

Hanscom Area Towns Committee (HATS) May 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerks of HATS member towns, the HATS meeting convened in a meeting via a recorded video conference on May 18, 2023 at 7:04 pm

Present:

Select Board Members: Doug Lucente, Lexington HATS Chair and assigned Clerk for this meeting; Emily Mitchell, Bedford; Linda Escobedo, Concord; Jim Hutchinson, Lincoln.

Other HATS Members: Margaret Coppe, Lexington; Charles Hornig, Lexington Planning Board Member; Gary Taylor, Lincoln Planning Board Member; Steven Hagan, Bedford Planning Board Member.

Guests: Glen Kernusky, Hanscom 66th Air Base Group Public Affairs; Jonathan Dwyer, Lincoln; Amber Goodspeed, Massport; Simone Monteleone, Minute Man National Park Superintendent;

Welcome and Introductions:

Mr. Lucente welcomed participants noting that the meeting was being recorded. Each Member of HATS introduced themselves and noted their past involvement with HATS.

Meeting Minutes:

Meeting Minutes from June 30, 2022 were not available and will be placed on a future agenda for approval. The Minute-Taker for future meetings will rotate among the 4 communities. Lexington is responsible for the minutes of this meeting. The upcoming meetings will be done by Bedford, then Concord, and then Lincoln.

ACTION ITEM:

- Ms. Escobedo and Mr. Dwyer will both check files to try to locate the meeting minutes for June 30, 2022.

Updates on HATS Membership as of 5/18/2023:

HATS Town	Select Board	Planning	Conservation	At Large
<i>Bedford</i>	Emily Mitchell	Steve Hagan	VACANT	VACANT
<i>Concord</i>	Linda Escobedo	VACANT	VACANT	VACANT
<i>Lexington</i>	Doug Lucente, Chair	Charles Hornig	VACANT	Margaret Coppe*
<i>Lincoln</i>	Jim Hutchinson	Gary Taylor / Ephraim Flint (Alt)	VACANT	VACANT

ACTION ITEM:

- Select Board Members from each town will follow-up on vacancies.
- Ms. Coppe will reach out to Lexington Town Clerk her appointment listing.

Website Domain Renewal:

The current domain registration for the HATS website, <http://www.hanscomareatownscommittee.com>, is expiring in June. Mr. Dwyer explained that the website is hosted on squarespace.com with an annual fee of \$250. The fee is paid by the chairing community each year. The main website tasks include: maintaining member information; posting agendas; posting minutes; and sharing meeting recordings. Meeting recordings are stored on the host town's website. Mr. Dwyer has paid the fee in previous years and will do so again for this renewal. Since Mr. Dwyer is no longer on HATS, Mr. Hornig volunteered to take on the website tasks with his guidance.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Mr. Dwyer will pay for renewal and seek reimbursement from Lexington.
- Mr. Dwyer and Mr. Hornig will connect to transition website.

- Mr. Lucente will have recording posted on LexMedia.

Municipal Highlights-Bedford:

New Town Manager – Ms. Mitchell reported that Sarah Stanton has left her position as Town Manager to take a position with the State as Undersecretary of Economic Strategies under the Executive Office for Housing and Economic Development. A search committee is being formed, and a search consultant has been hired. It is anticipated that a new Town Manager will be hired in the fall.

New Fire Station – Land was acquired in the center of town within the Historic District last year and an owner's project manager is on board for a new Fire Station. The design process is just getting started. A designer was hired and a building committee was established. Meetings with abutters and community members will be held in June.

MBTA Housing Zoning – Mr. Hagan added that Bedford still needs to zone 50 acres to accommodate 750 more units. This is a top priority for Bedford, along with starting their 10-year plan.

Municipal Highlights-Concord:

Housing Production Plan – Ms. Escobedo reported that Concord approved its housing production plan in December. The plan includes a number of ambitious projects, but its success will depend on the state's transfer fee.

Town Meeting - Concord completed the Annual Town Meeting. There were 46 items on the warrant. Most notable items: A new zoning bylaw for mobile food establishments; A citizens petition to prohibit gas-powered leaf blowers; An appropriation for the 250th anniversary celebration.

Middle School Building - Concord recently awarded a contract for the construction of a new middle school. The cost of the construction is \$85 million, with the anticipated total costs being over \$100 million. This project will require significant tax increases for Concord residents.

Hanscom Field Expansion - Hanscom Field expansion is a topic of concern for Concord. The expansion will have a significant impact on the environment and traffic in the area.

Municipal Highlights-Lincoln:

Building Projects – Mr. Hutchinson reported that the renovation of the K-8 School is nearly complete and under budget. The total cost was \$94 million. Lincoln is considering building a Community Center on the same campus. This project is in the design phase and is a few years out.

Solar Project – Lincoln is working on a project to install solar panels on the landfill.

Fossil Fuel-Free Building Code – Similar to other communities, Lincoln adopted a bylaw that requires new homes to be built without fossil fuels.

Route 2A Repaving Project - This is a major project that HATS should continue to monitor.

North Airfield Expansion – Lincoln is also concerned about the expansion of Hanscom Airfield.

Redevelopment and Rezoning of Mall Area – Mr. Taylor reported that Lincoln is considering redeveloping and rezoning the mall area. This project is part of the Housing Choice Act, which requires municipalities to provide affordable housing.

Hanscom School Contract - The contract with the federal government to operate the Hanscom School is up for renewal. Lincoln will be renegotiating this contract.

Municipal Highlights-Lexington:

Police Station – Mr. Lucente reported that Lexington is building a new Police Station in the center of Town. The steel is up and the Town is working to make it a net-zero building.

Streetscape Projects – Lexington has finished its Center Streetscape Project and just began construction on the Battle Green Streetscape Project.

Town Meeting – Mr. Hornig reported that Lexington recently finished Annual Town Meeting and had several planning articles pass. Lexington passed the MBTA community zoning, and expanded slightly the boundaries of its center business district.

New High School – Lexington is in the process of designing a new high school. The projected costs will be upwards of \$400m.

Complete Streets Project – Lexington is in the process of working on a complete streets project on Bedford Street, Hartwell Avenue, and Wood Street. Construction would not be likely for 10-15 years from now.

Cultural District – Ms. Coppe reported that Lexington today had a ribbon cutting for the new cultural district.

Route 2A Project – A portion of the Route 2A Project will go through Lexington, and a recent design shows the bridge over RTE 128 being redone with roundabouts at either end.

Update: Hanscom Air Force Base: (Reported by Glen Kernusky)

Hiring Event on Tuesday, May 23 – There are over 400 civilian positions available in a variety of career fields. This event is open to everyone who is interested in working for the federal government.

AT&T Cellular Service – There is a collaborative effort to improve cellular service at the Base.

Resiliency - The base is working with the Massachusetts Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force to explore ways to bolster energy resiliency at the installation. This effort is still in the planning stages.

New Visitor Center Construction and Commercial Vehicle Inspection Building – Construction is underway for the guardhouse and booths at Vandenberg Drive. The project is on track for completion in late September.

New Commuter Shuttle Service for Hanscom Employees - The shuttle runs four times in the morning and three times in the afternoon between the base and the Concord commuter rail system. This service is part of the base's initiative to reduce the overall number of vehicles on the roads in the local communities and coming into the base.

Update: Hanscom Airfield / Massport: (Reported by Amber Goodspeed)

Atlantic Aviation is constructing 320,000 square foot hangars. Construction is ongoing and is expected to be completed in 2024.

Runway 523 will be reconstructed over the course of the summer. The reconstruction will begin on June 5 and is expected to take approximately 35 days. During this time, runway 11-9 will be used for all aircraft operations.

The 2022 Environmental Status and Planning Report is underway. The report is a comprehensive study of all aspects of the airport, including air traffic, noise, air quality, historical resources, and natural resources. The draft report is expected to be submitted to the secretary at the end of this year.

The North Airfield area has seen a number of changes in recent years. Atlantic Aviation has demolished 36 T hangars and erected eight new hangars in their place. North Airfield Ventures has won the bid to develop the North Airfield area, which encompasses just under 30 acres. The company has also won the bid to develop the adjacent Navy hangar. The project team is currently working on a draft environmental impact report, which is expected to be released this fall.

Signature Flight Support is improving and updating their existing campus. The company is constructing a new fixed base operator building, which is expected to be completed in June. When the new building is completed, Signature Flight Support will move into it and demolish the old building.

Update: Hanscom Field Advisory Committee (HFAC):

Several participants discussed the North Airfield Project and its potential impact on the environment and local communities. Ms. Mitchell provided context about the project, mentioning that the purchase of the Navy Hangar and the development of the acreage were separate events. The proposal involves building hangars for private jets, with the goal of reducing "ferry flights" where planes are kept elsewhere and flown in and out of Hanscom. Concerns were raised about the potential increase in greenhouse gas emissions and the overall environmental impact of expanded jet travel. Bedford residents have also expressed worries about infrastructure, utilities, wetlands, and ongoing cleanup efforts in the area.

Members discussed a collective advocacy among the towns and the possibility of inviting speakers to provide more information about the project. Ms. Coppe suggested inviting upper management from Massport to a future meeting and arranging tours of the base. Ms. Escobedo shared an example of successful collaboration in Concord

with a renovation project and emphasized the importance of citizen input and strong opposition to the North Airfield expansion. Neil Rasmussen was mentioned as a speaker who would provide further insights on the topic. Members agreed that HATS needs to continue to gather more facts about the project.

Future Agenda Topics:

HATS Members discussed potential topics for upcoming meetings:

- **Northeast Airfield Project:** Consider inviting upper management from Massport and explore the possibility of organizing a tour. Invite a representative from the State Department of Economic Development to provide insights on the state's perspective regarding the expansion.
- **Public Safety Night:** Invite Police Chiefs from each Town to discuss public safety matters.
- **DPW Night:** Invite DPW Directors from each Town to share information and best practices.
- **MBTA Zoning and Housing Choice:** Discuss the impact and implications of these policies on all Towns, with a focus on progress made to date.
- **250th Celebration:** Review coordination efforts and discuss plans for the celebration.
- **School Superintendent Night:** Invite superintendents of each school district and representatives from Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District to discuss school-related topics, budgets, buildings, and capital projects.
- **Town Manager Night:** After Bedford gets a new Town Manager, invite the four Town Managers to discuss ongoing developments in their respective towns.

Future Meeting Schedule:

It was decided that HATS would meet 6 times per year: **September, November, January, February, April, and June.** The 3rd Thursday of each month was generally preferred for meetings but with some flexibility. The current chair, Mr. Lucente, expressed the intention to continue serving until the end of the year (in June 2024) to provide consistency. Most participants indicated a preference for virtual meetings for convenience, but it was suggested that occasional in-person meetings would foster face-to-face connections. It was suggested that HATS not have Hybrid Meetings, rather all in-person or all virtual meetings. Members agreed to have the June meeting in person and continue with virtual meetings afterward.

Public Comment:

The meeting was opened up to public comment. There were no public comments.

Adjourn:

With the Committee's business concluded for the evening, by a roll call vote 4-0 (Mitchell-yes; Escobedo-yes; Lucente-yes; Hutchinson-yes) the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Lucente
Lexington Select Board Member