

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LAND MANAGEMENT

Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning and Land Management

Mission

To guide the development and use of private and public lands within the Town of Concord in a manner that preserves and celebrates the unique character that is Concord.

Organization and Staffing

The Department of Planning & Land Management (DPLM) is comprised of sixteen full-time and 8-10 part-time individuals within four distinct Divisions – Building Inspections, Health, Natural Resources and Planning. The four Divisions are responsible for the review, permitting and enforcement of Concord’s land use and development regulations; the range and extent of authority exercised by these Divisions is found in State Law and local bylaws.

The four DPLM Divisions provide staff support to the Town’s regulatory boards and committees that address land use and development activities in the Town: Zoning Board of Appeals, Board of Health, Natural Resources Commission, Planning Board and Historic Districts Commission. DPLM staff also provides support to the Community Preservation Committee and Historical Commission, in addition to many other sub-committees and task forces that may be appointed to address specific issues from time to time, such as Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee, Conservation Restriction Stewardship Committee, NMI-Starmet Reuse Planning Committee, and West Concord Advisory Committee. Two additional committees supported by Planning Division staff are focused on the two cultural districts - the West Concord Junction Cultural District Committee and the Concord Center Cultural District Committee. Staff also participates in other municipal advisory groups (Transportation Advisory Committee and Economic Vitality Committee) as well as regional groups such

as the 13 communities that make up the MAPC-Minuteman Area Group on Inter-local Coordination (MAGIC), the Battle Road Scenic Byway Committee, the nine towns that participate in the Regional Housing Services Office and participation in the Community Health Network (CHNA) 15 Partnership.

DPLM was fortunate that there were no staffing changes in 2020, and that staff was flexible and creative in addressing the challenges of the pandemic. Closing Town offices to the public required adapting to new procedures and protocols to safely continue accepting applications, inspecting construction sites, food service facilities and other permitted activities, supporting boards and committees in learning to conduct meetings virtually, and operating remotely. E-permitting was implemented for many of the Health and Inspections applications by the end of 2020 and we look forward to expanding e-permitting to Natural Resources and Planning.

This year marks the seventh year in administering the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO). The RHSO offices are located at 37 Knox Trail, just over the town line in Acton. The RHSO is staffed by four people: Program Director Elizabeth Rust, and Housing Specialists Lara Plaskon, Elizabeth Valente, and Jody Kablack. The Regional Housing Services Office now supports affordable housing activity (such as rental housing monitoring, assisting in re-sales, project development, WestMetro HOME activities, etc.) in nine communities including: Acton, Bedford, Concord, Lexington, Lincoln, Maynard, Sudbury, Wayland, and Weston.

Detailed reports on the regulatory activities of the various boards staffed by DPLM and additional information specific to the four Divisions are included elsewhere in this Annual Report.

BUILDING INSPECTIONS

Ray Matte, Building Commissioner/
Zoning Enforcement Officer
Paul Creedon, Local Building Inspector
Gary Smith, Local Building Inspector
Pat Sands, Assistant Local Building Inspector
Tracy LaPierre, Administrative Assistant
Bob Prescott, Electrical/Wiring Inspector
Kenneth McConnell, Plumbing/Gas Inspector

Building and Zoning Activity

The Building Inspections Division issued 836 building permits in 2020, which is consistent with the number of permits issued last year. The overall construction value increased in 2020 to \$ 74.8 million compared to \$70.9 million in 2019, which represents an increase in value by 5.2%. Of this total, \$45.3 million was for residential construction with \$29.5 million in commercial work.

The value of “new residential dwelling units” built in Concord went from \$12.2 million last year to \$14.2 million in 2020. This new residential construction value represents twenty-six new detached single-family homes. Of these 26 new homes, twenty, or 77% were the result of “tear downs” (the act of demolishing an existing structure and constructing a new one at the same site).

In 2020 issuance of Mechanical permits decreased by 55.5%, Electrical Permits decreased by 17.4% and Plumbing/Gas permits decreased by 23.47 %. Overall, 2441 permits were issued with a 15.28% decrease overall total compared to 2814 permits issued in 2019. The Building Division collected a total of \$924,174 in permit fees in 2020 versus \$1,017,932 collected in 2019. This is a 13.4% decrease from last year.

Staffing/Operations

The Building Inspections staff is comprised of four full-time and three part-time personnel. Our staff is committed to pursuing diligent Zoning and Sign Bylaw enforcement, as well as enforcement of the State Building code, which includes, but is not limited to: handicap accessibility, structural integrity, fire safety, energy codes and many other regulations relative to public safety. Our staff

provides technical assistance to property owners, builders, real estate professionals, other Town departments, as well as other boards and committees in town. In addition to issuing building permits and conducting required onsite inspections, the Building Inspections Division staff spends an increasing amount of time reviewing development proposals, which include: sub-divisions, special permits, site plans, variance requests, zoning determinations and addressing zoning complaints. Staff also provides review and comment to the Select Board for annual license renewals, including licensing for alcohol and beverage facilities and livery services.

2020 has been an extremely challenging year due to COVID-19. Despite this, the Building Inspections Division continued with daily on-site inspections, permit issuance, zoning enforcement and response to resident’s questions throughout the pandemic. The Building Commissioner worked regular hours in the office and initially the two building inspectors had alternating schedules to accommodate safety guidelines. Staff resumed full time in-office schedules at the beginning of July, with the Plumbing/Gas and Electrical inspectors being the exception.

Inspection needs have been consistent with previous years and the number of permits issued remained nearly the same as 2019. Beginning mid-September, the mechanical type permits (Electrical, Gas, Plumbing, and Mechanical) switched to online permitting. Initially, 99% of all new applications were submitted in paper format, and the staff processed them with the new system. On January 4, 2021 Building permits were also switched to online permitting. There has been considerable positive feedback from the public, and the new online permitting system makes it much more efficient for processing and record keeping for all staff. We look forward to working with the new e-permitting system and all the new features it offers.

Noteworthy Projects Under Construction this Year

The Volunteers of America, located at 68 Commonwealth Avenue, applied for and received a building permit for a 10.6 million dollar addition and renovation. The project consisted of a 9,300 square foot 3 - story wing addition with a net

increase of 16 units, a 2,537 square foot addition of a third level to part of the existing facility, and the complete interior renovation of the existing facility. The project also included an increase in parking spaces from 39 spaces to 58 spaces, relocation and expansion to the building's fire access road and reconfiguration of the existing storm water detention basin.

Noteworthy Projects Completed this Year

The Concord Animal Hospital located at 245 Baker Ave constructed a new 1.8 million dollar facility. This project consisted of the demolition of

the existing 4,800 square foot building and the outside kennels, and construction of a new 5,800 square foot building and site improvements.

The Nashoba Brooks School at 200 Strawberry Hill Road completed their 3 million dollar construction project that consisted of a new 5,900 square foot 2 - story building. The building will be used primarily for performances and educational uses. The maximum seating area for the performance area is 150 persons.

Permits Issued	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
New single family homes	55	38	51	43	39	44	20	26
Multi-family attached units	0	75	6	6	4	6	6	0
Additions/Alterations	770	759	866	760	719	748	710	749
Commercial	100	114	115	100	88	86	97	61
Total Building Permits:	925	873	1038	909	850	884	833	836
Electrical	933	907	751	865	996	945	916	780
Mechanical	91	119	122	108	93	141	126	81
Plumbing	480	546	478	542	524	507	488	397
Gas	416	443	391	428	433	437	422	340
Signs	54	68	62	29	32	31	29	7
Total all Permits:	2899	2956	2824	2881	2928	2945	2814	2441
Value of Const. (millions)	142.6	80.4	80.7	84.7	96.7	72.2	70.9	74.8
Permit Fee Revenue	\$783,883	\$1,015,370	\$991,099	\$927,555	\$1,224,460	\$1,017,932	\$1,017,932	\$976,317

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Elizabeth Akehurst-Moore, Chair
 Theo Kindermans, Clerk
 James Smith
 Stuart Freeland, Associate Member
 Ravi Faiia, Associate Member

The Zoning Board of Appeals is authorized by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A and is responsible for conducting public hearings and meetings for Special Permits and Variances as required pursuant to the Zoning Bylaw of the Town.

Board Members remained the same for 2020 with Elizabeth Akehurst-Moore being elected Chair and Theo Kindermans elected as Clerk. The Board is currently in need of one additional associate member.

In December, the Board attended a joint discussion and working session with the Planning Board to discuss and come to a consensus on potential Zoning Bylaw amendments for the 2021 Annual Town Meeting.

In 2020, the Board held twelve public hearings and participated in one working session with the Planning Board. The Board heard applications one Variance and thirty-three Special Permits which included two Planned Residential Developments and six renewals for previously granted Special Permits. Of these applications, twenty-nine Special Permits were granted, one application was withdrawn without prejudice at the request of the applicant, one was denied, and two applications are pending. (Some of these applications included multiple activities; therefore, the activity totals below may exceed the number of applications.)

Zoning Board of Appeals Application Activities

Sign Bylaw	1
Two-family Dwelling Unit	2
Additional Dwelling Unit	2
Educational Uses	1
Philanthropic Uses	1
Non-profit Entity	1
Special Home Occupation	2
Tourist Home or Bed and Breakfast	1
Fairs Bazaars, Antique Shows, Suppers, and Dances	1
Relief from Maximum Height Requirements	1
Mobile Medical Facility	1
Combined Business/residence	2
Change, Alteration or Extension of a Non-Conforming Use and/ or Structure	11
Increase Gross Floor Area by more than 50%	9
Work within the Flood Plain Conservancy District	1
Work within the Groundwater Conservancy District	1
Earth Removal	3
Parking Waiver	3
Open Space Requirements	1
Planned Residential Development	2
Special Permit	33
Variance	1
Site Plan Approval (Associated with a Special Permit)	3

BOARD OF HEALTH

Deborah Greene, MD, Chair
Jill Block, MPH
Ray Considine, MSW
Mark Haddad Esq.
Alma Healey, RN

The Board of Health is responsible for the overall stewardship of the public health of Concord. It promotes, enacts, and enforces health rules and regulations in accordance with local bylaws and state law. There are five members of the Board, appointed for three-year terms by the Town Manager

As the public health regulatory entity for the Town, the Board continues to endorse measures that can positively impact the public by promoting health and wellness.

The COVID-19 public health emergency dominated much of 2020. As the pandemic emerged in spring 2020, the Board worked with town officials to educate the public about disease risks and ways the public could protect themselves and others to reduce disease transmission. Early efforts included enacting a Public Health Order requiring face coverings be worn in all public places and businesses to help prevent spread of the disease. When schools reopened in September, a major focus was preventing the spread of COVID-19 within the school community. Board Chair Deborah Greene MD facilitated rapid COVID testing at Emerson Hospital for school students and other town essential staff. Timely testing results allowed infected individuals to quickly be quarantined to reduce the risk of infecting others, which enabled schools and town departments to remain open.

Other concerns were economic stress caused by the closing of many businesses and places of employment, and senior citizens who were by necessity staying isolated at home with limited social interaction and access to social services. Board member Jill Block, who also serves as Chair of the Board of Directors at Open Table, facilitated expanded food distribution efforts to families and seniors in need in Concord and surrounding towns. 2020 came to an end with the promise of vaccine becoming available in early 2021.

Throughout 2020, the Board of Health continued its focus on substance use prevention, particularly the use of electronic nicotine delivery devices (“vaping”) amongst youth and limiting access to other tobacco products. State legislation prohibiting the sale of all flavored tobacco products and restricting the nicotine content of vaping devices was enacted in late 2019. In spring 2020, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health/Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Program (MTCP) provided funding to create a 4-town tobacco compliance program including the towns of Concord, Bedford, Lexington and Wilmington. Staff was hired to educate business owners about the new tobacco sales requirements and assist them in compliance to comply with these regulations.

The Board of Health and Concord Health Division continued their partnership with the Concord Public Schools and the Center for Parents and Teachers in a vaping education and prevention project. This effort includes working with the schools to enhance existing vaping health curriculum; community and parent educational presentations; providing educational materials to pediatricians and family medical practices; and creating counseling and cessation programs for teens who are vaping and need help to quit. The project has been funded by a grant from CHNA15 with funding provided by Lahey Hospital and Medical Center through the Department of Public Health’s Determination of Need (DoN) process. Emerson Hospital’s Community Benefits program also supports this effort.

HEALTH DIVISION

Susan Rask, MS, RS, Public Health Director
Stanley Sosnicki, CEHT, Assistant Public
Health Director
Gabrielle White, Public Health Inspector
Karen Byrne, Administrative Assistant

The Health Division enforces State statutes and regulations relative to the protection of public health, the control of disease, the promotion of sanitary living conditions, and the protection of the environment from damage and pollution.

Environmental and sanitary codes enforced by the Health Division include: onsite wastewater (septic) systems, food establishments, swimming pools, bathing beaches, recreational camps, indoor ice skating rinks, housing, and lead paint.

Administrative staff is responsible for assisting with annual flu clinics, the rabies control program, administration of the Septic Betterment Loan Program, and the issuance of approximately 800 annual licenses/permits.

Public Health Initiatives

Health Division efforts in 2020 were devoted almost exclusively to responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Response began in February 2020 when the Health Division was notified of Concord residents who had potentially been exposed to the virus and needed to be quarantined. All persons who have had close contact with a COVID-positive case are required to be quarantined for a period of time to reduce the spread of infection.

When the Health Division was notified of a COVID case, the Public Health Nurse reached out to each individual to determine who their close contacts were who may have been exposed to the disease. Each of the close contacts were contacted, placed in quarantine, and monitored for a period of time. This effort continued throughout 2020 as COVID case numbers rose statewide. The Health Division also worked closely with the Concord Public Schools on protocols for safe reopening of schools in Fall 2020. As businesses were allowed to reopen during the summer and fall of 2020 under State COVID safety guidelines, the Health Division worked with

businesses to assist them in understanding these safety guidelines, and responded to complaints about businesses that were not operating safely.

The year ended with the announcement from the Federal and State governments that effective vaccines for COVID-19 would become available in early 2021. The Health Division and Town leadership began planning for clinics to vaccinate Concord residents once vaccine became available.

Public Health Nursing/Communicable Disease Control

Public Health Nurse Tricia McGean played a pivotal role in Concord's COVID-19 response efforts. Tricia devoted thousands of hours to contact tracing, quarantining, and counseling exposed individuals in order to protect the health of all Concord residents. Her work with the Concord Public Schools and private schools was instrumental in keeping these schools open for in-person learning for all of Fall 2020. Concord is indeed fortunate to have such a dedicated public health nurse.

Tricia works for the town under a contract between the Health Division and Emerson Hospital Home Care which provides nursing services for the town's annual influenza vaccination clinics, telephone and home visits to patients, and investigation of reported cases of communicable diseases. The cases of communicable diseases are reported to the Health Division for inclusion in statistical reports prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for epidemiological purposes. This confidential information is maintained by the Public Health Nurses and Administrative Assistant and routed to MDPH for appropriate follow-up action through the MAVEN (Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network).

Influenza Vaccine Distribution & Clinics

The Health Division sponsored its annual seasonal influenza clinic for Concord Seniors at the Harvey Wheeler Center in October 2020. Emerson Hospital Home Care nurses administered vaccine to 139 participants in a drive-up vaccination clinic due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the protocols prohibiting large scale indoor gatherings. The clinic went smoothly and all involved were extremely pleased to be able to continue to serve the

most at-risk population who may not have otherwise been able to take advantage of other venues such as in person primary care or local pharmacies that provide vaccine.

Emergency Preparedness

In 2020, the Health Division continued to work with the Concord Emergency Management Agency (CEMA), the Concord Council on Aging, Massachusetts Department of Public Health Region 4A, and Emerson Hospital to enhance community emergency preparedness. Concord maintains a plan, in compliance with MDPH requirements, for dispensing of medication (vaccines or pharmaceuticals) in an emergency. Concord's primary Emergency Dispensing Site (EDS) is the Concord-Carlisle Regional High School. The EDS plan includes use of the new CCHS building and logistical planning has begun in preparation of the upcoming COVID-19 vaccination clinics for the general population in 2021.

Regional Public Health Services

The Concord Health Division has provided inspectional services to the Town of Lincoln under a regional contract since 1996. Over the past several years, the program has evolved from providing limited inspectional services to the administration of public health programs within the Town of Lincoln. The Assistant Public Health Director and Administrative Assistant are the primary contacts for providing services in Lincoln. In 2020, this program generated nearly \$20,000 in additional revenue for the Town of Concord (approximately 300 hours of public health and inspectional/administrative staff support). Staff witnessed test holes on 16 sites, issued 23 septic permits, 17 food service permits, 3 well permits, and reviewed 5 building projects. The Health Division Staff provided additional support to the Town of Lincoln regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic throughout the year.

Permits & Licenses

The Health Division issued the following licenses in 2020 and collected \$124,027.39 in permit fees: 174 Food Service/Retail Food (including farm stands, school cafeterias (private & public), food banks, churches, caterer operations, residential retail

kitchens, mobile food trucks, bed & breakfast establishments); 14 Tobacco Sales; 114 Permits to Keep Farm Animals; 4 Bathing Beaches; 37 Swimming Pools; 54 Hazardous Material Storage/Usage; 3 Motels; 17 Recreational Camp Sites; 25 Day Camp Programs; 25 Registered Title 5 Inspectors, 90 Disposal Works Installers; 21 Septic Haulers; 12 Rubbish Haulers; 1 Body Art Establishment; 6 Body Art Technicians and 2 licensed Body Art Apprentices; 4 Funeral Directors; 2 Funeral Homes; 94 On-Site Sewage Disposal Permits; 166 Building Permit Reviews; 3 Beaver Permits and 15 Well Permits.

Wastewater Permitting Program

Onsite Sewage Disposal/Building Reviews for Title 5 & Town Sewer

The Assistant Public Health Director oversees the onsite wastewater management (septic system) program in the Health Division. In 2020, the Division issued 94 permits for construction and/or alteration of septic systems, reviewed 166 building permit applications for regulatory compliance, and witnessed percolation tests and soil evaluations for 41 properties.

Septic System Betterment Loan Program

The Community Septic System Betterment Loan Program is administered by the Health Division Administrative Assistant.

In 2009, Concord Town Meeting approved a loan/debt authorization for \$2,000,000 borrowing authorized to be carried out by the Massachusetts Water Pollution Abatement Trust (MWPAT) for the purpose of continuing to fund the Septic Betterment Loan Program. Concord property owners can borrow up to \$30,000 at 2% interest, to be paid back as a betterment-lien over 10 years. In 2020, over \$200,000 was committed to residents to offset costs for onsite sewage disposal expenses through the loan program. Since this program was initially authorized in 2001, over one hundred property owners have benefited from it and over 1.7 million dollars has been expended.

Assistant Karen Byrne works very closely with local engineers, septic installers and other Town Departments to actively promote this program and

will continue to do so in 2021. The Town is very fortunate to be able to offer this type of financial assistance to its residents to alleviate some of the unexpected financial burdens or stressors that may come with dealing with a failed onsite sewage system.

Food Protection Program

The Public Health Inspector conducts risk-based inspections of all Food Service Establishments. Food Establishments range from complex meal service in full service restaurants, hospital and school kitchens to convenience store packaged food sales.

Temporary Food Event applications are reviewed by staff to identify and address any potential food safety risk factors that could impact the public health. During 2020, 17 Temporary Food Events/Catered Events were permitted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic restricting many activities. Due to the pandemic, many annual events were canceled in 2020 including Patriots Day Festivities, Chamber of Commerce Spring/Fall Festival, the Memorial Day and Fourth of July activities, and the Fall Agricultural Fair.

Recreational Camp Program

The Public Health Inspector licensed 2 programs in Concord in 2020. Programs were reviewed for compliance with the regulatory requirements of 105 CMR 430.000: Minimum Standards For Recreational Camps For Children and COVID safety requirements. Ensuring that camps complied with COVID-19 safety requirements made this a particularly challenging year for both staff and camps, and many camp programs chose not to operate this year.

Bathing Beach Program

The Health Division continued its contract with G&L Laboratories to provide services for collection and analysis of bathing beach water samples. The Town of Concord Beach (former White Pond Association Beach), Dover St. Property Owners Association, Silver Hill Association and Annursnac Hill Association, were sampled weekly during the 2020 season between Memorial Day through Labor Day, for compliance with 105 CMR 445.00, Minimum Standards for Bathing Beaches. Sixty four water samples were collected from the 4 beaches over a 16 week time period. There were 2 beach

closures during the 2020 season due to bacterial levels exceeding acceptable limits for bathing beach waters but fortunately it was not the norm throughout the summer and beaches reopened within days. White Pond continued to have occasional public health advisories posted due to visible cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) blooms which were intermittent throughout the summer.

Swimming Pools

There are 14 sites in Concord which hold recreational pool permits, which include 4 general purpose pools, 14 lap pools, 6 children's pools, 3 special purpose pools and 1 diving well. The Public Health Inspector conducts water tests at each pool as well as monitors safety equipment and trained personal for each site.

Animal Permits

The Public Health Inspector serves as the Town's Animal Inspector and conducts annual site visits to all permitted properties to inspect for sanitary conditions, health of animals and responds to odor or nuisance complaints for non-compliance. The Health Division staff issued 114 permits for The Keeping of Farm Animals.

Rabies Control Program

During 2020, 3 domestic animals were quarantined and followed by Dog Officer because of animal bites to humans. In 2020, 3 animals were submitted to the Department of Public Health to be tested for the rabies virus because of potential human or domestic animal contact 1 dog and 2 bats; one bat tested positive for the rabies virus. The Health Division's Annual Rabies Clinic scheduled for March 2020 was canceled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Weights & Measures

The Town of Concord contracts with the Massachusetts Department of Standards to conduct inspections of gas stations (fuel pumps), fuel trucks, scales and scanners. In 2020, a total of 12 fuel trucks, 143 fuel pumps and 89 scales were inspected by DOS; revenue collected for the program totaled \$6,520. Scanners will be inspected in 2021.

East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project

The East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project

(EMMCP) conducts a program in Concord consisting of mosquito surveillance, larval mosquito control, ditch maintenance and public education.

2020 was the second warmest year recorded for Middlesex County according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, since records began in 1895. Precipitation over the entire year was a little below normal (2.00" less than average from 1895-1983). Every month from May through September had below average precipitation leading to drought conditions in Middlesex County.

The total mosquito population was below average. It was below average in spring due to the dry winter (2019/2020) and cool spring, and close to normal in late spring/early summer. From mid-summer on, the mosquito populations plummeted due to low precipitation and high heat. The summer floodwater mosquitoes were at their second lowest levels since 2000 (only 2017 was lower). In contrast, the high heat and dry conditions of 2020 led to high *Culex pipiens/restuans* populations. They were almost as high as the record high from 2017. *Culiseta melanura* populations were the 6th lowest since 2000 and 52% of normal.

The adult mosquito surveillance program monitored mosquitoes from thirteen Concord trap collections during the season. The mosquitoes from these traps were collected and tested for West Nile virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). No WNV or EEE was found in Concord.

Bacillus sphaericus was applied to 2,700 catch basins to control *Culex pipiens* mosquito larvae. The *Culex pipiens* species is the primary vector of WNV in Massachusetts.

The Project's public education program is designed to develop awareness within the public and the private sectors as to their roles in mosquito control. The Project serves as a resource to residents, municipal officials and the local media on mosquitoes and mosquito borne diseases. A web page located at <https://sudbury.ma.us/emmcp/> provides residents with information on mosquitoes, control programs and related topics.

EMERSON HOSPITAL HOME CARE SERVICES

Christine Dixon, RN, BSN, MMHC
Executive Director, Emerson Hospital Home Care

Emerson Hospital Home Care is a Medicare/Medicaid Certified, Joint Commission accredited, provider of home care services in Concord, as well as 29 surrounding cities and towns. The mission is to deliver high quality, safe, and cost effective services to our patients and families in the community we serve. We provide skilled nursing, physical, occupational, and speech therapy, home health aide, medical social work and our new Telehealth monitoring service.

Emerson Hospital Home Care provides patients and families community health, education, and communicable disease follow up in accordance with our Board of Health contracts with the Town of Concord. This collaborative approach to allows Home Care to make home visits to qualifying individuals who have no source of payment to cover our services. This remains an important aspect of our work with the Board of Health. Emerson Hospital Home Care also works closely with Concord Council on Aging to promote health and wellness to seniors through lectures and other community programs. The influenza vaccination clinics serves both residents and employees of the Town of Concord.

Emerson Hospital Home Care looks forward to a continued partnership with the Board of Health and other community organizations as we continue our commitment to care for the residents of Concord.

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Edward Nardi, Chair
Sarah Grimwood
Gregory E. Higgins
Nicholas Pappas
Judith R. Zaunbrecher

The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) and staff are responsible for the overall stewardship of the natural resources of the Town, and the establishment of Town environmental policy in conjunction with the Select Board and Town Meeting. The NRC administers the state Wetlands Protection Act (MGL Chapter 131, Section 40), the Rivers Protection Act (MGL Chapter 258 of the Acts of 1996) and accompanying regulations (310 CMR 10.00), and the Concord Wetlands Bylaw and Regulations. The NRC also plays an important role in open space planning pursuant to its authority under the Conservation Commission Act (MGL Chapter 40 Section 8c).

Wetlands Protection Act

The majority of Commission and staff time is dedicated to administering and enforcing state and local wetland regulations. The NRC held 27 public meetings, which included review of 38 Notices of Intent, 2 Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation, and 21 Requests for Determinations of Applicability for a total of 61 new applications. The NRC closed out many completed projects, issuing 34 Certificates of Compliance and five Partial Certificates of Compliance. Division staff reviewed 30 Administrative Approvals for very minor projects including limited tree and invasive species removal. Three Emergency Certificates were issued (two for beaver related issues and one for emergency communication line repairs). In 2020, DEP issued an approval with conditions for the appealed single family home at Keuka Road. The NRC's decision requiring a Notice of Intent for mechanical tree removal within jurisdictional resource areas was appealed by the MBTA, and a decision is expected in early 2021. Two violations were identified this year; one was resolved and the Commission is working with the landowner to resolve the second.

Projects of interest reviewed by the NRC this year included the Recreation Department's plans to install recreational facilities at the recently acquired Gerow land, a new canoe launch at the Fenn School, and additional synthetic turf fields at Middlesex School.

NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION

Delia R. J. Kaye, Natural Resources Director
Colleen Puzas, Natural Resources Assistant Director
Karen T. Bockoven, Administrative Assistant

Natural Resource Management

In addition to providing technical and administrative support to the Natural Resources Commission, Division staff are responsible for the stewardship of nearly 1,500 acres of Town conservation land (including White Pond Reservation), maintaining over 28 miles of trails, and mowing 84 acres to maintain trails and open meadows. Natural resources management also includes staff support to three NRC active subcommittees, as well as coordinating with other local and regional stewardship initiatives. In 2020, the Sudbury Valley Trustees awarded Delia Kaye with the Distinguished Public Service Award for exemplary environmental leadership.

Concord Trail Book

Working with ecologist Richard Forman and Trails Committee chair Bob White, the Division is pleased to announce a new trail book of fourteen popular natural areas. The book will be a walker's guide to the history, geology, flora, and fauna of these areas. Publication of the book, *Ecology Along Concord Trails*, will occur in early 2021.

Pollinator Meadow Development

The Division worked with community members on two pollinator meadows that were established last year. At Barretts Mill Farm, Division staff removed several loads of poison ivy and, working with farmers Lise Holdorf and Melissa Maxwell and their

crew, planted over 2,000 plugs of herbaceous pollinator plantings in front of the red barn. Volunteers Marcia Schloss, Lyell Slade, and Sandra White continued maintenance of the planted pollinator area at Heywood Meadow. Trail Steward Beth Bariyames also planted two new pollinator meadows, one at Cousins Field and the second at the West Concord trailhead.



Planting of pollinator plants at Barretts Mill Farm

Old Calf Pasture Restoration

Division staff continued invasive species control oversight at Old Calf Pasture. Spot treatments of previously managed areas were again treated by Native Plant Trust, expanding areas of improved habitat for native flora and fauna, including the rare Britton's violet.

Grant Applications

Four applications sponsored by the Division were submitted and recommended by the Community Preservation Act for approval at 2021 Town Meeting: The second and final application for dredging costs at Warner's Pond to improve the ecological health and recreational opportunities; funding to acquire a Conservation Restriction over a 0.68 acre parcel of historically significant land owned by the Ralph Waldo Emerson Memorial Association; survey and permitting funding to replace the Chamberlin footbridge and path; and survey and design services to improve a 0.25 mile portion of trail at the Old Rifle Range. The Division was also awarded funds from the CISMA Small Grants Program to manage a large infestation of invasive porcelain berry near Gowing's Swamp, which will be

conducted cooperatively with the Sudbury Valley Trustees.

Conservation Crew and Rangers

Due to the pandemic, summer staff were not hired this year, but we welcomed former MMNHP Chief Ranger Bill Brooks to patrol Estabrook Trail and Punkatasset for compliance with posted rules and regulations. We are grateful for the assistance of Trails Committee and Stewards, Concord Public Works, and the Concord Police Department for their assistance in maintaining our treasured conservation lands and enforcing rules and regulations for all trail users, particularly during this time when increased numbers of the public were taking respite in Concord's natural areas.

Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area

Division staff continued working with other towns, organizations, and individuals in the Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Rivers (SuAsCo) watershed to develop strategic regional plans for invasive species management in the watershed, and to promote collaborative approaches to achieve these priorities.

Conservation Restriction Stewardship Committee

The Conservation Restriction Stewardship Committee continued to assist the Natural Resources Division with its land management responsibilities of the 80 plus parcels with Conservation Restrictions. Hampered by the COVID-19 restrictions and technology changes, committee members conducted fewer site visits this year, completing six monitoring reports. Members of the CRSC are Mary Ann Lippert (chair), John Ferguson, Richard Higgins, Neil Ryder, Arthur Schwope (clerk), Jane Wells, and Michelle Wiggins.

Heywood Meadow Stewardship Committee

For the past twenty years, the Heywood Meadow Stewardship Committee has worked to fulfill its Mission Statement, which was included in the 2005 Landscape Preservation Plan for Heywood Meadow and states "To rehabilitate all of Heywood Meadow (Lots 1,2,3 and Ford Park), so as to evoke the Meadow's historic and agricultural past...". Also included in the Preservation Plan are seven Goals, several of which have been successfully accomplished.

The Committee reviewed the Mission Statement and Goals over several virtual meetings, and plan to continue this review to meet its goals. This year two work days were held to plant new pollinator plants and cut back unwanted growth. The CPA funded project to eradicate invasives continued, and the stone wall extension on the East Meadow will be built in the spring. The Committee consists of nine members: co-chairs Susan Clark and Joanne Gibson, clerks Murray Nicolson and Sandy Smith, and members Mary Clarke, Lola Chaisson, Stan Lucks, Bev Miller and Cris van Dyke.

Trails Committee

The Mattison Field Conservation Area was a major focus of Trails Committee work this year, with construction of a secondary trail through a sassafras grove that provides a walking alternative to the open field. Two other new trails provide access to interesting geologic formations and 1800s man made features. In a joint effort with Concord Land Conservation Trust, a deteriorated foot-bridge was replaced with a 16-foot bridge constructed across the Charles Miles Run to ensure continued safe access to CLCT's trail connection with Sudbury Road.

At Hapgood Wright Town Forest, steep, informal trails on the hill beside Fairyland Pond were discontinued and replaced with a new graded trail for easier walking and to prevent erosion. Ongoing improvements at the Baker Avenue property involved clearing of under-story growth and invasive species along the path to the Assabet, the river access and the picnic areas. Extensive invasive growth was further discouraged with mulching around native plantings, and the path to the river reinforced with a fresh layer of woodchips. At Westvale-Harrington Park, a plank bridge across the channel between the old dam and the Assabet was raised above the high water level to make it passable when the river back flows into the Second Division Brook area. The ongoing project of beautifying the West Concord Park trailhead, and improving native habitat, was continued with native plantings.

Being vigilant of trail needs and correcting obstructions to assure walkers' access is a never-ending task handled by dedicated Stewards and Trails Committee members. The Committee was

fortunate this year to accept seven new steward volunteers to help with the work. Committee members include Spencer Borden, David Clark, Carlene Hempel, Bill Kemeza, Jonathan Keyes, Ken Miller, and Bob White (chair).

Conservation Land Use Permits

A total of 10 permits were issued to various groups using Town conservation land for research projects, nature programs, the Musketaquid Art Ramble, and drag hunts.

Farming and Community Gardens

Agricultural Farming Agreements

The Division continues to work with local farmers to retain land in agriculture, overseeing 15 agreements over 200 acres of actively farmed land.

Marshall Farm

Marshall Farm is in its third generation of successful farming. This year, 10 new beehives were added. Seven more mobile chickens coops were brought in for sustainable rotation. Seventy yards of accumulated manure will be spread through the farm fields and Harrington Park field. This year was the best tomato crop to date. Black plastic was replaced with wood shavings to reduce waste and weed pressure. The Rogers field was planted with decorative sunflowers, but sadly ended up being a crop failure.

McGrath Farmstead

Barrett's Mill Farm completed their seventh season on the McGrath Farmstead and fifth season on the parcel at 41A Barretts Mill Rd. In addition to field grown vegetables, fruits, and flowers, they grew vegetables in four high tunnels. All crops grown on the farm were certified organic.

The 2020 growing season was dominated by the challenges of growing and distributing produce during the COVID-19 pandemic. The farm store opened as planned in May with the addition of a new online pre-ordering system set up for contactless purchases. Both online ordering and walk up sales at the farm stand were available to the general public throughout the season (May-November). The 235-member CSA operated with pandemic safety measures including a canopy tent for distribu-

tion, portable handwashing sinks, mandatory mask wearing, and pick-your-own field capacity limits. Additional labor was needed to make the necessary accommodations for preventing the spread of COVID-19 so the farm employed a total of 18 field crew members and shopkeepers.

Despite a drought, crop yields were good and overall sales were the highest they have been. Highlights included the second season of high tunnel grown tomatoes, a productive fall spinach harvest, and a popular watermelon crop. Barrett's Mill Farm continued to provide weekly vegetable donations to the Boston Area Gleaners as well as reduced price memberships through the SNAP program. Additionally, two free CSA memberships were donated to Dignity in Asylum, and one to Minute Man ARC.

Thoreau Birthplace

Gaining Ground, a non-profit farm that grows food for hunger relief with the help of community volunteers, cultivates land at the Thoreau Birthplace and adjacent Massport land. In 2020, its 26th growing season, the farm donated over 127,000 pounds of organic produce to 15 pantries, shelters, meal programs, and direct donation markets in Concord, Lowell, the MetroWest, and Boston. Gaining Ground now supports approximately 1,000 food-insecure households each week during the growing season. The farm continues to achieve annual production increases due to our innovative no-till agricultural methods and has been selected to take part in no-till studies led by NOFA, MDAR, and USDA/NRCS, testing the soil health and nutrients of our produce. As of 2020, there are four hoop houses, 10 caterpillar tunnels, and 14 hedgerows on the property.

Gaining Ground continues to take part in the New England tradition of maple sugaring in February and March, this year harvesting 175 buckets of sap and finishing 21 gallons of syrup to be donated. Typically, farm staff work alongside 2,500 volunteers throughout the growing seasons, educating schools, corporate, and community groups, as well as individuals and families, about its hunger relief mission and no-till farming. The volunteer program was temporarily suspended in 2020 due to the global pandemic.

Community Gardens

The long standing tradition of the organic community gardens continues to thrive under the helpful guidance of volunteer coordinators Terry Marzucco, Rebecca Sheehan Purcell, and Michelle Wiggins at the Hugh Cargill Community Garden, Dale and Sally Clutter, and India Rose at the East Quarter Farm Community Garden, and Sabrina Haber at Cousins Community Garden. Carol Aronson and Mark Del Guidice provided guidance for Rogers Community Garden. Coordinators assign garden plots, coordinate annual meetings and cleanups, and offer guidance to gardeners to produce beautiful and bountiful harvests. New gardeners are always welcome!

Cousins Field

Despite the many concerns about the Coronavirus, the summer of 2020 at Cousins Community Garden was very successful. The thirty-five individuals and families who have plots at Cousins Field quickly adapted to safety protocols and got back to gardening. Five new gardeners were welcomed to the garden. Efforts were made to improve the raspberry patch and control the poison ivy that was threatening to take it over, resulting in two excellent crops and a safer picking experience. Gardeners planted both typical and unusual vegetables and flowers in their garden plots and in August and September, the garden was a riot of colors, butterflies, and birds. Gardeners were grateful to the gardener who built a fantastic and much needed hose storage box.

East Quarter Farm

East Quarter Farm (EQF) had a successful 2020 growing season despite the challenges of a summer drought and the need to comply with COVID-19 protocols. There was renewed interest in gardening this year, and EQF took on 10 new gardeners eager to grow their own produce. In spite of social distancing and mask wearing, gardeners were able to share their gardening experiences and maintain a strong sense of community. Due to drought conditions that started in July, EQF had to implement water conservation strategies including selective watering and rigorous mulching. With these measures, and thanks to a high spring water table, the water supply lasted through the end of the summer. The gardeners were successful in growing

many varieties of vegetables, herbs, and flowers.

Hugh Cargill Community Garden

The Hugh Cargill Community Garden (HCCG) was established in the 1970s on land donated to the town in 1793. The garden consists of approximately 80 plots maintained by sixty-seven residents, ranging in age from 7 to 82. Gardeners grow vegetables and flowers in a friendly community setting. This year, HCCG provided a reprieve from the Coronavirus restrictions, enabling gardeners to interact with their neighbors while maintaining social distancing and other COVID guidelines. Possibly, as a result, the gardens were unusually lush and productive this season, despite the drought. Evidence of this can be seen in pictures on the garden website: <https://sites.google.com/view/hughcargillcommunitygarden/home>.

Rogers Community Garden

In its fifth season, this was the first year that all plots were leased to 27 individuals and/or families. Gardening represented a true respite from the pandemic. Efforts continue to improve the organic content of the soil.

Environmental and Educational Activities

The Division continues to sponsor the longstanding tradition of early morning Conservation Coffees on the first Tuesday morning of most months at 7:30 a.m. These lively and stimulating gatherings of citizens, conservation organization representatives, and federal, state, and local officials provide an interesting and effective forum to exchange information, ideas, and concerns about conservation and the environment.

For the first time in many years, the annual spring migratory bird walk, led by Peter Alden, was not held due to restrictions on outdoor gathering size. On a positive note, a pair of bald eagles nested for the first time in known history at Fairhaven Bay.

The NRC continues to support Dr. Bryan Windmiller's research and headstarting efforts on the Blanding's turtle, a threatened species with a population at Great Meadows which he has studied in depth since 2003.

Four kestrel boxes were installed around Town this fall, led by Simon Cadavid for his Eagle Scout Project Boxes were placed at Alcott School, Mattison Field, Monument Farm, and Old Calf Pasture in an effort to provide nesting habitat for declining kestrels, our smallest falcon.

PLANNING BOARD

Kristen Ferguson, Chair
Burton Flint, Vice Chair
Nathan Bosdet, Clerk
Kate McEneaney
Linda Miller
Haley Orvedal
Allen Sayegh

Marcia Rasmussen, Director
Elizabeth Hughes, Town Planner
Nancy Hausherr, Administrative Assistant

The Planning Board's authority is contained in MGL Ch. 41 "Improved Methods of Municipal Planning" and MGL Ch. 40A "The Zoning Act". The Board is responsible for making rules and regulations relating to subdivision control, initiating Zoning Bylaws, holding public hearings on all Zoning Bylaws submitted to the Select Board, evaluating various developments through Site Plan Review, revising and updating the Comprehensive Long Range Plan, and from time to time making studies of the resources and needs of the Town. Additional responsibilities are in the Town Bylaws and the Town Charter.

Due to the global pandemic of the COVID-19 virus, 2020 was a year like no other. Per the Governor's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, and the Town's Policy Directive issued in April, the majority of meetings in 2020 were held virtually via Zoom. Board members, applicants, staff, and residents

adapted to the “new normal” and learned how to participate remotely in the review of applications and administrative business brought before the Board.

The Board met twenty-one times in 2020. Meetings were recorded for broadcast on the Town’s Minuteman Media Network (MMN) YouTube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUk6r-j8hFwin1lwhT-RViA> In addition to their regular meetings, two separate public hearings were held, one in February and one in August, for Zoning Bylaw amendments considered at Annual Town Meeting in September. Mr. Johnson’s term ended and the Board welcomed a new member, Ms. Miller.

Residential Development

Sixteen “Approval Not Required” (ANR) plans were submitted to the Board for endorsement. Ten plans approved changes of lot lines that did not create additional lots. Six endorsed plans created a total of twelve additional lots.

In June, the Board made an affirmative recommendation with conditions to the Zoning Board of Appeals on the application of Now Communities LLC for a 14-unit Planned Residential Development Special Permit at 1651, 1657, and 165X Main Street.

In December, the Board granted approval with conditions of Definitive Subdivision Plan #246, submitted by Symes Development and Permitting LLC, for a twenty-two lots at 1440, 1450, 146B Main Street and 10B Highland Street.

A review of the Definitive Subdivision Plan submitted by Quarry North Road LLC to preserve frontage for the Concord portion of the Town of Sudbury owned tract at 48Y Fitchburg Turnpike was still ongoing at the end of year.

Commercial, Institutional and Other Development

The Board granted Site Plan Approval to Nashoba Brook Bakery, 152 Commonwealth Avenue; Minute Man ARC for Human Services, Inc., 35 Forest Ridge Road; and Middlesex School, 1400 Lowell Road.

The Board made affirmative recommendations to the Zoning Board of Appeals on the following site plan/special permit applications: Concord Mobil gas station, 143 Sudbury Road; 113-115 Commonwealth Avenue; Chase Bank, 1134 Main Street; and FX Investments, 13B Commonwealth Avenue.

Zoning Amendments and Town Meeting Actions

The Board reviewed draft language for potential Zoning Bylaw amendments at several meetings throughout the year. Six of the eight Zoning Bylaw Amendment warrant articles sponsored by the Board passed at Annual Town Meeting. These were: An article to allow the development of attached and detached accessory dwelling units (Article 32); an article to amend the Planned Residential Development Section 10 to add site plan approval and amend density calculations, height, common open space, density bonus and sustainable design requirements (Article 34); an article to change the permit granting authority for a hammerhead lot special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals to the Planning Board (Article 35); an article to add new criteria to consider when granting relief from parking requirements (Article 36); an article to add philanthropic to list of organizations subject to special permit requirement for fairs, bazaars, antique shows, suppers and dances (Article 38); and an article to clarify that the prohibited use in Section 4.7.1 is for the keeping of an unregistered trailer or for using a trailer for habitation on a property (Article 39).

One citizen petition Zoning Bylaw amendment article (Article 41) and a related Sign Bylaw amendment passed (Article 42) passed. These articles require and allow the applicants to install on-site signage to inform the public that a Planned Residential Development application is submitted.

Thoreau Depot Business District Redevelopment Analysis

One the Town’s goals that emerged from the comprehensive plan update, Envision Concord: Bridge to 2030, was to promote smart growth development in the Thoreau Business District area. At the beginning of 2020, the Board and the Town Planner began working with Metropolitan Area Planning Council staff on the potential redevelopment analysis of the Thoreau Depot

Business District. An initial, well-attended public forum in February led to an MAPC presentation to the Board in June. The presentation was a synthesis of the feedback and it included a draft vision and draft recommendations for zoning and other elements. Subsequently in August, MAPC staff presented a Vision and Action Plan to the Board. MAPC staff will continue to attend Planning Board meetings on an ongoing basis so that the recommendations can be refined and until potential Zoning Bylaw amendments are developed for consideration at future year's Town Meeting.

Other Actions

Throughout the year, the Board:

- Developed goals and objectives for 2020-2021 and considered Envision Concord action items
- Attended a 59 Walden Street Visualization Study Presentation by Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
- Discussed the Capital Planning Task's Force January 10, 2020 memorandum
- Discussed the MA Model Floodplain Bylaw
- Twice welcomed members of the NMI/Starmet Reuse Planning Committee for an update on their activities
- Accepted the Keuka Road Definitive Subdivision Plan Performance Guarantee
- Elected officers and assigned liaisons for various Boards and Committees
- Made a recommendation to the Select Board re: a Notice of Intent to sell Ch. 61B property at Fitchburg Turnpike
- Acknowledged the Attorney General's Open Meeting Law Determination re: Sept. 10, 2019 minutes
- Discussed the Tree Protection Bylaw and Rules and Regulations with the Town's Reviewing Agent
- Held a joint meeting and working session with the Zoning Board of Appeals re: 2021 potential ZBL amendments

The Board recommends members to the West Concord Advisory Committee for nomination by the Select Board and nominates members for the Community Preservation Committee and Historic Districts Commission. Members of the Planning Board serve on the following regional committees: MAGIC (Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination) and HATS (Hanscom Area TownS)

and participate on other Town Committees by providing liaisons to the Comprehensive Sustainable Energy Committee, West Concord Advisory Committee, Community Preservation Committee, and Climate Action Advisory Board.

West Concord Advisory Committee (WCAC)

The West Concord Advisory Committee (WCAC), a subcommittee of the Planning Board with seven regular and two associate members, serves as a resource for the Planning Board by providing input to developers and property owners as well as the Board when plans are proposed for development, renovation, circulation, etc. in West Concord. Village business owners as well as residents in and around the West Concord Village use the WCAC as a sounding board for ideas, to communicate to Town administration, and to pose questions they may have. All members of the WCAC also have liaison responsibilities with other Town boards and committees and report back about issues related to the Village and its surrounding neighborhoods.

The WCAC worked on several initiatives in 2020, despite a 3-month hiatus due to the pandemic. These initiatives included:

- Review revised designs for 13B Commonwealth Ave., the final component of the approved Brookside Square development project. An initial proposal in 2018 consisted of a single story commercial building, but after reviewing plans and providing feedback on a two-story building in 2019, the developer returned with a 3-story structure reminiscent of an 1880's building that once existed in the village. The latest design would provide commercial space on the first floor and 8 residential units on the 2nd and 3rd floors and was recommended for approval.
- Review and recommend on redevelopment of a new bank building to replace the existing building at 1134 Main St.
- Review and provide comments on the definitive subdivision plan proposed at 1440/1450 Main Street.
- Review the proposal and provide a recommendation to the Town Manager on a proposed Economic Distressed Area as it relates to the Massachusetts Brownfields Tax Credit Program.
- Partner with the West Concord Junction Cultural District Committee to consider revisions to the 2011 Design Guidelines in order to better preserve and

enhance the artistic and cultural aspects of the village.

- Monitor and provide feedback regarding the reuse planning for 2229 Main Street, the former NMI/Starmet site.
- Continue monitoring aspects of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail in and around the village center, and work to understand what its impacts will be to West Concord.
- Provide comments to the Recreation Department on the Gerow Recreational Area proposed on the north shore of Warner's Pond.
- Continue outreach through the Town hosted website and a Facebook page to encourage participation and information exchange.

The WCAC finished the year with plans to work on a number of projects in 2021 such as: continued monitoring of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail use and impacts on West Concord, especially with regard to Junction Park and to bicycle/pedestrian safety on local streets; work with the West Concord Junction Cultural District Committee and the Planning Division to identify funds/grants for a consultant to assist with the update to the 2011 Design Guidelines; and, support and assist as needed on the design and permitting of a pedestrian bridge over the Assabet River that will connect the village with Baker Avenue businesses providing a safe and convenient access.

PLANNING DIVISION

Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning
& Land Management

Elizabeth Hughes, Town Planner

Heather Gill, Senior Planner

Nancy Hausherr, Administrative Assistant

Heather Carey, Administrative Assistant

The Planning Division provides professional and administrative staff support to multiple standing boards and committees including: the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), Planning Board, Historic Districts Commission (HDC), Historical Commission and Community Preservation Committee (CPC). Planning Division staff coordinated the town staff review of all development proposals submitted for regulatory approval to the HDC, ZBA and the Planning Board. Planning Division staff assisted the Community Preservation Committee with the required Community Preservation Act (CPA) Plan update and the CPA application and funding distribution processes. This year the Division continued to provide staff support to the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee (BFRTAC), NMI/Starmet Reuse Committee, West Concord Advisory Committee (WCAC), a subcommittee of the Planning Board, as well as the Concord Center Cultural District Committee and West Concord Junction Cultural District Committee. Planning staff participated in the Battle Road Scenic Byway Task Force, the WestMetroHOME Consortium and Regional Housing Services Office. The Division's agenda includes initiatives in the area of open space protection, affordable housing production, traffic and transportation planning, economic development guidance, historic resources protection, public facilities planning, development regulation creation and sustainable practices.

Director Marcia Rasmussen continued to provide project oversight and coordination for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) Phase 2B (construction of the bridge over Route 2) and the last ½ mile of Phase 2C (Powder Mill Road to the Sudbury town line). The Phase 2B bridge work is expected to be completed in November 2021 and the Phase 2C/2D work is expected to be advertised for construction in 2022.



Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Near Junction Village

Ms. Rasmussen continues to work with the West Concord Junction Cultural District Committee to complete installation of the West Concord Goes Bluegrass mural on the Reasons to be Cheerful façade through funding provided by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The Concord Center Cultural District Committee worked on developing a ‘brand’ for the Concord Center cultural district and was planning for a future Film Festival. She also served as staff liaison to the NMI-Starmeret Reuse Committee as they finalized the Reuse Assessment report from consultant Skeo and solicited public comment on the draft final report that will outline potential redevelopment scenarios for the property at 2229 Main St. Additionally, Ms. Rasmussen assisted in responding to the economic impacts of COVID-19 on local businesses through participation in the 23-town CBDG Microenterprise grant program, attending meetings of the Economic Vitality Committee, working with the Transportation Advisory Committee, and supporting various initiatives to get people outdoors safely.

Both the Director and Town Planner continue participating in transportation-oriented issues and promoting the Town’s involvement in the CrossTown Connect Transportation Management Association to seek mechanisms to foster and

promote alternative transportation options for the community. In 2020, CTC and the Town were awarded a State Workforce Transportation Grant application for \$250,000 for the implementation of a fixed route shuttle to various employment sites and the two commuter rail stations. However, with so many challenges faced by the State because of the pandemic, the State withdrew the grants funds before the project could commence. Additionally, Ms. Rasmussen participated in a Shuttle Feasibility Study to historic sites by the Volpe Center with the Minute Man National Historical Park, Lincoln and Lexington. The long-term hope is to integrate commuter/worker shuttle services with visitor transportation services.

In coordination with the Planning Board and planners from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, the Planning Division conducted a second public forum on the potential redevelopment of the Thoreau Depot Business District to receive community input on a draft vision for the Thoreau Depot area and highlight potential zoning changes needed to create that vision. Throughout the year, MAPC attended various Planning Board meetings to receive feedback on the progress of the project with the hope of presenting potential Zoning Bylaw amendments to the Town in the fall of 2021.

Town Planner Elizabeth Hughes provided professional support to the Planning Board and the ZBA in addition to shepherding the plan review process for all development proposals submitted to these boards. She worked closely with the Planning Board on the presentation of Zoning Bylaw amendments at the 2020 Annual Town Meeting and the development of five potential warrant articles for the 2021 Annual Town meeting. Ms. Hughes continued to coordinate the various Town departments, the Town’s consultant from the UMass Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management and FullCircle Technologies on the development and deployment of a Town-wide on-line permit and application software package.

Ms. Hughes submitted an application to the MassTrails Grant Program and was awarded \$135,000 towards the continued design and permitting for the Assabet River Pedestrian Bridge connecting the Baker Ave/Baker Ave. Extension

business area to the West Concord Village.

Senior Planner Heather Gill provides professional support to the Historic Districts Commission (HDC), Community Preservation Committee (CPC) and Historical Commission. Ms. Gill supported the Historical Commission's review of applications under the Demolition Review Bylaw; administration of the historic house marker program; and the development of amendments to the Demolition Review Bylaw, which will be presented at the 2021 Annual Town Meeting. She coordinated the acceptance and review of 15 applications to the Community Preservation Committee for CPA funding, and conducted the annual CPA project status updates for all open/ongoing projects. Ms. Gill supported the Historic Districts Commission's review of over 60 new applications for Certificates of Appropriateness for alterations to buildings located within Concord's six local historic districts. She also provided invaluable assistance to the HDC on the potential creation of a new historic district for the Jennie Dugan Road area. Ms. Gill also assisted Sustainability Director Kate Hanley in providing support and guidance to the summer UNH Sustainability Fellow, who developed "Sustainability Guidelines for Historic Homes"; as well as actively participating in the Battle Road Scenic Byway Committee's development of an application for the Federal designation of the Scenic Byway.

Planning Division Administrative Assistant Nancy Hausherr and Heather Carey are the key to the efficient management of all of the daily coordination and processes for each of the boards and committees, as well as, posting information on current applications before the Planning Board, ZBA, and HDC and updating the information and materials on the BFRAC, CPC and WCAC pages. The year of 2020 brought many new challenges for the Planning Division staff, citizens and project proponents. Ms. Rasmussen and Ms. Hughes would like to extend their sincere appreciation to Ms. Hausherr and Ms. Carey for their continued exceptional support, their expertise to manage the many changes in how the Division had to operate, and most importantly, their ability to provide the highest level of service with a positive attitude.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

John Cratsley, Chair [Select Board Appointee]
Tom Kearns, Vice Chair [Select Board Appointee]
Burton Flint, Secretary [Planning Board Appointee]
Judy Zaunbrecher, Treasurer [Natural Resources Commission Appointee]
Hester Schnipper [Concord Housing Authority Appointee]
Paul Grasso [Recreation Commission Appointee]
Nancy Nelson [Historical Commission Appointee]
Peter Ward [Select Board Appointee]
Diane Proctor [Select Board Appointee]

Town of Concord Staff supporting CPC
Heather Gill, Senior Planner
Heather Carey, Administrative Assistant
Elizabeth Hughes, Concord Town Planner

2019/2020 Town Meeting Funding Cycle

John Cratsley, Chair (Select Board Appointee)
Tom Kearns, Vice Chair (Select Board Appointee)
Burton Flint, Secretary (Planning Board Appointee)
Judy Zaunbrecher, Treasurer (Natural Resources Commission Appointee)
Hester Schnipper (Concord Housing Authority Appointee)
Paul Grasso (Recreation Commission Appointee)
Nancy Nelson (Historical Commission Appointee)
Peter Ward (Select Board Appointee)
Diane Proctor (Select Board Appointee)

The Community Preservation Committee [CPC] had an especially challenging year, including impacts from the COVID pandemic beginning early in 2020 and lasting throughout the year. This global crisis resulted in a shift to all virtual ZOOM CPC meetings, a delayed Town meeting from April 2020 to September 2020, and rescheduling of the application and deliberation process in the fall. Officer elections were rescheduled from May to October, following the outdoor Town Meeting held in September.

The CPC commends the Town of Concord staff for their extraordinary efforts during a year filled with new challenges. Exemplary leadership, teamwork, and communication was foundational to the success

of the Committee's work. In addition to the funding recommendations noted below, the CPC and Town Staff worked closely with funding recipients and the Finance Department throughout 2020 to ensure that the reimbursement process went smoothly and efficiently, and that completed projects were closed in a timely manner.

2020 Annual Town Meeting – Recommendations Approved

The CPC held informational meetings in June and September of 2019, for potential applicants. At the end of September, the Committee received [13] new applications requesting 2020 Town Meeting funding. As in previous years, the nearly \$2.6 million in CPA funds requested far exceeded the projected available funding. On December 3, 2019, the CPC voted to recommend an allocation of \$1,960,000 in CPA funds to [10] projects, which were included in a warrant article for the 2020 Annual Town Meeting. These funding recommendations were approved at the September 2020 Annual Town Meeting without alteration, as noted below:

Community Housing Projects:

- Concord Housing Authority – Commonwealth Ave. Project - \$300,000 to build an affordable unit.
- Town of Concord – Regional Housing Services Program - \$20,000.

Historic Preservation Projects:

- First Parish in Concord - \$75,000 for the restoration, repaint, and gilding of the belfry that holds the Town clock.
- Holy Family Parish - \$75,000 for the replacement of the rectory roof.
- Friends of Minuteman National Park - \$100,000 for the rehabilitation of the Buttrick House Gardens hardscape.

Open Space and Recreation Projects:

- Town of Concord – Gerow Park - \$500,000 for Phase 1 improvements.
- Town of Concord – Warner's Pond Dredging Project - \$500,000 to improve the ecological health and recreational opportunities.
- Town of Concord – Assabet River Pedestrian Bridge - \$250,000 for construction drawings and permitting.

Recreation Projects:

- Minute Man Arc for Human Services Inc. -

\$100,000 for accessible outdoor oasis recreation park for people with disabilities.

Administration:

- Staff and Technical Support - \$40,000 for administration of the CPA. Funding provides staff support, signage, legal and consulting services, public notices, copying, and other administrative expenses.

2020/2021 Town Meeting Funding Cycle – CPC Members

- Tom Kearns, Chair [Select Board Appointee]
- Peter Ward, Vice Chair [Select Board Appointee]
- Burton Flint, Secretary [Planning Board Appointee]
- Judy Zaunbrecher, Treasurer [Natural Resources Commission Appointee]
- Hester Schnipper [Concord Housing Authority Appointee]
- Paul Grasso [Recreation Commission Appointee]
- Nancy Nelson [Historical Commission Appointee]
- Diane Proctor [Select Board Appointee]
- John Cratsley, Chair [Select Board Appointee]

2021 Annual Town Meeting Recommendations - Pending

The CPC, along with applicants and the community at large, did an excellent job in pivoting to a new schedule. The CPC held informational meetings in August and September for potential applicants. In October, the Committee received 15 new applications for 2021 Annual Town Meeting funding. As in previous years, the nearly \$2.3 million in CPA funds requested far exceeded the funds available for distribution. The Committee met [10] times between September and January 2021, to meet with applicants and evaluate projects. On January 19, 2021, the CPC voted to recommend that \$1,769,891 in CPA funds be appropriated for [15] applications, which will be included in a warrant article for the upcoming 2021 Annual Town Meeting.

HISTORIC DISTRICTS COMMISSION

Commission Members:

Peter Nobile, Chair
Luis Berrizbeitia, Vice Chair
Nea Glenn, Secretary
Melinda Shumway
Paul Ware

Associate Commission Members:

Kate Chartener
Abigail Flanagan
Katharine Mast
Dennis Fiori

Certificates of Appropriateness were reviewed. Due to State of MA COVID-19 restrictions we could not meet in person, so beginning in March our meetings were held remotely via remote participation tool, Zoom. The Chair would particularly like to thank the Commissioners, our talented Town staff including Heather Gill, Heather Carey, and Jeremy Romanul, and of course all applicants and members of the public who attended these Zoom meetings for their patience, good humor, and flexibility as we navigated the peculiarities of Zoom world.

The business of the HDC continued in excellent form, with our staff working behind the scenes in helping applicants file appropriate documents on time, preparing agendas and background information for commissioners, and producing both meeting minutes and follow-up documentation quickly and effectively. As we have in past years, the Commission closely examined each application, considered, and debated its merits per our mandate, elicited in some cases a huge amount of public input, and in some cases with modifications or adjustments we issued Certificates of Appropriateness to the vast majority of applicants. The Commission also conducted several official early morning site visits during the year.



2020 Historic District Commission Members on Zoom: top row from left: Peter Nobile, Chair, Nea Glenn, and Melinda Shumway; middle row from left: Luis Berrizbeitia, Paul Ware, and Kate Chartener; bottom row from left: Dennis Fiore, Katharine Mast, and Abby Flanagan.

Most notably in 2020 the HDC concluded a lengthy review process – including several public meetings, site visits and amendments to the original application – for the Concord Free Public Library expansion and renovation project at 129 Main Street. While the final vote was not unanimous, in the Chair’s opinion a sign of true democracy, the Commission did approve the application and speaks with one voice via the Certificate of Appropriateness. The chair would again like to thank the commissioners for their service, and both the applicants and the public for their commitment to our process and for participating in the robust and passionate but fair and open debates about balancing priorities between public and private interests in our Town.

Applications this year also included designs for major additions or renovations to structures and outbuildings – including replacement structures, dormers, and porches – but also an array of modifications including everything from awnings,

As part of its mandate under the Historic Districts Act, the Historic Districts Commission (HDC) regularly reviews applications for changes to exterior features which are visible from a public way or place and issues or denies Certificates of Appropriateness in response to those applications. The HDC is charged with “the preservation and protection of buildings, places and districts of historic or literary significance” within Concord’s six local historic districts - the American Mile, Barrett Farm, Church Street, Hubbardville, Main Street, and Monument Square/North Bridge.

In 2020, the HDC held 23 regularly scheduled public meetings at which over 60 new applications for

chimney caps, bicycle racks, driveway paving, and fencing to pool equipment sheds, security cameras, signage, and stone walls. The commission will continue to refine its guidelines and resources to assist applicants in choosing the most cost effective, energy efficient and contextually appropriate solutions to this variety of design challenges.

Commission Member Peter Nobile served as Chair over the last year, with Luis Berrizbeitia serving as Vice-Chair and Nea Glenn as Secretary, and Dennis Fiori rejoined the commission after rotating off for two years. The Commission is preparing to fill the one vacant position in 2021.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Members:

Melissa Saalfield, Chair
Thomas Beardsley
Michael Capizzi
Robert Gross
Nancy Nelson

Associate Members:

Alan Bogosian
Rebecca Lemaitre

For the world and the Concord Historical Commission, 2020 was marked by the terrible disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic. Several Commission meetings were postponed or canceled; the remainder were held via Zoom technology, the host of most Concord civic and social commerce for the year. Despite these setbacks Commission business did continue. Highlights of the year are as follows:

Demolition Review Permits

The CHC received six applications for Demolition Review in 2020. Four of these structures were found to be Historically Significant and required a public hearing. At the public hearings, all four structures were determined to be “Preferably Preserved” and

demolition was delayed one year from the date of application. The structures found to be preferably preserved were 111 Ripley Hill Road, 1651 and 1657 Main Street and 1710 Lowell Road.

Demolition Review Bylaw Amendments

Given the number of demolition permits issued and the subsequent destruction of several structures that the Commission designated “preferably preserved,” the Commission agreed to propose a warrant for the 2021 Town Meeting that amends the current bylaw in the hope that the proposed changes will strengthen the review process and, hopefully, save historic structures from demolition.

House Marker Program

No applications for a Historic House Marker were received in 2020. The Concord Historical Commission encourages homeowners who believe their home may qualify to inquire at our website or seek help from Special Collections of the Concord Free Public Library.

Special Programs

Unfortunately, the bi-annual 2020 Preservation Awards were postponed until Fall of 2021, or possibly longer, due to the pandemic. A speaker from the Boston Architectural College had been planned to speak for an evening program with past recipients and town officials.

Additionally, the Commission was unable to participate in a program, Hidden Treasures, with Freedom’s Way. The family-oriented program was to have been a collaboration with the Concord Free Public Library and the Thoreau Farm Trust.

West Concord Depot

The physical condition of the Depot had been of great concern to the Commission. The structure had been renovated using Community Preservation Funds along with funds provided by the MBTA which is the building owner. Over the past decade the exterior has deteriorated and a number of repairs are needed. At year’s end, the MBTA announced that it was officially seeking a new tenant for the property and the tenant will be required to provide physical upkeep of the building.

Wheeler-Harrington House

In 2019, a new tenant took up residence in this

historic West Concord historic home and site. This change prompted a new round of discussions as to the use and maintenance of the property. Oversight of the home and property is under the jurisdiction of the Natural Resources Commission, which is obligated to inform the Concord Historical Commission of any changes in condition, etc.

BRUCE FREEMAN RAIL TRAIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Richard Fahlander, Co-Chair
Nat Welch, Co-Chair
Adrienne Boardman
Dorcas Miller
John Soden
Carole Steele



Site walk of the Phase 2B construction on the BFRT

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee advises the Select Board and Town Manager on the design, development, and long-term maintenance of the rail trail in Concord. The Committee works with other town committees and community organizations to ensure safe access for all users.

This has been an eventful year for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail in Concord.

- 2020 was the first full year of operation for the Concord portion of the trail from Commonwealth Avenue to Powdermill Road.
- Construction began for the bridge spanning Route 2 between Acton and Concord with completion anticipated in late 2021/early 2022.

- Preparation of final construction plans for the last half-mile of the trail in Concord (from Powdermill Road to the Sudbury town line) is underway; with construction of the last half-mile in Concord to be combined with the Sudbury section as that project moves forward toward construction beginning as early as 2022.

The rail trail has become a valued community asset since its opening in September 2019. Users of all ages and abilities experience the natural beauty and historic nature of the West Concord route. Where trains once huffed and puffed, people pedaled, jogged, walked, and wheeled. The benefits of such a resource became all the more apparent during the pandemic, as more and more people found solace and safe space in the fresh air.

Operationally, the trail faced not unexpected growing pains. Erosion at some high traffic locations and access from unauthorized spots are being addressed with additional planting, fencing and paving. Overall, Concord Public Works has maintained the trail admirably. The Friends of the Rail Trail plan to marshal volunteers to assist with maintenance.

The Committee continues to monitor safety issues at crossings and intersections. Conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists in Junction Park are being assessed with both short term measures and long term solutions. Local cycling advocates have suggested signage and road marking to improve safety along the roadway for bicyclists who access the trail at the intersection of Main Street and Commonwealth Avenue. The Committee agreed that the Town departments should make such improvements when feasible.

In December the Committee met with abutters along the last half-mile of the trail to review design of fencing and landscaping as proposed in the 75% plans, to determine if revisions were needed. Of particular interest is protection of White Pond and its fragile ecology. A decorative six-foot tall fence is proposed to be installed along the trail at the pond. The Committee will continue to work closely with the White Pond Advisory Committee throughout final design and construction. A site visit for abutters will be held in Spring 2021. Also, the

Committee is coordinating with Sudbury Rail Trail Advisory Committee to ensure that White Pond protection is considered in their planning.

The Committee is exploring ways to count users on the trail by remote technology and/or volunteers. This data will be particularly useful to measure changes in usership following the completion of the Route 2 bridge, when the 2C portion is scheduled to join the 2A portion of the trail.

The Rail Trail hosted a well-received “Out of Doors” exhibit coordinated by the Umbrella Community Arts Center. Artists painted whimsical, intriguing, and colorful doors that were strategically placed along the trail. As part of the 2B construction project, a permanent display will highlight the history of the White Ladies -housing for prison employee families and of Warner’s Pond. The Committee looks forward to more such creative community collaborations in the future.

This year also saw changes in the Committee membership. Long-time chair Jim Lyon completed his many years of service as did members Kent Carlson and Suzanne Knight. We thank these and all previous committee members for their dedication to making the Rail Trail a reality. The committee welcomed new members Adrienne Boardman, Richard Fahlander, Dorcas Miller, and Nat Welch.

In recognition of outstanding design and construction the Concord portion of the Rail Trail received a Project of the Year Award from the American Public Works Association. The nominating committee stated that, “The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail multi-use path is an impressive example of ingenuity, design excellence and ‘complete streets’ and multi-modal initiatives.” Town staff and committees are to be congratulated for their exemplary efforts on behalf of our community.

Construction Timetable

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail is a 25- mile long rail trail through the communities of Lowell, Chelmsford, Westford, Carlisle, Acton, Concord, Sudbury, and Framingham. The accessible trail is open to non-motorized uses such as cycling, jogging, walking, rollerblading, and skiing. The trail

honors the memory of Bruce N. Freeman, a State Representative from Chelmsford and early advocate for the development of the rail trail.

Phase 1 - Lowell, Chelmsford, Westford - 6.9 miles. Opened in 2009.

Phase 2A – Westford, Carlisle, Acton - 4.9 miles. Opened in April 2018.

Phase 2B – Route 2 Bridge. Construction began June 2020. Expected completion Fall 2021/Spring 2022.

Phase 2C – Concord (Commonwealth Avenue to Powdermill Road) – 2.5 miles. Opened on September 27, 2019.

Phase 2D - Powder Mill Road to Route 20 in Sudbury - 0.5 mile in Concord/4.4 miles in Sudbury. In November 2020 the Town of Sudbury engaged a consultant for the final design, scheduled to be completed by December 2021. Construction may start in 2022.

Phase 3 - Sudbury finalized the purchase of 1.4 miles of CSX rail corridor from just north of Route 20 to the Framingham line. This will ensure the Town’s control of the corridor. Framingham is negotiating for the purchase of the remaining 3.2 miles of the CSX corridor in that municipality.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST STUDY COMMITTEE

Keith Bergman, Chair
Lee Smith, Vice-Chair
Holly Darzen, Clerk
Jim Terry
Linda Miller

The Select Board appointed a 5-member Affordable Housing Trust Study Committee to develop a proposed affordable housing trust bylaw for consideration by this year’s town meeting, following last year’s town meeting vote to accept the authorizing state statute. The Study Committee organized in October 2019 and served through September 2020, undertaking our charge with the support and guidance of Regional Housing Services Office Director Elizabeth Rust and Select Board liaison Linda Escobedo.

CONCORD LAND CONSERVATION TRUST

The Town of Concord Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Bylaw drafted by the Study Committee and recommended by the Select Board was approved as Article 13 of the 2020 Annual Town Meeting on September 13, 2020. Under that bylaw, the Trust's Board of Trustees-- appointed by the Select Board and including one of its own members on the trust board-- would have the ability to receive and disburse funds and real property dedicated to affordable housing, subject to guidelines approved by the Select Board and consistent with the Town's adopted housing goals. The Concord Municipal Affordable Housing Trust complements the Town's existing affordable housing efforts, entities and programs, and the Trust can act quickly when affordable housing opportunities arise. Select Board approval would also be needed for Trust to borrow money; mortgage or pledge trust assets; purchase, accept, sell, lease, exchange, transfer, abandon, convey interest in real, personal, or mixed property; or to amend the Trust. The Town Treasurer serves as custodian of the Trust's funds.

In its message to April 2019 Annual Town Meeting voters, our the Affordable Housing Funding Committee had reported that "Concord needs predictable, sustainable revenue sources so that funds are readily available when affordable home opportunities arise Without the necessary funds to act quickly, valuable opportunities could be missed." The Funding Committee's recommended package of articles was approved by that town meeting: Article 23 appropriated \$500,000 from Free Cash for affordable housing; Article 24 accepted MGL C.44, s.55C to authorize creation of a municipal affordable housing trust to promote the preservation and creation of affordable housing for the benefit of low and moderate income households, and for funding of community housing; and Articles 25 & 26 authorized filing of home rule petitions to establish a building permit surcharge and a real estate transfer fee to be deposited into Concord's Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

The members of the Affordable Housing Trust Study Committee are grateful for the work done by our predecessor, the Affordable Housing Funding Committee, and look forward to the establishment of our successor, the Concord Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Board of Trustees.

Concord Land Conservation Trust Trustees:

Polly Reeve, Chairman
John M. Stevens, Jr., Secretary
Jeff Wieand, Treasurer
Joan D. Ferguson
Lynn G. Huggins
Frederic H. Mulligan
Jonathan M. Keyes
Gordon H. Shaw, Trustee Emeritus

Concord Open Land Foundation Directors:

Thomas C. Tremblay, President
F. Robert Parker, Treasurer
Lynn G. Huggins, Secretary
John G. Bemis
Nancy A. Nelson

The Concord Land Conservation Trust (P.O. Box 141, Concord, MA) is a tax exempt, 501(c)(3) charitable organization established in 1959. Membership and the properties owned by the Land Trust are open to all. The Land Trust's mission is to conserve the natural resources of Concord and the town's traditional landscape of woods, meadows and fields. Its programs complement other conservation efforts of the town, state and national governments as well as other nonprofit organizations. The Land Trust works closely with its affiliate, the Concord Open Land Foundation.

The Land Trust adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic last spring by providing videos and other digital content to the public through the Land Trust's website and social media outlets. Some popular videos included virtual hikes and bird identification videos with Peter Alden. While in-person events with members were canceled, the Land Trust has seen record usage of trails and properties this year. The Land Trust also partnered with other local organizations to offer the Summer Quest program, a way to provide free fun activities for families to complete on Land Trust properties and earn a badge.

The Land Trust hired a full-time Land Stewardship Intern this summer to assist with maintaining trail systems (which was so important with the increased

use of trails) and with removing invasive plants, both aquatic and terrestrial. The Intern, Kate Regan-Loomis of Sudbury, accomplished a lot on Land Trust properties, including working with the Appalachian Mountain Club to build a boardwalk at Newbury Field, coordinating volunteers to pull the invasive water chestnut (*Trapa natans*) from the Sudbury River, and re-creating a trail in Upper Spencer Brook Valley now called the Cattle Run Trail.



Stewardship Intern Kate Regan-Loomis marking trails on Land Trust property October Farm Riverfront.

Even in the midst of a pandemic, the Land Trust is pleased to announce two land donations that took place in 2020. First, we gratefully accepted a gift from The Michael and Tara Burgess Edelman Family of 1.4 acres of open space in the Nashawtuc Hill neighborhood. The donated property, a mature woodland along the Assabet River, is an important link in the matrix of over 125 acres of protected land that the Land Trust has been assembling in this area for almost 60 years. It includes segments of both Squaw Sachem Trail and the abandoned Reformatory Branch rail road, some of the most popular trails in town. Second, as the year ended, the Land Trust received a gift of land from Elizabeth (Libby) Bourquin: a small but lovely parcel on Barrett's Mill Road next to the historic house where she grew up and connecting to Corey-Bourquin Field. The donation is the last in a series of steps taken by Libby, her mother and her sister to preserve the natural and historic landscape of Barrett's Mill Road. Corey Meadow and Corey-Bourquin Field, previous acquisitions from the family to the Land Trust, together with the new parcel, are popular for neighborhood walks and provide valuable wildlife corridors.

The Land Trust continued its active stewardship of the 978 acres of protected land in our care. In the upper Spencer Brook valley, with assistance from Beaver Solutions LLC, the Land Trust stymied the beaver's attempt to dam under a trail bridge in order to insure access for recreation. Controlling invasive plants is an ongoing objective on Land Trust properties and throughout Concord. The Land Trust prioritizes these efforts according to the ecologic value of the property being threatened; to this end, licensed contractors were retained to remove glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*) at Newbury Field, a little bluestem meadow, and along the wet edges of Well Meadow in Wright Woods. The Land Trust also hired a contractor to remove common reed (*Phragmites australis*) from the Bigelow Woods along Route 2 – a population of manageable size that the Land Trust hopes to eradicate from that section of the Sudbury River and help prevent its spread. The Land Trust also worked to prevent new invasives such as black swallowwort (*Cynanchum louiseae*) from getting a foothold in town. In addition, as part of a grant from the Garden Club of Concord, planted native shrubs (*Vaccinium corymbosum* and *Corylus americana*) and strawberries (*Fragaria virginiana*) in Wright Woods as part of an ongoing project to restore and maintain the former site of the Bay House.

The Land Trust is governed by a volunteer board and its operations are supported almost exclusively by annual membership donations. The Land Trust extends immense gratitude to the many residents of Concord who have been so generous in donating land, conservation restrictions on land, and the funds necessary to acquire and maintain conservation land. As one of the oldest local land trusts in the country, we are proud and grateful that for so long Concord has placed such a high value on maintaining a balance of land uses characteristic of the traditions of a New England town. Especially now, during a pandemic, when access to open space is so important to so many, the Land Trust is committed to continuing its efforts to protect and steward our precious natural lands, for Concord residents and all to enjoy now and for many years to come.

Concord Land Conservation Trust
Statement of Activities
September 30, 2019 and 2020

	<u>2019</u>		<u>2020</u>
<u>Revenue and Support</u>			
Membership dues	\$ 162,189	\$	144,595
Contributions	128,427		78,211
Rental income	10,061		10,061
Trail guide fees	35		10
Investment income, net	44,602		170,755
Total revenue and support	345,314		403,632
<u>Expenses</u>			
<u>Program services</u>			
Salary and wages	29,579		36,884
Property maintenance	31,861		33,560
Education studies	1,200		1,200
Insurance	6,068		7,235
Amortization	1,444		9,333
Printing and postage	3,795		-
Professional fees	9,358		9,849
Payroll taxes	2,321		2,887
Organizational dues	1,300		600
Office rent and utilities	4,950		-
Annual meeting and events	4,740		290
Telephone	704		-
Real estate taxes and other taxes	-		-
Donations	55,000		2,500
Other	732		2,699
<u>Support Services</u>			
Salary and wages	12,912		22,234
Printing and postage	4,464		5,944
Office rent and utilities	2,475		10,140
Professional fees	9,774		12,434
Payroll taxes	1,246		1,729
Office supplies and services	1,100		1,859
Telephone	352		1,923
Real estate taxes and other taxes	7,787		8,239
Bank and credit card fees	1,014		522
Conference fees and training	-		-
Insurance	2,888		-
State filing fees and other taxes	36		1,166
<u>Fundraising Expenses</u>			
Salary and wages	4,621		7,411
Office rent and utilities	2,475		-
Payroll taxes	368		576
Office supplies and services	850		850
Telephone	352		-
Printing and postage	405		-
Total expenses	206,171		182,064
Increase (decrease) in net assets	139,143		221,568
Net assets at beginning of year	32,236,252		32,379,575
Net assets at end of year	\$ 32,375,395	\$	32,601,143

Concord Land Conservation Trust
Statements of Financial Position
September 30, 2019 and 2020

	2019		2020
<u>Assets</u>			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 281,658	\$	154,469
Investments	2,690,583		3,061,314
Promises to give - net - current	11,500		11,500
Prepaid expenses	4,230		4,383
Total current assets	2,987,971		3,231,666
Non-current assets			
Promises to give - net - long-term	\$ -	\$	-
Land - held as open space	29,370,475		29,370,475
Website costs	24,556		17,111
Deposits	600		600
Total non-current assets	29,395,631		29,388,186
Total assets	\$ 32,383,602		\$ 32,619,852
<u>Liabilities and Net Assets</u>			
Current liabilities			
Accrued expenses	\$ 5,696	\$	15,104
Accrued payroll	2,511		3,605
Total current liabilities	8,207		18,709
Net assets			
Without donor restrictions			
Unrestricted net assets	\$ 2,395,572	\$	2,640,023
Board-designated net assets	10,000		10,000
Total unrestricted net assets	2,405,572		2,650,023
With donor restrictions	29,969,823		29,951,120
Total net assets	32,375,395		32,601,143
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 32,383,602	\$	32,619,852

AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

The Agriculture (Ag) Committee provides a forum for matters of interest to farmers in Concord and reports to the Select Board on how best to support farming in Concord. The Ag Committee is comprised of 5 members, 3 of whom are actively engaged in the business of farming and 2 community members who have an active interest in farming referred to as “friends of farming”. Carolyn Goethert chaired the Committee for a second year in 2020 until Lise Holdorf took over the chair post in November.

2020 was a challenging season for many farms in Concord. Unpredictable weather patterns, including an unseasonably cold and wet spring followed by a severe drought throughout the summer and an unusually severe freeze and snowstorm in October caused crop loss and headaches for farmers. On their own, these events would have been quite a test for farmers this year, but the pandemic added yet another layer of difficulty. In March, farms had to abruptly pivot and make adjustments to staffing and safety protocols, as farm workers are essential workers and continued to work in person throughout the lockdown. Farms also struggled to sometimes find the materials they needed for the season since everything from cleaning supplies to seeds were suddenly in short supply. Many farms also had to quickly make alterations to their food safety and customer safety practices as they augmented sanitizing and cleaning protocols, implemented new capacity limits in their farm stands and pick-your-own fields, adjusted layouts to allow for proper social distancing and set up new online ordering, scheduling and contactless pick-up systems. With many food supply disruptions across the country, Concord farms reported unprecedented demand for their products. Concord farms fortunately rose to the challenge, showing how critical a robust local food system is to the health and vitality of the community.

The Ag Committee also made adjustments this year due to the pandemic. The annual Spring Forum had been scheduled for late March, but had to be canceled. The committee had a little more time to make adjustments to the format of our other major annual outreach event: the Ag Day Farmers Market.

This event was reimagined as “Ag Week” during the week of September 8th-12th. Eight farms around town hosted safe, socially distanced events such as sweet corn and pumpkin picking, pumpkin decorating, veggie car racing, pick-your-own flowers, farm-themed takeout dinners and virtual tours. Residents were encouraged to photograph themselves visiting Concord’s farms during Ag Week and submit their photos to be entered in a drawing for farm-themed prizes. Five winners were selected. Planning for a modified spring forum for 2021 is underway and will likely include virtual as well as outdoor socially distanced activities like farm tours and demos.

CONCORD HOUSING AUTHORITY

Richard Eifler, Chair
Stephen Dirrane
Edward Larner
Charles Phillips
Hester Schnipper

The primary mission of the Concord Housing Authority(CHA) is to develop and administer an adequate supply of rental housing for the elderly, disabled, and families of low and moderate income in Concord. Our goal is to provide decent, safe and sanitary housing opportunities to improve the quality of life for these individuals and families as well as promote economic self-sufficiency and long term stability. The goals of the CHA are consistent with the Town’s historical commitment to foster a heterogenous and integrated community.

The Concord Housing Authority (CHA) was established in 1961 under M.G.L. Section 121.B as a local municipal agency for providing low income housing and is subject to state, federal and local regulations. The CHA is governed by a Board of Commissioners, four of whom are locally elected and one of whom is a state Appointee. All programs are dependent on state, federal, and vital local sources of funding and support.

The CHA operates 228 subsidized units in both Public Housing and Section 8 programs and currently serves more than 375 people. Our State/Federal Family and elderly units are scattered throughout the Town in over 20 locations.

Due to COVID restrictions, capital projects in 2020 were limited to vacant units and exterior projects. The CHA was able to replace three roofs at scattered site properties. An upgrade to exterior lighting at Everett Gardens and Peter Bulkeley Terrace and lock replacements at Everett Gardens Expansion were part of a health and safety initiative. Smaller renovation projects in kitchens and bathrooms were accomplished at turnover. We have begun the replacement of 14 patio doors in two family developments and continue to move forward on the design and development of a two-bedroom single family home on Commonwealth Ave. with financial support from the Town of Concord and Community Preservation.

CONCORD HOUSING FOUNDATION

Jane Blumberg
Steve Carr
Holly Darzen
Frank (Rich) Feeley, President
Lise Holdorf
Nancy McJennett, Treasurer
Charles Phillips
Barbara Powell, Clerk
Terry Rothermel
Sara (Win) Wilbur

Since 2001, the Concord Housing Foundation, Inc. (CHF), a private, non-profit charitable organization, has sought to keep Concord's housing more affordable. Our volunteer Board of Directors has continuously engaged in fundraising, outreach, and education to achieve this goal. Following a very busy and successful year in 2019, the pandemic put a hold on many of our local efforts.

At the 2020 Town Meeting, CHF supported a new Town appropriation of \$500,000 for affordable housing, as well as a zoning change to make it easier to construct accessory housing units. The CHF also supported actions to continue property-tax relief for qualifying senior citizens. All were approved by the voters. The Town also approved bylaws for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, so that the Fund can be used for diverse affordable housing projects.

Home-rule petitions to authorize a building-permit fee increase and real estate transfer fee for affordable housing, approved at 2019 Town Meeting, were submitted by our state legislators. At the same time, bills were introduced in the General Court to provide an option, state-wide, for municipalities to adopt such a transfer fee. CHF worked with a state-wide coalition to support these bills, but there was no legislative action on them during the pandemic. The bills are being filed again in the new legislative session in 2021, and the Foundation will continue to work with the coalition towards their passage.

Plans are moving ahead for Habitat for Humanity to create two owner-occupied affordable units in the house at 930 Main Street, which was purchased, in part, with funds from CHF. Consistent with the CHF's request to replace the small house demolished in the creation of Gerow Park, the Town approved \$300,000 for construction of an affordable unit for the Concord Housing Authority. CHF continues to monitor planning efforts, such as the NMI-Starmet Reuse Committee and the Middle School Building Committee, to encourage inclusion of affordable housing when suitable land becomes available.

The Foundation's newsletter, The Concord Housing News, is generally published in the spring and fall. The newsletter covers topics related to affordable housing, including the activities of the Concord Housing Authority, the Concord Housing Development Corporation, and the CHF itself. The newsletter also serves to inform citizens about housing articles to be considered at Town Meeting and subsequently reports on their outcomes. The Foundation also maintains a web site — concord-housingfoundation.org — to inform the community about affordable housing issues and about CHF.

During 2020, CHF welcomed Lise Holdorf as a new Director. Lise is a farmer, currently living on and farming the land at Barrett's Mill Farm. Barrett's Mill farmland was preserved for farming and the farmhouse maintained as an affordable house through a successful partnership between CHF and the Town of Concord.

A Board of Advisors supports the Foundation and joins in our Annual Meeting, providing valuable counsel. The CHF can be reached at PO Box 751, Concord, MA 01742-0751.

CONCORD HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Douglas Bacon
James Burns
Peter Lowitt, Vice President
Lee Smith, President
Yannis Tsitsas

The Concord Housing Development Corporation (CHDC) is a non-profit corporation established by a special act of the Massachusetts Legislature in August, 2006, as a successor entity to the Concord Housing Trust, and the Concord Affordable Housing Committee before that.

All Board members are appointed by the Select Board, and are volunteers and Concord residents. The CHDC works under the charge developed by the Concord Select Board to investigate and implement alternatives for the provision of affordable housing for persons of low, moderate and middle income and others whose needs may be identified from time to time in the Town. The corporation works closely with all Town boards, Committees and Departments to support the Town's goal of housing diversity.

Over the last 14 years, the CHDC has made great strides towards its mission. The CHDC has constructed and sold eight income-restricted units in the Lalli Woods mixed income housing development, contributed funds to a lower level of affordability for several new housing units, allowing them to be counted on the town's subsidized

housing inventory (SHI), and preserved the affordable housing restrictions on several units at Emerson Annex by purchasing, renovating and reselling the units. Most recently in 2019, the CHDC, in partnership with the Town and Concord Housing Foundation, purchased a small home in Concord for conversion to a duplex of affordable housing as a Habitat for Humanity project. The project moved forward in 2020, despite the pandemic, with the permit issued by the Planning Board for a duplex, DHCD approval of the project, and the start of marketing. The family selection and lottery is planned for February, 2021, with construction following in the spring, and occupancy in 2022.

The CHDC has also continued its Small Grants Program in FY2020, which helps low to moderate income residents of Concord make repairs to their homes to improve health and safety. The Small Grant Program has two grant cycles annually. The maximum grant amount was reduced from \$5,000 to \$4,000 due to funding constraints. The grants are awarded based on availability of funds and the health and safety justifications of the requests. Over the life of the program, the CHDC has awarded 53 grants for \$164,000, 42% to senior residents. Further information regarding the CHDC Small Grant Program is available on the Town website or from the Town Planning Office.

The CHDC continues on its Junction Village development initiative, the 12-acre property on Winthrop Street, known as Christopher Heights of Concord at Junction Village. The Commonwealth gave the property to the CHDC specifically for affordable housing and open space purposes. The project is a residential development of 83 units of permanently restricted affordable assisted living, developed and managed by the Grantham Group, and an open space passive recreation area to be protected by a conservation restriction. The Commonwealth awarded state low income housing tax credits and subsidies in April, 2020. Other progress this last year includes Town Meeting approval of a Tax Incremental Financing Agreement and appointment of members to the Open Space Task Force.

The CHDC is an important part of Concord's housing "family", collaborating with the Concord Housing Authority and the Concord Housing Foundation to promote affordable housing in Concord and increase housing diversity. Concord remains an expensive town in which to live, and the need for affordable housing remains constant. We will continue to seek out and support responsible additions to the Town's affordable housing inventory to help maintain and increase our housing diversity.

The CHDC is well positioned to advance Concord's housing agenda, and looks forward to new initiatives and activities.

The Board typically meets monthly with meeting agendas and minutes posted on the Town's website. Interested residents are welcome to attend a meeting and get a sense of how the Board operates.

METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING COUNCIL: MINUTEMAN ADVISORY GROUP ON INTERLOCAL COORDINATION (MAGIC)

The Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC) includes the towns of Acton, Bedford, Bolton, Boxborough, Carlisle, Concord, Hudson, Lexington, Lincoln, Littleton, Maynard, Stow, and Sudbury. MAGIC was established as a growth management committee in 1984 and has become a respected voice in regional decision making, focusing on transportation, the environment, energy, open space, affordable housing, economic and community development, and legislative issues.

MAGIC Highlights

MAGIC held annual elections at its September 3rd meeting. MAGIC's three leadership positions are one Chair and two Co-Chair positions. Together, they work with the MAGIC Coordinator to steer the ship and ensure MAGIC encourages regional collaboration and discussion of issues of regional interest and concern. Congratulations and thanks to Adam Duchesneau, Boxborough Town Planner, who

was elected to another term as Chair; Kristina Johnson, Assistant Director of Planning and Community Development in Hudson, who will be continuing as MAGIC Co-Vice Chair, and to Margot Fleischman, Bedford Selectman, who continued on as Co-Vice Chair as well this year.

We also welcomed new MAGIC members and participants this year: from Boxborough: Wes Fowlks, Select Board Chair, and Cindy Markowitz, Planning Board Chair. Many thanks to Les Fox and Rita Grossman from Boxborough for their service to MAGIC.

MAPC staff member Lizzie Grobbel served as the Subregional Coordinator to MAGIC through November 2020 and Julie Curti become the new Subregional Coordinator in December.

MAGIC Meetings

MAGIC held six regular business meetings in 2020. Highlight meeting topics included the following:

- Legislative Updates from MAPC
- Zoning for Multi-family Housing
- Healthy Aging, Healthy Living
- MAGIC FY 2021 Work Plan Meeting
- Election of Officers and COVID-19 Project Brainstorm
- MPO Transportation Planning & Projects discussion

Regional Projects

MAGIC communities make a voluntary annual contribution to a Special Assessment Fund, to increase the region's capacity to pursue projects of regional interest. FY2020 and FY2021 MAGIC Special Assessment allocations to regional projects are as follow:

Fiscal Year 2020 (\$25,562.27)

- Regional Age Friendly Planning: Housing and Transportation
 - MAGIC Microtransit Pilot: Making the Connections
 - Climate Change Mitigation and Implementation: Coordination and Implementation
 - MAGIC Stormwater Partnership
- Fiscal Year 2021 (\$25,697.79)
- COVID-19 Recovery Planning Support for Towns, Small Businesses, and Village Centers

- Regional Age Friendly Planning: Housing and Transportation
- Climate Mitigation and Adaptation: Net Zero Planning

Special Events

MAGIC held the following special events in 2020:

MAGIC Age-Friendly Forum

MAGIC held an age-friendly forum in January 29. The event covered MAGIC’s first Age Friendly Plan produced by MAPC, the “MAGIC Healthy Aging, Healthy Living Report.” The report assesses the transportation and housing needs of older adults of the 13 member towns of MAGIC subregion and presents a range of local and regional strategies for addressing those needs. Implementation of the Healthy Aging, Healthy Living strategies will happen through regional coordination as well as municipalities acting independently.

MAGIC Transportation and Climate Forum on Municipal Electrification

On February 10, MAGIC held a forum for municipal staff, school staff, and town Transportation Advisory/Sustainability committee members. The event focused on sharing what municipalities and schools can do to reduce carbon emissions in the transportation sector. The forum covered opportunities to electrify vehicle fleets, and also introduced the Transportation and Climate Initiative.

Net Zero Planning Workshop

MAGIC held a net zero planning workshop on May 20 as a joint event with the MWRC subregion. Participants joined from across the two subregions to learn about net zero planning resources available for cities and towns from MAPC. The workshop included an overview of net zero planning and available resources, case studies from MAPC municipalities, and an introduction to MAPC’s framework for equitable net zero planning. The workshop then moved to breakout groups on the topics of GHG inventories, net zero buildings, and climate-smart zoning and permitting.

2020 MAGIC Legislative Breakfast

Over 50 local officials, municipal staff, and other members of the MAGIC gathered virtually on June 18 to hear from and ask questions of their state

representatives. The breakfast included a panel discussion featured Senators Barrett, Eldridge, and Tran, and Representatives Ciccolo, Gentile, Gordon, Gouveia, and Hogan.

Winter Placemaking Charette

On November 17, MAGIC held a Winter Placemaking Mini-Charette with MAPC’s Economic Development team to consider two sites in the MAGIC region and create winter programming options to generate more local business traffic. A Winter Activation Design Guide was offered as a resource to cover regulatory/permitting requirements and upcoming funding opportunities (including the MassDOT Shared Winter Streets and Places grant).

RIVER STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL OF THE SUDBURY, ASSABET, AND CONCORD WILD AND SCENIC RIVER

Emma Lord, NPS Community Planner

River Stewardship Council Transitions in 2020

Emma Lord is the new National Park Service staff working with the River Stewardship Council. Emma is also working with the nearby Nashua, Squannacook, and Nissitissit Rivers Wild and Scenic Stewardship Council.

Virtual Riverfest

Like everyone else, the RSC had to adapt to a virtual world during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. The annual Riverfest was adapted into “Virtual Riverfest”, which consisted of a number of videos and interactive presentations on the RSC website. The goal was to educate and give visitors a feel for the rivers, but most importantly to encourage visitors to get out and explore the rivers on their own.

This year’s Virtual Riverfest activities highlighted the historic, recreational, scenic, and ecological values of the Wild and Scenic Rivers. From interactive historic tours to interpretive paddles and

walks to recreational maps and other resources, there was something for people of all ages. Kids could earn their Junior River Ranger badge, enjoy a Wild & Scenic Film Festival, take a nature photography class, or learn about the rivers on a virtual watershed tour. Participants brought out their inner naturalist by grabbing binoculars and smart phones and observing and identifying wildlife along the rivers. They took in the local history of the rivers with a virtual museum tour and interpretive talk with a ranger at Minute Man National Historical Park. For the more adventurous, there were bike touring opportunities, a RiverQuest, and recreation guides to help plan their own excursion.

Because all of the activities were virtual, the RSC was able to reach a broader audience and people could participate in Riverfest throughout the region, state, country, and world.

Major Partner Work

The RSC once again funded major partners in the region to work on important project, through the Federal Wild and Scenic budget; these dollars leveraged hundreds of hours of volunteer time and local resources and funds. The RSC provided funding to support SuAsCo CISMA's basic administrative costs, invasive plant control at rare plant locations in the watershed, and the 7th annual small grants program. The Council supported Sudbury Valley Trustees' work on land protection, land maintenance, and land stewardship. OARS' water quality and water flow related work continued to be partially funded this year by the RSC. The RSC funded Mass Audubon's Riverschools program during the academic year as well as their efforts to document, evaluate, and share the Riverschools curriculum with more teachers in SuAsCo's member towns.

Community Grant Projects

The following projects were awarded community grant funds in 2020:

City of Framingham Department of Public Works - Public education on water pollution using the Enviroscape Ecological Restoration model.

Lowell Parks & Conservation Trust - Fish Monitoring During a Pandemic: Funds to support

staff time, river herring monitoring supplies, and outreach for the fish monitoring program on the Concord River in Lowell.

The Umbrella Art Center / OARS - Earth Month Water Installation – Voyage of the Yellow Wellies watershed tour; Children's Wild and Scenic Film Festival, streaming for Earth Month and Riverfest.

Mass Rivers Alliance - Water Bylaws Toolkit: Developed a water bylaw toolkit including examples of the most protective and effective water-related bylaws in the state, covering issues from stormwater to water conservation.

Town of Carlisle Trails Committee - Greenough Trail Improvements: Trail infrastructure improvements on the Greenough Property along the Concord River in the Town of Carlisle.

All of the RSC's major partners and community grant recipients rose to the challenge of working in a COVID-19 world. Adaptations included virtual volunteer training for water quality and fish monitoring and using proper COVID-19 safety protocols for in-person work.

Advocacy for the Rivers

The RSC continued to participate in the ongoing discussions regarding the Billerica dam. The RSC reviewed and commented on a proposal by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to expand hunting in Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge. The group also reviewed and commented on a proposed state Mosquito Control Bill. In its advisory role to the National Park Service and Army Corp of Engineers, the RSC commented on the proposed projects to rehab the historic Stone's Bridge in Wayland (long advocated by the RSC).

Get Involved

There are many ways to get involved in the work of the Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Wild and Scenic River. We meet monthly and our meetings are open to the public. To be in touch, find us online at www.sudbury-assabet-concord.org.

WEST CONCORD JUNCTION CULTURAL ARTS COMMITTEE (WCJCDC).

Harry Bartlett
Lisa Evans
Carlene Hempel, Chair
Margot Kimball
Jen Montbach
Ann Sussman
Kate Yoder

The West Concord Junction Cultural District Committee (WCJCDC), appointed by the Select Board with seven regular members, serves as a planning group to support a thriving creative/artist community through events as well as initiatives in the Village district. The WCJCDC also seeks to illuminate the notion that art is an important economic engine that can strengthen Village businesses and serve as a magnet for visitors who want to shop and recreate here. While the COVID-19 pandemic stalled or thwarted many of our plans, the WCJCDC succeeded in some of its 2020 goals. Those were:

- We continued our multi-year ArtScramble community mural project. In the second installment, “ArtScramble 2: Our Local Farms,” local artists created a community-farming themed 6-foot-by-12-foot mural that was digitized into 288 squares. In an effort led by the Village Art Room, an art program created by WCJCDC member Margot Kimball, members of the community were recruited to paint squares in socially distant art events as well as through art kits that were packaged and delivered to their homes. The result is the dynamic second installment in our planned five-part community mural series for West Concord Village.
- In late November, the WCJCDC applied for and received a grant from the MCC to build upon and continue our ArtScramble mural project. With the \$5,000 we were awarded in January 2020, we water-proofed and permanently installed “ArtScramble 1: Music in the Village” on the outside wall of Reasons to be Cheerful, facing Beharrell Street, in the heart of the Village and purchased supplies for our ArtScramble 2 mural project.
- We collaborated with the Town of Concord’s Visitor’s Center and a local sign maker to design



“ArtScramble 2: Our Local Farms:” A detail of some of the 288 squares of the WCJCDC’s second public mural project, organized and painted throughout the pandemic months by local artists and hundreds of community members.

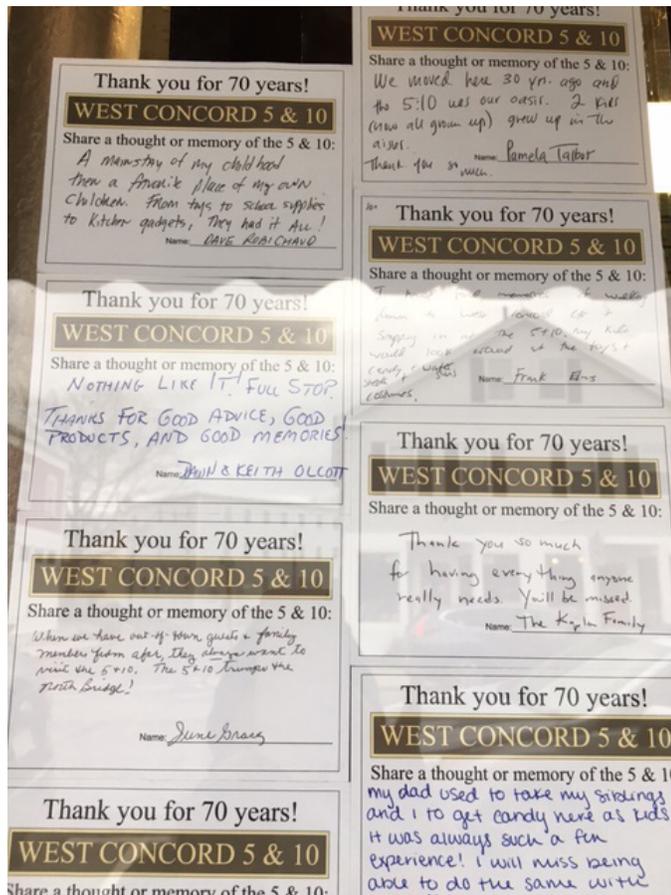
new wayfinding signs that announce the Village’s cultural district from five-different entry points. We also worked to create a wayfinding kiosk to illustrate the boundaries of our cultural district that will include the locations of our artist studios and creative spaces, along with district amenities such as bathrooms, bike racks and arts attractions such as the Concord Conservatory of Music and the Kay DeFord Performing Arts Center.

- We applied for and received a Local Cultural Council grant for \$300 – with a match for the same amount from the Town – to create a map and history of the cultural district to be printed as brochures or pamphlets and placed in local businesses. This project was interrupted by the pandemic and is ongoing.
- We created a series of tributes to our local 5&10, a beloved store, landmark and cultural icon in our district that closed on Dec. 31 after 85 years in business. Our effort was three-pronged: (1) We organized an extensive car parade to pass by the store on its last day that included police, fire and ambulance vehicles as well as numerous local residents. (2) We created a postcard tribute that involved designing, printing and handing out postcards on which community members wrote about their favorite memory of the 5&10. We then installed the postcards in the store’s window for all to read. (3) With the help of local cable outlet Minuteman Media Network, we helped create a 30-minute long tribute video of the store, its

proprietor Maynard Forbes and the Village itself that was then distributed to the community at large. Though we had to cancel some of our other events, such as the Porchfest music festival planned for September 2020, we remained at work planning and strategizing to be ready for the reopening, and the revival, of West Concord Village, post-pandemic.

2229 MAIN STREET OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Ray Bruttomesso
 Deborah Farnsworth,
 Board of Health representative
 Nick Pappas, NRC representative
 Len Rappoli
 Pam Rockwell
 Fred Seward



A few of more than 150 postcards collected by the WCJCDC in tribute to the West Concord 5&10.

The 2229 Main Street Oversight Committee was formed to monitor the cleanup at the site previously occupied by defense contractor Starmet, formerly Nuclear Metals, Inc. (NMI). This site was put on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) national priorities list in 2001 and is now a Superfund site. The EPA has completed the building removal action, so at this point, the covered building slabs, construction trailers, sampling well-heads, and fences are the only structures that remain at the site. In 2020 the contractor developed a workplan for the remedial design, which includes testing of materials that will be used in the remediation, new sampling of wells, and project planning. Additionally, new data from a pump and treat system that was brought on-line in 2019 in Acton to protect drinking water from organics in the groundwater became available.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the committee only met once, although committee members submitted individual comments to the remedial design workplan review. The workplan includes new testing to look at additional sources of organic contamination in the water heading off of the site and under the river, including developing a model for 1,4-dioxane in bedrock and PFAS chemicals from the site. PFAS, also known as “forever chemicals” are a group of fluoroalkyl substances that are used in waterproofing, food packaging, non-stick surfaces, and industrial processes. These chemicals do not breakdown, and are associated with endocrine disruption or cancer. Massachusetts set new drinking water standards for PFAS contamination in 2020, and the testing was developed to make sure that PFAS contamination from the Starmet site does not reach Acton’s drinking water wells. PFAS can be removed from water with charcoal filters, so the pretreatment of water for the 1,4-dioxane pump and treat system

may already be reducing the PFAS in the groundwater plume while more data is collected.

In April 2018, Concord Town meeting voted to encourage taking ownership of the property immediately and to allocate funds for a redevelopment plan. The Town has created a new committee, the NMI/Starmet Reuse Planning Committee to develop ideas about how the Town could reuse the site. The 2229 Main Street Oversight Committee is supporting the new committee's efforts, and would like to emphasize that the best way for the Town to ensure that the most complete cleanup is implemented and maintained at the site is for the Town to take ownership of this site and redevelop it.

Once the remediation design is complete, the work to clean up the rest of the site can begin. Currently depleted uranium in surface soils near building slabs, and in groundwater deep below the surface is confined to the 2229 Main Street property. Depleted uranium in groundwater moves slowly, so EPA has ample time to ensure that the uranium never moves off the site. Contaminated soils up to a 10 foot depth will be dug up and removed from the site so that a person living, working, and growing their own food at the site for 70 years will have less than an increased cancer rate of one in a million because of their exposure. Groundwater at the site will be protected by chemically sequestering the large mass of depleted uranium deep below the old holding basin, surrounding it with a waterproof barrier like concrete or bentonite, and capping it. Contaminated soils will be shipped to a proper mixed waste disposal area and not buried at the site.

More information about the 2229 Main Street cleanup can be found at the following websites. The committee does not have control over the content of these sites:

- www.nmisite.org is the website created by the contractor de maximis inc. It includes a list of the current activities at the site, including data and maps from the sampling that has been completed and pictures of the building removal. There are also links to the EPA Record of Decision and feasibility study.

- More information from the EPA about the 2229 Main Street Superfund site can be found online at <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/nmi>

NMI-STARMET RE-USE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Gary Kleiman, Co-Chair
Paul Boehm, Co-Chair
Pam Rockwell, Clerk
Andrew Boardman
Jim Burns
Steven Ng
Karl Seidman

The purpose of the NMI-Starmet Re-use Planning Committee (NSRC) is to assist the Town with identifying possible ways to reuse the property at 2229 Main Street for maximum public benefit. In 2020, the committee worked with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) contractor Squeo to finalize a report about the redevelopment process, including identifying principles that the committee will use to evaluate reuse options, and developing a map of the site that shows which areas of the site are suitable for particular types of redevelopment. The committee used information from an online survey, in addition to data from last year's outreach efforts, to develop a master plan concept to redevelop the property, which will be presented to the Select Board in 2021.

The committee used guidance from the 2018 Comprehensive Long Range Plan to develop principles to guide redevelopment at the Starmet site:

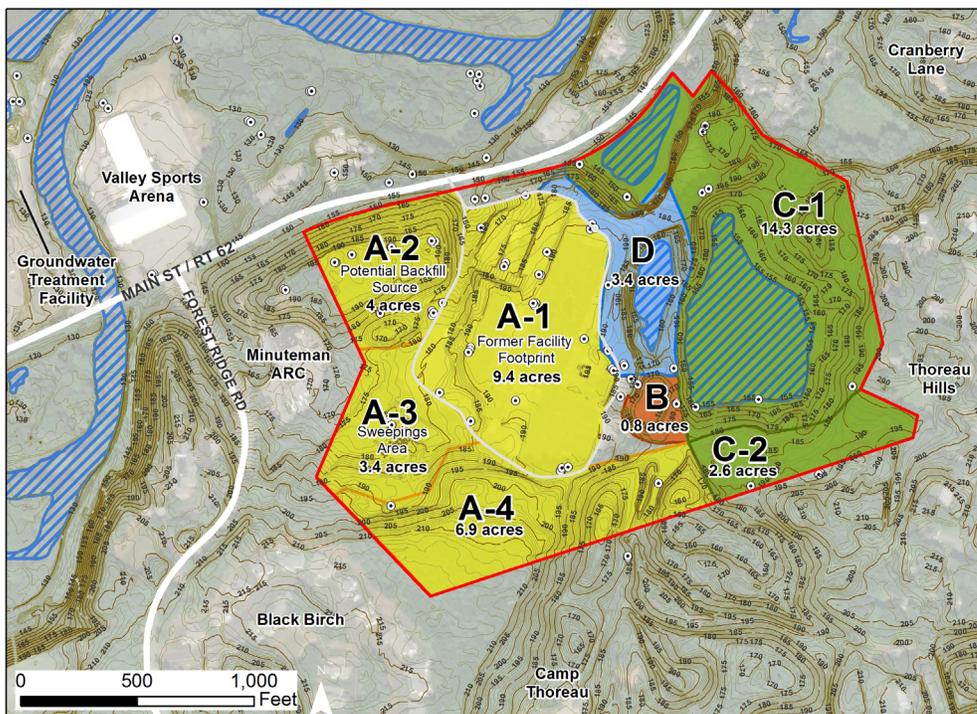
- **Multiple Integrated Uses:** Redevelopment should address multiple needs identified by the community.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** Redevelopment should be sustainable and preserve environmental assets, be carbon-neutral, and improve landscape resilience.
- **Fiscal Sustainability:** Find creative way to fund reuse.
- **Community synergy:** Strengthen the community and our relationships with neighboring towns. Provide opportunities for people from diverse social groups to interact as they access services at the site, and support site accessibility to

local neighborhoods and surrounding communities. Over the summer the committee released an online survey to gather more information about how the general public feels about redeveloping the site. Over 65 people responded to the survey. The committee noted that respondents supported a wide variety of potential uses for the part of the property where the old manufacturing buildings and parking lots were located. Notably, municipal uses were much more popular than private development uses. More than half the respondents supported some form of housing at the site, particularly affordable housing. Most respondents also supported some improvement in public access, such as trails, viewing areas, or environmental education areas in the natural areas of the site that will not be developed (at least 20 acres). There were still some respondents who commented that they felt that the site would not be safe for redevelopment or housing.

The committee is developing its report to the Select Board with the information they have collected, which will include recommendations. The

committee is considering whether to recommend that the Town take ownership of the property and take steps to advance the master plan concept for redeveloping the site. Whether through forums, committee presentations, surveys, or personal interactions, a common thread among most commentors is that the Town values the special environmental assets of this site, including the sphagnum bog and the steep woodlands that ring the site. The draft master plan concept would conserve these areas, connect them to town hiking trails, develop safe viewing areas, and provide car free access options to the site.

Additionally, municipal, commercial, housing or mixed-use developments would be located first in the area previously developed at the site and sited to take advantage of views and access to the natural areas, and should include solar power and battery storage. Examples and more explicit options will be detailed in the final report. The committee expects to do more public outreach with the report before presenting it to the Select Board in 2021.



Potential Reuse Zones Map

- Site Boundary
- Zone A. Potential Development Areas
- Zone B. Holding Basin Consolidation
- Zone C. Open Space - Habitat/Buffer; Potential for Development TBD
- Zone D. Open Space - Drainage/Infrastructure
- ▨ Surface Water
- ▨ Existing Roads
- ▨ Onsite Access
- Monitoring Wells
- 5' Elevation Contours
- 1' Elevation Contours