, although they have not come to consensus yet, with resident opinions divided as well. Bedford is continuing its work on a new fire station, and they plan to bring a warrant article for construction costs to Town Meeting in March. The site they acquired is in a Historic District, so their Historical Commission is involved as well, and has been part of design process. Cost of the

building is still unknown, and they expect to get estimates in early January. Their previous cost ballpark was 17mil, but they know it will be more now. Bedford also has a new Town Manager, Matt Hanson, who has been in place since the end of September. Bedford also has two new hires in new positions: an Energy and Sustainability Manager, which was funded a few years ago, but it took them a few years to find someone to fill the role; and a Therapeutic Manager in the Rec Department, to open up programming to more kids. Bedford has also been having conversations about Town Meeting process, especially around scheduling of the sessions, with no agreement amongst residents emerging from informal surveys. Residents have also expressed interest in the Australian ballot idea of separating deliberation and voting into separate days, but Bedford agrees with Lincoln that this does not fit with MA Open Town Meeting laws and would require a home rule petition.

**Lexington:** Mark Sandeen reported that Lexington had submitted the joint HATS letter to the Governor. Lexington Select Board also approved funding for the HFAC air pollution study, and hope it will be done in time to compliment the North Airfield Draft Environmental Impact Report (“DEIR”), which is now expected in mid-January. Lexington has completed construction on a bus shelter in Lexington center on a MBTA bus route to Hanscom.

Lexington just conducted its first hybrid Town Meeting, with one Town Meeting member casting their ballot from an airplane at 35,000 feet! (It was noted that Lexington has a representative form of town meeting and thus is allowed to have remote voting, whereas the other three HATS Towns have Open Town Meeting and cannot offer remote voting). Lexington also recently received word from the state that it is in compliance with Section 3A of the Housing Choice Act. Lexington is also making good progress on Bedford St / Hartwell Ave Complete Streets project, and invites other HATS towns to provide feedback on this project. Information about how to provide comments on the project are available at the project webpage. <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/407/Bedford-Hartwell-Complete-Streets-Transp>

Charles Hornig reported that Lexington has developed site plan review regulations for compliance with the MBTA Communities Act. No one has filed for site plan review yet, but the Lexington Planning Department expects someone to do so in the near future. Lexington has tightened up the transportation demand management and mitigation requirements in its transportation management overlay district.

Mark Sandeen reported that Lexington has adopted the specialized energy code, which is going into force as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, and are participating in the 10-town demonstration program to prohibit use of fossil fuels in new construction and major renovations. Finally, Lexington is working on a feasibility study with MSBA for a new high school building, which is expected to be 450,000 square feet and cost roughly \$1,000 per square foot.

**Concord:** Terri Ackerman reported on behalf of Linda Escobedo, who could not attend tonight. Concord is also working on their MBTA Communities Act response. Their Town Meeting Moderators are setting up task force looking at Town Meeting processes. Their middle school construction project is proceeding well. They are also adopting the enhanced stretch code, and the 10-town new construction ban on fossil fuel use. Finally, they did a FOIA request about the Hanscom North Airfield expansion, and are willing to share the documents they received, including the RFP, and a memorandum of agreement with the developers. These files will be sent to Doug Lucente, who agreed to distribute them to any HATS members who would like it. Emily Mitchell noted that these files had already been shared with HFAC members.

## **Hanscom Updates**

**Massport:** Amber Goodspeed briefly repeated the update given at the last HFAC meeting. The salt storage shed in middle of parking lot is being relocated, with a bid for that work going out in January. Signature Flight Support’s old FBO facility has been demolished, and paving over of that land will occur in Spring 2024. The vegetation management plan that occurs every 5 years, which maps out trees and other vegetation that are

getting to be too big, is now in process, and will be discussed with HATS town conservation commissions in Q1 of 2024.

**Hanscom AFB:** Glen Kernusky discussed the status of the Sartains Gate project, which is 70% complete. All new building exterior work is complete, and they are working on interiors. Pavement is installed, and they are working on curbing now. Project completion is expected by this spring or early summer. Finally, they have a new commander of the Air Force Life Cycle Center, and they will hold a public welcoming event in the spring.

## Future Agendas

Mark Sandeen polled the group for desired future agenda items.

Emily Mitchell suggested that we invite guest speakers. Previously we have had the head of Massport; roundtables with head of departments (such as DPW) to share best practices. Finally, she suggested a forum on Town Meeting innovations, since all of us discussed that in today's updates.

Jim Hutchinson suggested a review of the Hanscom North Airfield DEIR. Mark Sandeen noted that could have a technical component and a political component, and it was noted that perhaps HFAC is better prepared for the technical response, while HATS might focus its efforts on the political response. With only 30 days to respond to the DEIR, it was acknowledged that a joint letter from HATS Towns would be challenging to arrange, but maybe if they could discuss the DEIR at a HATS meetings, we might benefit from hearing what other towns were thinking so that similar topics could perhaps be covered in individual town letters. Mark Sandeen suggested we get someone (Jim Hutchinson, or perhaps someone more knowledgeable like Neil Rasmussen) to brief HATS on the scope of the EIR. Emily Mitchell noted that it would be nice to get a presentation on results from the HFAC air pollution study, but she is not sure when this will be available and thus, we cannot schedule that yet, although the hope is that it is ready in a similar timeframe to the EIR so that it can be factored in to the responses by the Towns also.

Glen Kernusky noted that the current Hanscom AFB commander is coming to the end of her tenure this summer, but he would ask her if she'd like to come talk to HATS. Amber Goodspeed mentioned that Massport has an interim CEO now, so that it would probably would be best to wait on inviting them to speak to HATS and instead wait for a permanent CEO to be appointed. The timeframe for that is currently unknown. Another interesting guest speaker to HATS might be Simone Monteleone from the Park Service.

Margaret Coppe suggested a report on the 250<sup>th</sup> celebration, although Jim Hutchinson and Mark Sandeen preferred not to duplicate work being done by the 250<sup>th</sup> committees in each town. Margaret also suggested an update on what is happening at the State House, or from the head of the MBTA about transportation. Finally, HATS could continue to discuss housing initiatives.

## Meeting Schedule

Mark Sandeen asked about future meeting dates, and Emily Mitchell mentioned historically HFAC has met roughly every other month, something like Feb March April June Sept Nov. After discussion, it was agreed to hold the **next meeting on February 8, 2024**, with Mark Sandeen needing to check availability of Linda Escobedo. March was agreed to be too busy for most due to Town Meetings being held that month. A subsequent meeting was tentatively scheduled for **April 25, 2024**.

## Adjournment

Jim Hutchinson moved to adjourn, and Emily Mitchell seconded. Roll call vote in favor of the motion was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 8:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Hutchinson  
Lincoln Select Board Member

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