

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Department of Planning & Community Development



Planning Board
Zoning Board of Appeals
Internal Traffic Committee
Conservation Commission
Affordable Housing Trust
Economic Development Commission
Historical Commission
Commission on Disabilities

Department of Planning & Community Development

The Planning and Community Development Department provides a full suite of professional and administrative services related to land-use planning and development permitting, wetlands permitting, economic development, transportation, affordable housing, open space and environmental planning, natural resource protection, and grant writing and administration. The following Boards are staffed directly by this Department: Planning Board; Zoning Board of Appeals; Conservation Commission; Internal Traffic Committee; Affordable Housing Trust; Economic Development Commission; Disabilities Commission; and Historical Commission. Furthermore, this Department serves as an Ex-Officio member of the Downtown Business Improvement District Board of Directors, and serves on the Board of Directors of the MetroWest Transit Authority, the 495 Partnership, and many other regional Boards, Committees, and Consortia.

Outlined below are the major accomplishments during 2020 of the Department, which has undergone a significant transition with the retirement of the former Planning Director in August of 2020.

- All three (3) regulatory permitting Boards—the Conservation Commission, the Planning Board, and the Zoning Board of Appeals remained 100 percent operational throughout COVID. Two projects of significant public interest: the Eversource Transmission Line/MCRT Rail Trail and the proposed 11 Brent Drive Marijuana Cultivation Establishment were reviewed and permitted via remote public hearings.
- Managed \$1.2 Million in Commonwealth grants (MassWorks, MassDevelopment Site Readiness, Green Communities, and Department of Housing and Community Development Downtown Initiative program) to complete the following efforts: the construction of the Rotary; the environmental testing, hazardous material surveys, and demolition of 15 Broad Street; planning for Downtown wayfinding and branding; and energy efficiency upgrades at the Library and the Fire Stations.
- Administered on behalf of the Affordable Housing Trust a rental assistance program, which helped 11 Hudson renters.
- Worked successfully with the Affordable Housing Trust and the Packard Street Re-use Committee to plan for the redevelopment of the old Police Station site at 62 Packard Street for affordable housing.
- Completed the planning process for the Downtown Riverwalk Project and initiated the Chapter 91 permitting process for the preferred design alternative.
- Continued to manage the analysis of zoning and land-use plans as well as the development and implementation of long-range planning documents including the Master Plan, Open Space Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan, and the Assabet Affordable Housing Consortium
- Successfully completed the state Municipal Vulnerability Program (MVP) process to achieve MVP Certification, and the Green Communities application process to achieve Green Communities Designation and be awarded a \$170,590 Designation Grant.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristina Johnson, AICP
Acting Director of Planning and Community Development

Pam Helinek
Acting Assistant Director of Community Development/Conservation Agent.

Planning Board

The Planning Board's primary responsibility is to administer the Subdivision Control Law pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41 in order to ensure the public safety, interest and welfare of the residents of the Town of Hudson. The Board conducts meetings and public hearings in compliance with Massachusetts General Laws to review and consider Subdivision plans, Approval Not Required (Form A) plans, and Site Plan Review, Scenic Ways, and Special Permit applications.

The Planning Board considers and prepares amendments to the Town of Hudson Zoning By-laws. They conduct public hearings on these amendments and on zoning amendments that are submitted to the Board by way of citizen petition through the proper procedures. The Planning Board is also responsible for developing and updating the Town's Master Plan.

Throughout COVID, the Planning Board continued to meet and hold public hearing virtual without any stoppages. Highlights of 2020 Planning Board actions include approval of five (5) site plans review petitions, one (1) petition for development in the Adaptive Re-Use Overlay District, one (1) definitive subdivision, and the review of six (6) Approval Not Required plans.

The Planning Board consists of five members each elected for five (5) year terms.

Robert D'Amelio, Chair
Rodney Frias, Vice Chair
Dirk Underwood
David Daigneault
Daryl Filippi

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Hudson Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is an eight-person board—with five (5) members and three (3) associates—appointed by the Board of Selectmen to act on all matters within its jurisdiction outlined in the Hudson Protective Zoning By-Laws and in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 40A. These powers include:

- 1) To Act as the permit granting authority for all projects requiring the issuance of a special permit;
- 2) To hear and decide petitions for variances;
- 3) To hear and decide appeals of decisions of the Building Inspector, or other administrative officials; and
- 4) To oversee the Comprehensive Permit process for affordable housing as set forth under M.G.L. Chapter 40B.

Throughout COVID, the ZBA continued to meet and hold public hearing virtual without any stoppages. Highlights of 2020 ZBA actions include the issuance of four (4) Special Permits to allow for the construction of accessory dwelling units, one (1) Special Permit to allow for the construction of an over-55 retirement development, three (3) Special Permits to for the operations of three (3) marijuana establishments (two cultivators and one manufacturing) within the Marijuana Industrial Overlay District.

Darja Nevits, Chair

Jill Schafer, Vice Chair

Jason Mauro, Clerk

Pamela Cooper, Member

Matthew Russell, Member

Justin O'Neil, Associate Member

Ronald Sorgman, Associate Member

Conservation Commission

The Conservation Commission is responsible for protecting natural resources in the Town of Hudson. As a municipal regulatory board, the Commission administers the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act by approving and conditioning all development projects near wetlands and water bodies. In 2020, the Conservation Commission reviewed and issued 17 Orders of Conditions, 3 Extension Permits, 15 Determinations of Applicability, and 10 Certificates of Compliance.

In addition to its regulatory role, the Commission is responsible for maintaining several parcels of conservation land and a number of conservation easements in Hudson. In 2020, the Conservation Commission worked with the Hudson Land Trust to build bridges and boardwalks along the main trail in Danforth Falls Conservation Land and with the Recreation Division to rebuild bridges along the Assabet River Nature Trail off Chapin Road. Additionally, the Commission worked with the Recreation Division to survey land behind the Elks Lodge on Park Street in the hope of purchasing the land from the Elks.

The Conservation Commission consists of seven voting members, appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The Commission's regularly scheduled meetings are held on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month starting at 7:00PM at Town Hall. The public is always welcome to attend.

David Mercer, Chair
Emilie Wilder, Vice Chair
Brandon Parker
Heidi Graf
James Martin
Debbi Edelstein
Paul Osborne

Internal Traffic Committee

The Internal Traffic Committee (ITC) is a transportation policy review body consisting of Town of Hudson Officials including the Building Commissioner, the Fire Chief, the Police Chief, and the Director of Public Works. ITC considers public safety and transportation-related issues such as: traffic, parking, and speeding, and coordinates the planning for large-scale events in the community. All proposed amendments to the Town of Hudson Traffic Rules and Regulations are vetted by ITC.

ITC meets the 4th Friday of every month in the Board of Selectmen Conference Room, 2nd floor Town Hall.

Jeffrey Wood, Chair

Eric M. Ryder, Vice Chair

Chief Bryan Johannes

Chief Richard P. DiPersio

Historical Commission

The Hudson Historical Commission was established at Town meeting under Section 8D of Chapter 40 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth for the preservation, protection and development of the historical or archaeological assets of the Town. The Historical Commission meets on an as-needed basis.

In 2020, the Historical Commission was awarded a \$4000 grant from Community Preservation Act funds for plaques for historical buildings and structures in Town. They began the process of identifying sites for the signs, communicating with property owners, and researching the properties to write text for the plaques. The Commission also continued work on a Demolition Delay Bylaw. Additionally the Commission issued letters of support for two projects that would preserve historic buildings.

Peter Breton, Chair
Michael Volk
Mark Terra-Salomão
Paul Shultz
Al Morel
Ricky Gelin
Ron Sorgman

Affordable Housing Trust

The Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) was formed to preserve and create affordable housing units in the Town of Hudson. The AHT was established at Town Meeting in 2006.

The AHT receives funding through the CPA, grants and other sources. The Trust allows the Town to act quickly to purchase property, to prevent an affordable unit to be sold at market rate or from going to foreclosure. Without the Trust, the Town would need Town Meeting to allocate funds. The AHT meets on an as needed basis.

In 2020, the AHT continued to monitor the resale of Affordable Housing Units as they went on the market and worked with the seller to find buyers within the affordable resale market. The Trust is a member of a Regional Housing Consortium which hires consultants to help with monitoring and resale activities. The AHT also sponsored a Rental Assistance program to provide emergency rental assistance to residents who had financial difficulties due to Covid-19.

In 2020 the AHT determined that the site of the old Police Station at 62 Packard Street provided the best opportunity to redevelop Town land as affordable housing. The Board of Selectmen appointed an ad hoc committee of AHT members and Packard Street neighborhood residents to advise on this idea. The committee supported the project and recommended a number of design parameters. The AHT held a Public Forum to present the ideas to the public. A Town Meeting article to transfer the property to the AHT passed and the AHT began work on a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit a qualified developer.

Kevin Santos, Chair
John Parent, Vice Chair
Darryl Filippi
Anna Lawrence
Ian Masmanian
Jory Tsai
Jim Quinn
Robin Frank
Sushma Singh

Economic Development Commission

The Hudson Economic Development Commission (EDC) is a nine-member Commission appointed by the Board of Selectmen whose primary purpose is to promote and advocate the business and economic development interests in Hudson. In addition, the EDC is regularly briefed on major development and real estate trends, and economic development and planning initiatives underway, and reviews all proposed Tax Increment Financing agreements.

Major Town initiatives in 2020 supported by the EDC include:

- Redevelopment of 15 Broad Street
- Downtown Rotary reconstruction
- Downtown Wayfinding program
- Downtown Riverwalk Design

In 2021, the EDC looks forward to working with the Planning and Economic Development and other business organization partners in Hudson to posture the Town for continuing economic success post-COVID.

William J. Sullivan, Chair

Sarah B. Cressy

Chuck Randall

Thomas Davis

Hugh R. Gardner

Thomas Ricci

Christopher W. Tibbals

Sara Foster

Commission on Disabilities

The mission of the newly formed Hudson Commission on Disabilities is to address the needs and concerns of residents with disabilities and promote their full participation in the activities and services of Hudson. To promote equal access to community life and activities for people with disabilities, the Hudson Commission on Disabilities serves as an advisory Board to the Town. The Commission is also a resource for individuals with disabilities regarding programs and services provided by state and local governments. Members are appointed by the Board of Selectman and serve three-year terms.

The purpose of the Commission on Disabilities in the Town of Hudson is to:

- Advise and guide the Town and the general public regarding issues of accessibility in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Carry out programs in coordination with programs of the Massachusetts Office on Disability in order to bring about full and equal participation in all aspects of life in the town for people with disabilities.
- Be a resource for the community at-large, including individuals, businesses, organizations and Town Officials.
- Empower residents with disabilities and abate difficulties they are presented with in everyday life.

The Commission on Disabilities meets on the second Tuesday of every month in the Town Hall Auditorium.

Andrew Erickson, Chair
Frank Noyes, Vice Chair
Robert Butts
Ronald Sorgman