

Town of Acton

Town Board and Committee Descriptions

Volunteer Job Fair

April 26, 2011



League of Women Voters – Acton Area

Town of Acton – Volunteer Coordinating Committee

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Acton 2020

472 Main St.

Acton, MA 01720

Phone: (978) 929-6631

Email: acton2020@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The Acton 2020 Committee runs the process of creating a Comprehensive Community Plan that meets the requirements of Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) Chapter 41, Section 81 D and brings the Plan's goals and objectives to a vote at Town Meeting.

The Comprehensive Community Plan (or Master Plan) is the primary planning document for the Town, setting the Town's course for the next 10-15 years. As a committee, we have been in operation since June 2010. Thus far, we have reviewed the emerging vision and core values of the Phase I Outreach process; gathered data and facts in order to create an Existing Conditions Inventory and Analysis report on Acton, including progress made since the 1998 Master Plan Update; and revised and finalized a set of seven goals and objectives that will serve as the backbone of the plan.

Part of our responsibility is to ensure we have public input as we create this plan for our community. In order to do this, we have thus far held a big public workshop in October 2010 and then in March 2011 held three public meetings about some "burning issues" in Acton. We also have created a website that outlines the planning process and features all our events and relevant documents while also encouraging feedback (see www.acton2020.info). We also have a very active blog where we post and receive feedback on various "burning issues." (see blog.acton2020.info) We plan to have three more public events as we formulate the plan and hope to have the plan voted for approval by Town Meeting in April 2012. The Committee will oversee implementation of the goals, objectives, strategies and actions.

Our committee is supported by staff time from the Planning Department. The Director of Planning has budget authority from the Town Manager to help in creating this plan. With this money we have hired consultants who are helping us with this process. As a committee we delegate some of our responsibilities to these consultants, but retain authority to manage the timeline of the process, approve communications to residents that launch and support the outreach efforts and review and approve the intermediate and final documents to be sent to the Planning Board, the Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting for approval.

Membership:

The Acton 2020 Committee is authorized to have five full members and 2 Associates. Members are appointed by the Selectmen. The term is until the task is done, which is anticipated to be the 2012 Town Meeting.

Meetings:

Meetings are held the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 7 p.m.

Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council (ABCC)

P.O. Box 2291

Acton, MA 01720

Email: abccinformation@gmail.com

Description:

The Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council (ABCC) was established in 1982 to promote the arts, to help develop cultural programs in the Acton and Boxborough communities and to award and administer Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) Grant funds. The ABCC is one of 329 Local Cultural Councils (LCCs) that are funded by the Mass Cultural Council through an annual appropriation by the state legislature. We are a volunteer committee appointed by the selectmen of each community, but functioning as a single entity. We accomplish our goals by:

- Reviewing grant applications from individuals, libraries, schools, and organizations and awarding MCC grant funds to projects that provide a local public benefit;
- Sponsoring cultural programs for the Acton and Boxborough communities using grant funds generously designated by the Towns' voters at Annual Town Meeting. These funds have been used by the ABCC to present jazz and classical music concerts, vocal performances, opera, public art installations and more;
- Advocating for the arts through community outreach and publicity.

In our FY11 Grant Cycle we were able to support 25 individuals, schools, libraries and arts organizations using our MCC state funds of \$8148. This annual grant cycle is administered under statewide guidelines; applications are due October 15 every year, and decisions about funding are made by early December. Forty-three grant applications were reviewed in the fall of 2010.

Recent local activities have included a workshop for potential grant applicants, a table at the West Acton Oktoberfest, publicity and refreshments support for the annual Longwood Opera performance in Acton, and our annual reception for grant recipients and local officials. We enjoy frequent collaboration with other municipal and local groups including the Acton Memorial Library Foundation's Dessert Cabaret featuring the historic Fitzgerald Piano, and the Town of Acton and Acton Chinese Language School's Chinese New Year and Acton's 275th anniversary celebration. Our third annual "Our World" international film festival will be held in May 2011 and a recycled art event will be held in summer 2011 at the Sargent Memorial Library in Boxborough.

Members:

The members of the Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council are volunteers who are interested in the arts and enjoy advocating for the arts in their communities. Some also are professional artists and performers or enthusiastic amateurs. Members are appointed by the Board of Selectmen to a three-year term. The Massachusetts Cultural Council limits individuals to two consecutive three-year terms.

The ABCC holds monthly meetings September through June on weekday evenings. Members are asked to fill one council job and participate in grant review and local events. The council may consist of up to 22 members, seven of whom are Acton residents. Local cultural councils including the ABCC cannot have associate members, but all meetings and events are open to the public.

Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC)

472 Main St.

Acton, MA 01720

Phone: 978-263-9611

Email: ACHC@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC) is appointed by the Board of Selectmen and charged with facilitating affordable housing for working families and individuals with modest incomes. The Board oversees First Time Homebuyer programs and moderate income rental units.

Responsibilities:

The ACHC acts as the Town's initial contact and preliminary negotiating agency with developers of proposed affordable residential housing projects (40B's).

- Reviews design and density
- Determines consistency with Comprehensive Permit Policy
- Initiates action to create affordable residential housing developments on Town-owned properties.

Monitors the Affordability Requirements for housing developments:

- sales price
- maximum income & asset eligibility
- size of households applying for affordable units
- continued eligibility of the designated affordable Deed Restricted units
- marketing & outreach plan to ensure affirmative fair marketing
- Deed Riders used to ensure continued affordability
- resale of affordable units

Meetings:

Usually the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month at 7:00 PM (check the Town Calendar) in Room 126 of the Town Hall.

Membership:

Five regular members for three year terms, two or more associate members allowed for one year terms. Appointed by Board of Selectmen. ACHC has openings for 2 associate members.

Acton Water District
693 Massachusetts Avenue
Acton, MA 01720
Phone: (978) 263-0953
Website: www.actonwater.com

The Acton Water District is the organization in the Acton community that is responsible for delivering each resident the best possible drinking water for their residences.

The Acton Water District (AWD) is an independent civic entity created by the initiative of Acton citizens ninety nine (99) years ago and authorized by the Massachusetts State Legislature. The wisdom of this independence has allowed the AWD leadership to manage the necessary resources to provide fresh water to each water taker.

The AWD is led by an elected Board of Water Commissioners, Stephen Stuntz, Leonard Phillips and Dr. Ronald Parenti; a District Clerk, Charles Orcutt; and Moderator, Richard O'Brien.

The District Appointed Officials include a Finance Committee: Charles Bradley, William Kingman, and David Butler; District Manager Chris Allen; Treasurer/Collector MaryJo Bates; District Counsel Mary Bassett; District Asst Clerk Helen Argento; Commissioners Secretary Lynn Protasowicki; Auditor Maureen Waters Mara, CPA, MST; and a Water Land Management Advisory Committee – John Copar, Margaretha Eckhardt, Paul Malchodi, Charles Olmstead, and Barry Rosen. The Water District employs a full time staff to work with Mr. Allen to accomplish the work of the organization,

The AWD organization brings a highly diverse group of talents and interests to keep up with the needs of citizens in the District. Maintenance of a series of wells throughout the Town of Acton, operating an aging drain and piping system throughout the town is a major task. Doing it efficiently is a major challenge. Maintaining affordable costs, protecting citizens from impurities, maintaining security, keeping pace with technological change, responding to emergencies and educating the citizenry on the appropriate use and preservation of the ever more precious critical resource – water, are a significant service to citizens.

The entire town water supply is captured through annual rain and snow, which accumulates as ground water in underground aquifers. As Acton population increases, conservation becomes ever more critically important.

Headquarters of the AWD is located on Massachusetts Avenue, West Acton.

AWD will celebrate 100 years of service in 2012.

Board of Appeals

472 Main St.

Acton, MA 01720

Phone: 978-929-6633

Email: BOA@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The Board of Appeals (BOA), also called Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is an administrative appeals board for the Town. It holds public hearings to determine the granting of variances to zoning, special permits, and appeals of the Building Commissioner's decisions. It is also the granting authority for Comprehensive Permits (affordable housing developments).

Additional Duties:

Each member is assigned a case on a rotating basis. Membership can be very time consuming if many applications for appeals are pending. Extra meetings are then required and some outside work is necessary.

Membership:

3 members, 3 Associate members, 3 year terms

Candidates are interviewed and appointed by the Board of Selectmen

Meetings:

2nd Monday of each month except April and August, at 7:30 at Town Hall.

Board of Assessors

472 Main St.

Acton, MA 01720

Phone: 978-929-6621

Email: bas@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The board works with the Assessor/Appraiser, overseeing the establishment of property values, hearing appeals, reviewing abatements, establishing the tax rate, and processing the motor vehicle excise tax that is created by the Registry of Motor Vehicles. The board sets policy for the Town's tax program. Experience in real estate is helpful for serving on this board. Confidentiality is important in many instances.

Additional Duties:

Members must be prepared to expend large amounts of time for a period of about six months during re-evaluation years, which occur every third year. If many abatements are filed, the year after re-evaluation can have a couple of time-consuming months. During re-evaluation years, members do field reviews of all properties in Acton.

Special Requirements:

The Assessor's duties and qualifications are to a large extent covered by Mass. General Laws. The Commissioner at review under Ch. 58, Sec 3, has the power to require Assessors to attend in-service, pre-entry, and intern training programs on the technical, legal, and administrative aspects of the assessment process. These programs are to include the training required to meet minimum standards of assessment and classification performance. At the present time, the Commissioner requires that Assessors attend a one week course at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst on "Assessment-Administration-Law-Procedure Valuation" and pass a four hour exam. Other "recommended" workshops are scheduled on related topics throughout the year, but are not mandatory.

Membership:

3 members, 2 Alternate members, 3 year terms. Candidates are appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Meetings:

1st Wednesday of each month; meetings start at 6:00 at Town Hall.

Board of Health

472 Main St.

Acton, MA 01720

Phone: (978) 929-6632

Email: boh@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The Board of Health is charged with protecting the overall public health of the citizens of Acton.

Mission:

The mission of the Board of Health is to assess and address the needs of the Acton community, in order to protect and improve the health and quality of life of its residents and work force.

This mission is realized through the implementation of numerous programs including: disease prevention and health promotion programs, community health and nursing services, public outreach, education and empowerment, and promulgation and enforcement of Town and State health regulations

Overview:

Duties of the Board of Health include acting on water and wastewater permits, granting of Hazardous Materials Control Permits, and acting on any special requests made to the Board.

Additional responsibilities include monitoring public health and environmental matters, setting policies for issues concerning public health, adjudicating Compliant and Permit Appeal Hearings and overseeing the Nursing Service and Health Department staff.

Membership:

The Board is made up of five (5) full members and currently has one (1) associate member. The Board's responsibilities include monitoring public health and environmental matters. The Board sets policy for issues concerning the above and oversees the staff of the Health Department. Members occasionally are members of one or more sub-committees on other Town boards where there are overlapping interests.

An applicant does not require special knowledge or education, but must be willing and able to give the necessary time, to be conscientious in attending to duties and meetings, and willing to learn. An environmental or health science background is helpful but not necessary to work on this board. Applicants with specialized education, training and experience in the public health, medical, scientific, engineering and legal fields are encouraged to apply to provide a breadth of knowledge and expertise for the diverse matters which require Board of Health action.

3 year terms

Interviewed and appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Meetings:

The Board of Health meets at Town Hall on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month from 7:30 to 10:00PM.

Cable Advisory Committee

472 Main St.

Acton, MA 01720

Phone: (978) 929-6611

Email: cac@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The Cable Advisory Committee serves to advise the Board of Selectmen in matters pertaining to Cable Television in the Town of Acton. We also accept complaints from consumers and work with the cable company to resolve issues.

Members:

The committee is looking to add a new member to work with Cable service providers and Acton Community Access Television on providing the best possible Cable television service for Town of Acton residents. In addition, the committee needs new members to be familiar with cable issues for when the time comes for the next Cable license renewal negotiations. If you are interested, come visit us at one of our upcoming meetings, and if you like what you see, then please contact the Volunteer Coordinating Committee through the Town Manager's office.

Meetings:

We meet at Town Hall the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm. Our meetings are open to the public, and citizens are encouraged to attend

Cemetery Commission

472 Main St.

Acton, MA 01720

Phone: (978) 929-6642

Email: cemetery@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The Commissioners are responsible for expenditures from the various cemetery trust funds and oversee the operation and care of the three Town-owned cemeteries. They assist in the preparation of the cemetery budget and set policy for the use of the cemeteries.

Membership:

3 members, 3 year terms. Appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Meetings:

2nd Wednesday of each month.

Commission on Disability

472 Main St.

Acton, MA 01720

Phone: (978) 929-6611

Email: cod@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The Commission on Disability's mission is to make Acton a better place to live by: advocating for the rights and interests of citizens with disabilities and their families; ensuring that Acton meets the laws, regulations, and guidelines set down by federal, state and regional bodies pertaining to the rights of citizens with disabilities; and acting as a resource for education around the needs of people with disabilities and their families.

Additional Duties:

- Advocacy and education around the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Assisting town departments in complying with the ADA.
- Coordinating and carrying out programs designed to meet the needs of persons with disabilities in coordination with the programs of the Massachusetts Office on Disability.
- Researching local problems of persons with disabilities.
- Coordinating activities of other local groups organized for similar purposes.
- May advertise, prepare, print and distribute books, maps, charts, plans and pamphlets necessary for the work.
- May receive gifts of property, both real and/or personal, in the name of the Town, subject to the approval of the Board of Selectman. Such gifts are to be managed by the Commission for the purpose of the Commission's work.

Membership:

The commission allows up to 7 members with 2 alternates and a majority of the members should consist of persons with a disability. A member may be of the immediate family of a person with a disability,

and one member will be either an elected or appointed official of the Town. Any individual with an interest in the needs and concerns of persons with a disability is also encouraged to join the commission. A member can serve two terms of 3 years each. The Town Manager appoints members subject to the approval of the Board of Selectmen.

Meetings:

The meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month, September through June, 7:00 to 9:00 PM at the Town Hall.

Community Preservation Committee

**Address: Planning Department
472 Main Street, Acton, MA 01720
Phone: (978) 929-6611
Email: cpc@acton-ma.gov**

Description:

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) started in January 2003 after Acton voters adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA). The Community Preservation Committee is charged with studying the needs, possibilities and resources of Acton regarding community preservation. Its members are representatives from other Acton committees or residents of the town.

Additional Duties:

The Community Preservation Committee oversees Acton's Community Preservation Fund, selects preservation projects and recommends selected projects to Town Meeting for funding. Preservation projects may include acquiring, preserving and creating open space, historic resources, land for recreational use, and community housing.

Membership:

9 members, 2 associate members, 3 year terms

At-Large and Associate Members are appointed by Board of Selectmen. All others are appointed by the Board or Commission they represent.

Meetings:

Meetings are generally held on the second and fourth Thursdays through the budget cycle and monthly through the summer.

Conservation Commission

472 Main St.

Acton, MA 01720

Phone: (978) 929-6634

Email: concom@acton-ma.gov

Description:

This Commission promotes and develops the natural resources and seeks to protect the watershed resources of the Town. Its primary work consists of review of the site plans which are in or within 100 feet of wetlands. The Commission makes a decision on such a development based on compliance with State and local wetland laws. This Commission also develops bylaws, rules, and regulations regarding conservation issues for the Town. When necessary, it works in conjunction with other Town boards and neighboring town boards to coordinate efforts that are of a broader or regional nature.

Additional Duties:

The Conservation Commission is also in charge of a conservation and passive outdoor recreation plan consistent with the town Master Plan. When possible, it purchases and manages land for passive recreation and informs the public about these through maps and brochures.

Meetings:

The Commission normally meets the first and third Wednesdays of the month and may meet more frequently when there are special projects such as bylaws to be written. The work requires a cross-section of expertise from people who share a commitment to conservation and can give careful attention to the details which are important in the regulatory process.

The Commission sponsors the Acton Land Stewardship Committee, which looks after the 1,650 acres of Acton Conservation Land.

Membership:

7 members, 3 Associate members, 3 year terms

Candidates are interviewed and appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Council on Aging Board

Senior Center

50 Audubon Drive

Phone: 978-929-6652

Email: coa@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The board of the COA serves as an advocate for seniors, aiding them to maximize their independence and quality of life, and supports programs and services to meet seniors' health, economic, social and cultural needs.

Membership:

A variety of skills and viewpoints are sought for Board membership. The Board of Selectmen appoints members for a period of one year up to a maximum of six years. The COA board is composed of nine full members, in addition to several associate members.

Functions:

- Shares skills with the Senior Center staff and participants
- Identifies the needs of Acton seniors, particularly vulnerable populations
- Advocates on behalf of seniors on state and local levels; supports Senior Center budget
- Serves in an advisory capacity to the Director and Board of Selectmen
- Guides policy changes in conjunction with the Director and Board of Selectmen

Meetings:

The Board of the Council on Aging (COA town department) meets at the Acton Senior Center, 50 Audubon Drive, on the second Monday of each month at 3:45 p.m. The Board can be contacted through the Acton COA, the town department providing programs and services to seniors, at 978-264-9643.

Design Review Board

472 Main St.

Acton, MA

Phone: 978-929-6611

Email: designreviewboard@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The mission of the Design Review Board is to promote attractive, pedestrian-friendly development that enhances Town character and overall quality of life. Its intention is also to streamline the commercial development process. To that end, the Design Review Board publishes the Design Review Guidelines for Commercial Districts.

Membership:

The Design Review Board consists of 5 full members and 2 associate members.

Meetings:

The Design Review Board meets the first and third Wednesday of every month at the Town Hall. All meetings are posted and open to the public.

Economic Development Committee

472 Main St.

Acton, MA

Phone: (978) 929-6631

Email: edc@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The Economic Development Committee consists of members of town boards, the Chamber of Commerce, and citizens at large. Its members are appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The Committee has three main purposes: first, to advise them on issues concerning policies and zoning that foster commercial and business growth, secondly to support and help market Acton's existing business community, and third, to help to stimulate appropriate growth of new businesses in Acton.

Membership:

The EDC has six (6) full members, including one each from the Finance Committee, the Board of Selectmen and Planning, three (3) associate members, and two associate members. Volunteers for short-term projects are also welcome to participate as Friends of the EDC.

Meetings:

Thursdays at 7:30 P.M. in Town Hall room 204 (subject to change - see Town Hall postings). For more information, contact the Planning Department at 978-264-9636.

Finance Committee

472 Main St.

Acton, MA 01720

Ph: (978) 929-6624

Email: fincom@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The Finance Committee reviews budgets (Municipality, Minuteman Tech, Public and Regional Schools) and makes recommendations to the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee, as appropriate, and presents the Committee's assessment to the Annual Town Meeting. The Finance Committee also issues an opinion on each of the warrant articles presented to the Town Meeting.

Each member is assigned sections of the Town and/or School budget to review and make recommendations. The Committee approves all transfers from the Reserve Fund.

Membership:

Nine members serve three year terms and are appointed by the Moderator.

Meetings:

Tuesdays:

- February – April: weekly
- Summer months: monthly
- Spring, Fall, early Winter: bi-weekly

Green Advisory Board

472 Main St.

Acton, MA 01720

Phone: 978-929-6611

Email: gab@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The Green Advisory Board serves as an advisory committee reporting to the Board of Selectmen and the local and regional school committees. It investigates how Acton can improve its energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources. The committee may analyze strategies such as:

- Participating in the Massachusetts Green Community Act
- Setting up a green energy procurement plan
- Contracting / partnering with an Energy Services Company (ESCO)

The priority will be to identify, investigate, build the case for, and prioritize significant energy initiatives for the Town and schools.

Members:

The Green Advisory Board has five full members and two associate members appointed by the Selectmen for three year terms.

Meetings:

Meetings are announced and put on the Town calendar as scheduled.

Historic District Commission

472 Main St., Acton, MA 01720

Phone: (978) 929-6611

Email: hdc@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The Historic District Commission (HDC) is responsible for preserving the heritage of Acton by protecting the architecture and integrity of our three designated Historic Districts: Acton Center, South Acton and West Acton. The HDC administers and enforces the Town's local Historic District Bylaw, which was enacted by the town in 1990.

The HDC is charged with providing educational opportunities as well. In 2010 offerings included a Wood Window Repair Workshop by expert Jade Mortimer of Heartwood Restoration (co-sponsored with the Town of Acton Historical Commission and the Department of Municipal Properties), a lecture on Restoring Historic Landscapes by Jo Ann Robinson, Associate Curator of Landscape at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (co-sponsored with the Acton Memorial Library and the Acton Historical Commission) and several walking tours of the Maple/Martin neighborhood in South Acton, also co-sponsored with the Historical Commission.

Most changes to the exterior appearance of a building or site in a Historic District require the HDC ap-

approval in the form of a Certificate of Appropriateness issued by the Commission before the work begins. A property owner must submit an Application for Certificate. In some cases, the HDC will determine that the proposed work is excluded from its jurisdiction and issue a Certificate of Non-applicability. In order to obtain approval from another town board or department, a building permit for example, an owner must have either a Certificate of Appropriateness or Non-Applicability from the HDC.

We receive many inquiries about the process of reviewing applications. The HDC is required by law to review the architectural appropriateness of most proposed exterior design changes in the three districts, whether they are alterations, new additions, or removal of structures. These rules apply to all buildings in the districts, even those you might not consider "historic." It is the owner's responsibility to submit a completed application to the Commission to start the review process prior to commencing any work and prior to the issuance of building permits. Certain items and changes are excluded. Detailed guidelines governing exterior changes in a historic district have been adopted by the Commission and are available on the Town of Acton website www.acton-ma.gov or from the Town Clerk.

Examples of Items typically requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness include changes visible from a public way, including installing new siding, trim or shutters; new additions, demolitions, removing or altering porches, balconies or other building elements and features; replacing or installing exterior doors, chimney caps, windows, stairs, gutters or railings; light fixtures, satellite dishes, antennas, sheds, skylights and fences.

Examples of Items typically NOT requiring a Certificate include color of paint, storm windows, storm doors, window air conditioners; planting or removal of trees, shrubs and other plants (except when required for screening, as specified as a condition on a certificate); flags and flagpoles, moveable garden furniture, and garden objects and ornaments such as bird and bat houses, bird feeders, and sculpture; temporary play equipment (not set in cement or attached to a building); temporary signs and banners, including political and real estate signs; minor repairs and maintenance which does not change the visual appearance at all.

Membership:

The Commission consists of seven regular member and four alternate members appointed by the Board of Selectmen to staggered terms. Among its members are property owners in each of the district, an Acton Realtor and a registered architect.

Meetings:

The HDC meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at the Acton Town Hall. Please check the town web calendar for future meetings.

Historical Commission

472 Main St.

Acton, MA

Phone: 978-929-6611

Email: hc@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The objective of the Historical Commission is to protect and preserve the Town's cultural character and assets, be they archaeological sites, historic buildings, open spaces, landscapes, or historic districts. The Commission maintains the Cultural Resource List of significant structures in town and reviews any development, demolition or community planning to ensure that preservation concerns are considered via the public hearing process. The Cultural Resources List is available both online, and at the Memorial Library. It is currently being updated.

The Commission's jurisdiction includes everything outside of the three Historic Districts in town. The Commission can serve as a design resource to property owners who are remodeling older properties. The Commission also reviews and comments on all proposed subdivisions with regards to (loss of) stone walls, cart paths, old quarries, or other archaeological or historic elements of the landscape. During the review process, the group frequently visits the property to identify and document culturally significant resources.

Membership:

Six (6) full members for a three (3) year term, Two (2) Associate members for a one (1) year term.

Land Stewardship Committee

472 Main St.

Acton, MA

Phone: (978) 929-6634

Email: lsc@acton-ma.gov

<http://www.actontrails.org/index.htm>

Description:

The Land Stewardship Committee (LSCom) is a subcommittee of Acton's Conservation Commission. All conservation lands are owned by the Town of Acton, and 1650 acres of this land are maintained by LSCom with guidance from the Department of Natural Resources and in cooperation with other town departments. These lands are grouped into 16 conservation areas, 14 of which are now actively stewarded. LSCom is an all-volunteer committee directed by an Associate Commissioner of the Conservation Commission.

LSCom was created by a vote of the Acton Conservation Commission in the fall of 1996 in fulfillment of a recommendation made in the 1996 Acton Open Space and Recreation Plan. This committee is now comprised of 14 active stewards (plus a secretary), each of whom has responsibility for one of the town's 14 principal conservation lands. In addition, LSCom's two-layered structure allows utilization of each steward's special area of expertise or interest in conducting town-wide projects.

Since its inception, LSCom has completed many projects that are unique to just one particular conser-

vation land, as well as a number of projects that have been carried out town-wide. The descriptions of the individual conservation lands found at the LSCOM website (<http://www.actontrails.org/index.htm>) detail the entrances, trail systems, amenities, special uses, and unusual features of each property. The committee makes these areas accessible, constructs and maintains amenities where appropriate, enhances the trails, and maintains the special features of each property

A great deal of the work done since 1996 has been carried out by the volunteer members of LSCOM itself. But the committee has been assisted in its activities by the town's maintenance crew and by a number of other organizations, including Boy Scout Eagle candidates, Cub Scout dens, Girl Scout troops, ABRHS Senior Community Service Day participants, and the Merriam School Service Learning Project 5th and 6th graders, to name the most notable. Neighborhood volunteers have assisted with construction projects carried out in conservation areas near their homes.

Planning Board

472 Main St.

Acton, MA

Phone: (978) 929-6631

Email: pb@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The Planning Board studies the resources and needs of the Town, particularly conditions affecting public welfare and safety related to land use and development. It uses the Master Plan and related processes to plan and make recommendations for the development of the Town, with special attention to the proper housing of its inhabitants. It has total responsibility for all subdivisions, for the administration of the subdivision by-law, and for the numerous special permits required by the town's zoning by-laws. The Board has the primary responsibility for the writing of zoning by-laws, which must be approved by Town Meeting. The Board is assisted in its day-to-day work by the Planning Department.

Membership:

The Board has a chairperson, vice-chairperson, and clerk. Each member of the board has special liaison or coordination responsibilities with other related boards of the Town and planning groups in the central Middlesex region.

7 members, 5 year terms

Appointed by the Board of Selectmen (Selectmen interview required)

Additional Duties:

Members are assigned primary or secondary responsibility for reviewing subdivisions, and often undertake one or more short-term or long-term special projects, which may include participation on or leadership of Planning Board subcommittees. Presentation of proposed changes to the Town's zoning by-laws at Town Meeting is shared by members of the board.

Packets are distributed for review prior to meetings. Often, several hours of preparation is necessary, including review of plans in the Planning Department office. Up to 20 hours per week can be required if a special project is undertaken, or a Town Meeting presentation is being prepared. Consistent atten-

dance at meetings is very important, as hearings are often continued from meeting to meeting. Familiarity with state laws on zoning and subdivision, as well as the Town's by-laws, rules, and regulations, is essential, but is usually learned after becoming a member of the board. The most important requirements for membership are common sense, a willingness to learn, and the recognition that the board's job is to guide rather than to stop development in Town. The board functions well with an attorney, architect, municipal planner, engineer, and generalists.

Meetings:

Usually on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM in the Memorial Library. Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed. For a current listing of meetings visit the Town Calendar. Also, the Planning Board meets for walks of proposed subdivision parcels, as needed, to fully understand the topographic and neighborhood impacts of the proposed development.

Recreation Commission

472 Main St.

Acton, MA

Phone: (978) 929-6640

Fax: (978) 264-9630

Email: rc@acton-ma.gov

Description:

An advisory committee of the Board of Selectmen to oversee long range planning for recreational facilities and site acquisition, as well as development and maintenance of existing recreational facilities. The Commission maintains close liaison with the Conservation Commission, the Planning Board and the school's Community Education Department.

Additional Duties:

- Familiarize itself with the existing facilities, the current use and conditions.
- Bring any development or maintenance problems concerning existing facilities to the attention of the Town Manager and the Board of Selectmen.
- Meet with the Conservation Commission and its staff, the Planning Board and/or Chapter 61A Task Force to evaluate any proposed municipal acquisition of land or easements as to such proposed parcel's potential for active recreational uses.
- Bring any site or portion of a site proposed for municipal acquisition that it considers appropriate for active recreational use to the attention of the Town Manager and the Board of Selectmen.
- Keep abreast of the possibilities for the acquisition of land for active recreational use.
- Prepare any recreation-related articles for Town Meeting as considered appropriate or requested by the Board of Selectmen.

Membership:

Five (5) full members - three (3) year term, Two (2) associate members - one (1) year term
Appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Sidewalk Committee

472 Main St.

Acton, MA

Email: sidewalks@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The Sidewalk Committee is an advisory committee reporting to the Board of Selectman. Using criteria developed by the committee in its first year, the committee created and continues to maintain a priority list of sidewalk projects to be constructed in Acton.

The Sidewalk Committee's primary role is to help Acton become a more pedestrian friendly town.

Tasks include:

- Maintaining the sidewalk criteria
- Maintaining the sidewalk priority list
- Maintaining the Sidewalk Design Guidelines
- Facilitating the construction of projects on the priority list
- Providing feedback and advice to town staff on sidewalk issues
- Interfacing with citizens on sidewalk issues
- Interfacing with other boards on sidewalk issues

The Sidewalk Committee maintains the sidewalk priority list and the sidewalk design guidelines. The Sidewalk Committee works to facilitate the construction of projects on the priority list by addressing funding issues, providing feedback and advice to town staff, and working with concerned citizens and other town boards interested in sidewalk issues.

Additional Duties:

The committee may review proposed development projects and provide input to the Planning Board or Board of Selectman regarding sidewalks. The committee may make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen on various sidewalk related policies.

South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee

472 Main St.

Acton, MA 01720

Phone: (978) 929-6632

Email: satsac@acton-ma.gov

Overview:

The South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee will work with representatives of the MBTA to develop and recommend to the Board of Selectmen designs for the new commuter rail station, the Town owned parking lot and adjacent MBTA property, including additional parking or other uses for any property and easements acquired in proximity of the station. The committee will also work with the MBTA on other town-related issues.

The Committee will coordinate its work with the Town Planner, Town Engineer, the Assabet River Rail Train, Inc., neighborhood stakeholders and other relevant town boards, with consideration to traffic

flow management and building design. Of particular focus will be access from the south side of the station with the goal of mitigating vehicular congestion in the neighborhood and integrating alternative transportation modes, including the local shuttle bus service, bicycles and pedestrian walkways. The Committee will continue to monitor and advise the Board of Selectmen on both on-site and remote issues related to the station.

Membership:

Membership is comprised of one member from the Finance Committee, two residents in proximity to the South Acton train station, one member of the Transportation Advisory Committee, and five Citizens-at-large; two members of the Committee shall be regular commuters. Members are appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Meetings:

Meetings are scheduled as needed.

Transportation Advisory Committee

472 Main Street

Acton, MA 01720

Phone: 978-929-6611

Email: tac@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The TAC coordinates local transportation planning efforts and makes recommendations to the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board on:

- Traffic issues, including local roadway problems, planning, transportation infrastructure, parking, and traffic calming
- Bicycling issues, including recreational and commuter bike-path planning, roadway bicycle use, and other bicycle access issues
- Pedestrian issues, including sidewalk planning and priorities, creating pedestrian-friendly areas, and neighborhood traffic calming
- Annual appropriation requests for transportation-related capital and operating expenses

The TAC is expected to take a proactive as well as reactive role in dealing with these issues. Committee members may also choose to become involved in regional transportation planning efforts as observers, such as Route 2 planning efforts or Fitchburg rail-line improvements. However, the focus of the committee is on local transportation issues.

The TAC may be called on as needed to participate in Town Meeting presentation of local transportation issues or appropriation requests, hold public meetings, and respond to specific citizen requests concerning local transportation issues or improvements. The TAC also provides assistance and support in the implementation of the goals and objectives of the Town's Master Plan.

Additional duties and information:

- Members may be assigned primary or secondary responsibility for specific issues. This might include gathering information, speaking to citizens, coordinating with town officials, and forming preliminary recommendations to report back to the Committee.

- Beyond these specific assignments, some preparation should be expected before monthly meetings. Responsibility for taking and distributing minutes rotates with each meeting. Consistent attendance at meetings is important.
- Experience or familiarity with transportation planning and/or cycling and pedestrian issues is useful. The most important requirements are common sense, a willingness to learn and seek creative solutions to transportation problems, and recognition that transportation planning should serve the community – including cyclists, pedestrians, and residents – not just motorists.

Membership:

Five (5) full members, for three (3) year term, Two (2) associate members, one (1) year term.

Volunteer Coordinating Committee

472 Main St.

Acton, MA

Phone: 978-929-6611

Email: vcc@acton-ma.gov

Description:

The Volunteer Coordinating Committee (VCC) works for the Board of Selectmen, Town Manager and Town Moderator to help find volunteers for more than 30 town boards. Interested residents file an application with the VCC, are invited for an interview, and guided to the town board that would be the best match for each applicant’s interests and skills. The VCC also monitors the status of committee membership and recommends reappointments of members who are eligible and wish to serve additional terms.

Members of Town Boards and Committees are volunteers who enjoy spending a few hours (usually in the evening) with their fellow residents helping the Town of Acton run efficiently while remaining a pleasant place to live. There are nearly 30 boards and committees dealing with a broad range of Town and regional interests such as conservation, finance, the arts, senior citizens and many more.

Follow a board's link on the town website for further information about each board or committee. Another excellent way to find out what any board does and how it operates is to attend its meetings - all meetings of all boards are always open to anyone. Time and place are listed on calendars at Town Hall, the Memorial Library, and soon this web site. It is recommended that you verify the meeting schedule just before the meeting, sometimes it changes.

Members of most Town boards are appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The Town Manager and Town Moderator appoint members of other boards. To apply, please fill out the Acton Volunteer Application on-line or print out a copy and fill in by hand.

Membership:

Seven (7) members, three (3) year term.