

**Hanscom Area Towns Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
May 24, 2018**

**HATS Selectmen:** Suzie Barry, chair, Lexington; Jonathan Dwyer, Lincoln; Michael Lawson, Concord; Mike Rosenberg, Bedford.

**Other HATS attendees:** Peter Braun, Lincoln; Margaret Coppe, Lexington;

**Others in attendance:** B.J. Dunn, superintendent, Minute Man National Historical Park; Jennifer Boles, Patricia Dahlgren, Anthony Gallagher, community relations, Massachusetts Port Authority, Sarah Lance, and Melissa Tintocalis, Lexington economic development director.

Ms. Tintocalis made a presentation on Lexington's Hartwell North Zoning Initiative, a proposed new zoning district. The proposal, which would take as many as 30 years to fully realize, followed an economic development summit, where participants explored ways to enhance the non-residential tax base. The initiative covers the Hartwell Avenue corridor from Bedford Street to Maguire Road, incorporating 25 parcels. There will be opportunities to build on current parking lots and redevelop existing parcels. Planners are looking at transportation options, walkability, green space, building height (as many as six floors) and streetscape. The town has engaged an urban designer and a market analyst to envision what the area would be like with increased density. Currently there are 20 life-sciences firms. There are plans to engage the community as the process unfolds.

In answer to a question from Selectman Rosenberg, Ms. Tintocalis said Bedford Street improvement plans are still part of the overall landscape. Selectman Dwyer asked about traffic impact and Ms. Tintocalis said it is under study. Mr. Braun suggested that this is a great opportunity for the planning boards of the four towns to connect, as the proposal impacts all of them. Responding to a comment from Ms. Coppe, she said planners are factoring in projected traffic increases at Hanscom Air Force Base and Lincoln Laboratory. In answer to Selectman Rosenberg's question, she said 5 percent of the project will be street-level retail and 10-15 percent residential.

Superintendent Dunn said Minute Man is one of 413 units of the National Park Service. It is seven miles long and comprises three segments, including battle areas and The Wayside, with an area of 1,027 acres. There are 50 buildings, including 11 that were extant on April 19, 1775. The budget is \$2.8 million; there are 24 staff, including seven seasonal, and hundreds of volunteers. There are two visitors' centers, with some 350,000 persons registered annually at the Lexington center and about 250,000 at North Bridge. About half of the visitors interact with a park ranger or volunteer. The park's 2017 area economic impact was calculated at \$58,500,000 in visitors' spending, generating 810 jobs and almost \$32 million in labor income, Superintendent Dunn reported.

He outlined ongoing projects, including the "Parker's Revenge" site in Lexington. After archaeological research, he said, the plan is to restore the area to meadow with a trail. A related exhibit in the visitors' center includes 22 musket balls discovered at the site. A Friends of Minute Man Park campaign raised more than \$200,000 for the research, and Lexington Community

Preservation funds also were used. Battle Road trail rehabilitation continues along the Hartwell Tavern section. Restoration and rehabilitation work also continues on the Meriam House, Hartwell Tavern, Buttrick House and Bullethole House.

Besides the Friends, park partners include the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area and the Battle Road Scenic Byway. The superintendent said he strives to maintain great relationships. The superintendent also pointed out that the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Revolution will be marked in 2025, and there is already a state organization planning for it (revolution250.org). Some activities are already on the horizon. There is also a 33-member national advisory board, although it has more of a Philadelphia focus.

Superintendent Dunn also outlined agricultural activity in the national park. He said there are six farmers, with a potential of 200. About half of the available land is being cultivated through special-use permits. The superintendent wants to draft an agricultural management plan that includes community input. The park communicates through an electronic newsletter. He also mentioned parking and traffic challenges, especially on the Concord side of the park. Season shuttles may help alleviate the problem. Supt. Dunn also noted the expected regional impact of visitors in 2025.

In answer to a question from Selectman Dwyer, the superintendent said there are no plans to expand park boundaries. There is pressure on the boundaries from Concord, Lexington and Lincoln, he acknowledged. Supt. Dunn said the present backlog on buildings is almost \$5 million. Asked by Selectman Dwyer about additional events, Supt. Dunn noted that many eastern Massachusetts communities are considering 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorations. The park plans to reach out to the contiguous towns as 2025 approaches; Minute Man currently doesn't have a budget to plan events.

Selectman Lawson inquired about rehabilitation of agricultural housing. Supt. Dunn replied that park officials are considering making housing available in conjunction with increased agricultural use. Selectman also said Concord is considering expanding shuttle parking. Mr. Braun noted that Lincoln has an agricultural commission, and students from Minuteman Tech are a potential construction source. Supt. Dunn noted that students from the University of Massachusetts will be serving as Barrett Farm volunteers in the fall. Ms. Coppe called for signage acknowledging Freedom's Way.

#### Hanscom Air Force Base and Hanscom Field

Mr. Gallagher reported that the Massport Community Advisory Commission has two finalists for executive director. Mr. Braun suggested that the appointee could be invited to a HATS meeting. Selectman noted that the Hanscom Field Advisory Commission learned details of the new firefighting and border control facility at its most recent meeting.

#### Municipal highlights

Selectman Dwyer reported that a special town meeting will consider design for a new school. There are currently five concepts; selectmen are concerned about reaching consensus. Cost estimates range from \$49 million to \$115 million and cover the range from repair to a new

building. Selectman Barry noted that Carl Valente, Lexington town manager, will retire, effective Aug. 3. Selectman Lawson noted that Chris Whelan, Concord town manager, has announced his intention to retire in a year. Selectman Rosenberg said Bedford is weighing response to federal plans to sell former Navy hangars adjacent to Hanscom Field at auction.

#### Upcoming meetings

The next meeting of HATS is scheduled for July 12. Scott Anderson, assistant director of operations of Lincoln Laboratory has been invited to the Sept. 13 meeting. Other meetings will be Oct. 25 and Nov. 29 and, in 2019, Jan. 24, Feb. 28 and April 25. The new commander at Hanscom Air Force Base will be invited to a fall meeting.

Selectman Dwyer suggested a meeting of local fire department leaders, exploring topics such as selecting equipment, factors that drive decisions, and aviation. Mr. Braun said HATS should consider re-inviting past guests for updates, including Paul Regan, chair of the MBTA Advisory Board, and John Beatty, executive director of the Massachusetts Military Asset and Security Strategy Task Force. He also suggested that the board host town moderators to address town meeting technology and other changes.