

Residents Voice Concerns About Utilities, Traffic and Parking for Proposed 22-Unit Housing on Railroad Street



At table from left, Matthew Stengel and Felix Garcia listen to Timothy Grace responding to a question from the Board

Photo copyright Town of Winchendon

by Inanna Arthen

At the Planning Board meeting held on Tuesday, July 7, a public hearing was held regarding the proposed conversion of the former Winchendon Furniture Company retail store complex on Railroad Street into 22 housing units. Appearing before the Board to present their initial plans and schematics were Matthew Stengel of Landtech Consultants and Felix Garcia of Garcia Engineering LLC. Also present was Timothy Grace from engineering firm Tighe & Bond, which has done some studies on the site, and one of the current property owners, Michael Surprenant, although he did not come forward to speak.

Mr. Stengel began by giving an overview of the project. "So our project is located at 61 Railroad Street. The project site consists of five parcels under common ownership. The project site is approximately 2.1 acres, and we have frontage on Spruce Street and Railroad Street. The site contains the building, which is the former Winchendon Furniture Company, that was a local business. It was in business for over 80 years. Unfortunately, they closed down just over two years ago, and since then their building on Railroad Street has sat vacant.

"The site today is mostly developed and disturbed. There's the existing building structures, some paved parking areas, graded lawn area, and a small portion of undisturbed woods along the northern property lines. Our project proposes to redevelop the site into a 22 unit residential apartment building. This would include renovating the interior of the existing building and upgrading parking and access, upgrading storm water drainage, and constructing new utility connections. The layout of the project has been designed to utilize to the

greatest extent possible the existing disturbed areas. We're trying to minimize any disturbances to any woods or tree removal on the site.

"So the apartments are to be a mixture of one, two, three, and four bedroom units. There's going to be six one bedroom units, eleven two bedroom units, four three bedroom units, and one four bedroom unit. The interior of the building also includes a shared multipurpose room that would be for all the residents, and there's also a proposed shared outdoor courtyard space at the center of our building, where there will be outdoor picnic tables, benches, that type of stuff.

"Access to the site will use an existing curb cut that provides access to the existing parking lot behind the building, which is on Spruce Street. That entrance will be realigned and repaved to provide a full 24 foot width entrance and exit, and a second entrance is proposed on Railroad Street. There is an existing curb cut on Railroad Street, where there's a small paved parking area in front of the building, so we plan to utilize that existing curb cut to minimize disturbances to curbing, etc. Where we propose to reconfigure the parking area, do some regrading and realigning of the parking to provide 44 dedicated parking spaces. 11 of these parking spaces are proposed to be compact spaces, just to help reduce impervious area. Additionally, two of these parking spaces will be handicap accessible."

Mr. Stengel said that a traffic engineering firm found there would be no adverse effects on traffic in the neighborhood from changing the site to residential from commercial use.

"Part of our application is for a stormwater management permit," Mr. Stengel said. "Our project includes upgrading the existing

stormwater drainage infrastructure. These upgrades were designed in accordance with state and local standards for redevelopment projects, as part of to qualify as a redevelopment project. Part of that is reducing impervious area on the site. We propose to remove a decent portion of existing pavement that's on the site...even with the additional parking that we're proposing, we are reducing the total impervious on the site, which helps us to reduce the peak rates of runoff and the total runoff volume from the post-development site. We are planning to install new deep catch basins and a bio retention pond with the appropriate pre-treatment before the bio retention pond. This will help us to meet the standards for water quality, which would be the total suspended solid removal and nutrient removal from the storm water runoff."

Mr. Stengel said that they had received some analysis and feedback from Town Engineer Patrick Wood and the peer review engineer from Tighe & Bond, and had submitted new packets with revisions just in the last couple of days.

Also, Mr. Stengel said, they had done analysis on the impact which changing the use of the building from commercial to residential would have on the sewer flow into the municipal sewer system. (Residents will remember that the main line down Central Street was replaced as part of the Central Street Reconstruction Project.) The conversion will "almost triple" the flow into the system, he said. "We did provide a detailed analysis of this, of the sewer system downstream of our site, we surveyed the pipes from Spruce Street and Railroad Street all the way down past Central Street to evaluate the capacity for all the pipes in those roads that our site would be discharging to...We did

update some of our assumptions for how we calculated the total amount of flow going through the sewer system, and we updated some of the methodologies that were used to analyze the pipes and the average daily flows, the peak rate flows. It's our opinion that the updated analysis provides a pretty accurate representation of the sewer system, and our analysis does show that the sewer system does provide the appropriate capacity for the sewer flows from the site."

Mr. Garcia introduced himself as the structural engineer on the project, saying "I know that there's a housing crisis in the Commonwealth, also in the nation, and I know that this is a great project. It's going to provide increased tax revenue for the town, it's going to support local businesses as well, it's going to provide vitality to the community."

Planning Board Chair Guy Corbosiero said that because the town had not had time to review all the comments in the latest submissions, the Board would not be making any decisions tonight. Mr. Wood said that they were in the middle of reviewing everything and would be happy to hear comments or questions from residents.

A Board member asked about whether 44 parking spaces would be enough for 22 units. Mr. Stengel said that he was figuring one parking space per bedroom, while trying to minimize the amount of impervious (paved) area. "I think I could squeeze in some more parking spaces, but we were trying to keep all the parking along the one sort of path of travel behind the building. We weren't trying to place a second parking lot due to the grades and complications with grading and drainage at the site," he said.

Another Board member asked

Calmer Words and Various Points of View as ZBA Continues Hearing on 10 Cummings Road Conversion to Two-Family Housing



Eric Grady answers questions from members of the ZBA
Photo copyright Town of Winchendon

by Inanna Arthen

At their meeting on Wednesday, July 1, the Zoning Board of Appeals continued the hearing for a request for a Special Permit to convert the house at 10 Cummings Road into a two-family dwelling. This hearing had initially opened at the ZBA meeting on April 15, which was attended by numerous residents of Cummings Road who voiced their concerns. (See “Cummings Road Residents Pack ZBA Meeting with Concerns about Proposed Two-Family Conversion” in the May 16-23, 2026 edition of the *Winchendon Courier* (scroll down to article).)

The property in question is a home originally built in 1790 that now sits on a 2.17-acre parcel of land. According to the Assessors Database record, the building has 3,092 square feet of finished space comprising one unit with 7 rooms, 4 bedrooms, and 2 bathrooms. It was purchased by My Three Sons Investments LLC in Lafayette, Colorado for \$244,900 in 2024. Robert Grady of ERG Revocable Trust, who owns several properties in Winchendon, states that he is the owner of the 10 Cummings Road property, although the connection between Mr. Grady and My Three Sons Investments LLC is unclear.

Both the house and the property appear to be in poor condition as seen from the road, although some work has been done on the house recently. It is situated on a sharp bend in the road, and as houses typically were in the 1700s, is very close to the edge of the road. Cummings Road itself is narrow and not very well maintained. Because of the house’s position, it has a fairly clear view of all its neighbors, and vice versa. (The *Courier* drove out to take a look in May, and all four sides of the house can be examined easily without leaving the public way. At that time, a very large deck and stairs newly added to the back of the house were visible.)

The ZBA began the July 1 hearing with an overview of the property’s characteristics and the situation to date. ZBA Chair Cynthia Carvill said, “Just to review, the purpose of this is to get a special permit. Currently, there is a building permit to do renovations on the first floor, and at one point the building permit included three bedrooms and renovations...I understand that there’s a stop work order until some situations can be rectified that were not anticipated. It’s a very old building, and there were some issues in regards to the demo and reconstruction of the building, so people have asked, Why is there work being done? Why is it being stopped? But that’s just the short version of what’s going on historically. Currently, they did get permission, it was a four bedroom.”

Planning & Development Coordinator Nicole Roberts confirmed that the building’s septic system is approved for a four-bedroom house.

“So that’s what the building looked like at one point, and there has been some work done, and some work stopped, and we’re here tonight to look at their application to convert it from a single family home to a two family home, and in our town zoning it’s an allowed use of the property as long as the conversion doesn’t substantially alter the aesthetic or density of the immediate neighborhood in an adverse way, traffic and safety are not impacted, and adequacy of utilities,” Ms. Carvill said. If the building was expanded to more than four bedrooms, the septic would have to be upgraded and approved.

There was some discussion about the meaning of regulations about not changing the essential use of the building. State codes define a bedroom as being occupied by no more than two people.

Eric Grady, who is the son of Robert Grady and hopes to move into one of the units of the house with his family, came forward to answer questions. Eric Grady currently lives in a Winchendon property recorded as owned by My Three Sons Real Estate Management LLC, but which Robert Grady

states that he owns.

Mr. Grady explained that his family plans to move into the second floor apartment (currently being created by the renovations) and this will make the building a five-bedroom house. He said he was just learning tonight that he would need to upgrade the septic, but he was fine with that. He stated that the previous owners had at least six finished rooms with carpeting that could have been used as bedrooms, not counting the living and dining rooms.

There will be no internal stairs connecting the two apartments, Mr. Grady said. The upstairs apartment will be accessed through the stairs and deck on the back of the house, with a current window replaced with French doors.

Ms. Carvill asked Mr. Grady what their plans would be for the property if the Special Permit for a two-family was denied.

Mr. Grady said, “If it was only able to be a four bedroom, the business plan is to get these properties and offer them to people that need houses. Whether it’s what you guys consider ‘undesirables’ or low-income people or me that needs a house or anybody in town that needs a house, we’ve taken in people off the streets in town. He doesn’t charge above what the utilities cost and the mortgage cost. Inherently doing a project on a property like this from the 1900s is expensive, so buying the property, the renovations, all that puts us into a category where we’re going to have to charge \$6,000 a month for that property for a mortgage. That’s what we have to pay. If you do the math and you split it into two properties that are big enough to hold families...\$3,000 apiece, or \$2,500-\$3,500 apiece, more than you’d be able to ever rent that full property for \$6,000 to anybody. People can’t afford that, so short of us having to sell the house...which my dad would never do.” He said that they might rent out the house as bedrooms to eight individual people, and they could also create an accessory dwelling unit to add more space.

“There was never any plan of ‘undesirables’ living in these properties,” he went on. “This is all fear-mongering. Somebody came up here and threatened the board, made a.. there’s a federal threat, and I’m not sure if you guys did anything about that. He threatened lives, he threatened me because I’m an occupant of the house. He’s going to hang me from this property. If nothing’s going to be done about this ever, if you’re not going to do something about it. Last time it’s on record. It was reported he threatened the Board that if you guys didn’t vote the way he wanted, that he would kill people, and that’s not okay. And there was no recourse or repercussion, and nobody said anything about it. Why? Why when you were threatened, did you not call the police?” [Heated words to that effect were indeed spoken at the April 15 hearing, and may be heard on the video of the hearing.]

Mr. Grady said, “I will be living there. Another family from town with autistic children were going to be living in the downstairs unit. It’s fear-mongering that got us to this point. I had a civil conversation with a gentleman here in the back that is opposing us as well. After that conversation, he was very pleased with what I had to say. He asked me if I could relay that information to more townspeople.”

There was further discussion in which Ms. Carvill emphasized that they were talking about a two-family conversion, not a rooming or boarding house in any sense. The Board also discussed that they could not place any restrictions or stipulations on who could rent the house, as legally that would be discrimination. Mr. Grady said, “I’m willing to talk and have a civil conversation with anybody in town at any point, and give you any information that you need on any of the properties. This is our intended use for this property. We’d like to switch it into a two-family, and that’s it.”

Mr. Grady asked if any similar neighborhoods in town had ever had a property converted from a single family to a duplex. He pointed out that his family pays the highest amount of property taxes of any owner in town. “We are upgrading every property we have at the pace you allow us to, that is also simultaneously raising the property values of everybody in this room that is questioning what we’re doing. When we put \$100,000, \$200,000 into these properties, it is raising the integrity of the neighborhood. That house has been an eyesore in that neighborhood for years, if everybody would sit here and say, ‘I’d rather have that house look like it looked and sat there like it sat.’ We have intentions to resurrect that barn as a historical barn. You can’t just tear it down, it’s historical. You have to do certain things, and we are going to do stuff with this whole property, and it’s going to increase the property. It’s not taking away from anything.”

Ms. Carvill stated that the ZBA bases its decision on the land, not the person connected to it, and they cannot base a denial on “an applicant’s personality or past zoning behavior” or on “general neighborhood opposition.” She pointed out that when the farms in that neighborhood were subdivided and homes were built, some people were very upset that the property went from rural residential with a big farm to a subdivision with houses. The ZBA looks at specific factors, such as traffic, nuisance and privacy issues, parking and so on.

Winchendon News

"Community Conversations" Organizers Present Outcomes of the Conversations To BOS



from left, Pastor J Lillie, Jane LaPointe and Patti Stanko share the results of the Community Conversations series with the BOS

Photo copyright Town of Winchendon

by Inanna Arthen

At the Board of Selectmen's meeting on Monday, July 13, three of the principal organizers of the series of "Community Conversations" held in the first part of 2026 came before the Board to talk about how the conversations went and what participants learned. Pastor J Lillie of Cornerstone Church, Patti Stanko of Beals Memorial Library and resident Jane LaPointe came forward to follow up on their presentation in February as the Conversations were preparing to start. At that time, the Board asked the organizers to come back with a report when the series was complete. (See "Beals Memorial Library Plans 'Community Conversations'" in the February 12-19, 2026 edition of the *Winchendon Courier* (scroll down to article). Also in the March, 2026 print edition, page 2.)

Four Conversations were held, one per month from February to May. The series was called, "Bridging Ideas and Building Futures," and each Conversation was professionally facilitated by a consulting firm contracted via grant money from CHNA9. Each one had a specific topic participants focused on. The first Conversation was held at the Beals Memorial Library, but was so well attended, the series was moved to the Old Murdock Senior Center where there was more space. They were held on Saturday mornings from 10:00 a.m. to noon.

Pastor J began, "Basically we had between 30 and 50 people come out every month, just

from across various micro-communities within Winchendon, to have discussions based around four ideas. The first month was "what does community mean to you?" The second month we talked about "what do we want our community to look like." The third month we talked about "how do we get there." So it was a transparent look at obstacles and connections, including we talked about digital issues, silos, political strains, economic transitions, and whatnot. And finally, in the last month, we asked the question: "What, as a community, are we prepared to do?" So we began to talk about those things. We had amazing conversations around those things."

Ms. LaPointe said, "We got a grant from our local CHNA to hire facilitators that came in and helped, and they were very good in structuring the conversations. It was really fascinating to hear all the different perspectives that came out on these four different questions, and there was a lot of opportunity for people to share their ideas, their thoughts, what this all meant to them, and it was good. We've got files of more detail than what's here. We have a lot of data."

Pastor J said, "I just briefly want to go over the four conversations.

"Discovering our definition of community. As we spoke together, we had I think 30 people that first month discussing just what is community, and we talked about, community is coming together, community is showing up, community is caring for one another, community is a system

of communication between and about diverse groups. We did a lot of talking about moving between the silos, moving between the micro-communities, working with people who don't think like you do, and then also growing a volunteer base that would become a prime part of the conversation throughout.

"In the second month, we discussed envisioning Winchendon as a sort of a soft place to land. This focused on legacy, aiming for a stable town with a thriving economy where roots grow deep and people feel they matter... We had between 40 and 50 people that second month, and we went between a large group and then we moved into several small groups where we discussed the issues of who do we want to be, and so in those visioning sessions, the word 'home' appeared most prominently. We wanted people to feel at home here in Winchendon.

"When we began to discuss things of an economic nature, what came up was a lot of people were saying we need to say yes to things in our backyard. That's what YIMBY means: Yes, In My Back Yard. We need to start moving towards a positive approach towards economics and

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Winchendon News

CONVERSATIONS
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building a stable tax base, allowing residents to work locally.

“There was a great deal of desire to honor history, from the Senior Center to our trails. We had youth there every single month, and they had great input. This visioning prioritizes emotional relational health, linking arms instead of competing against one another. We did a lot of talking about how silos right now are duplicating efforts rather than building together.”

Ms. LaPointe said there was a mix of people who had grown up in the town and always lived here, people who grew up here, left for a while and have come back, and people who are new to Winchendon. “But the value of home, and caring for each other, and the diversity of what we can build on really came through,” she said.

Pastor J went on, “In the third month, we chatted about challenges and barriers to that soft place to land, we talked about how even though over the last several years, and this is really a testament to the work that the Board has done and other agencies in town have done, we talked about how silos have begun coming down. I’ve been in town all my life, and I see a greater desire to collaborate than I’ve seen in a long time. That’s very exciting to me for a lot of reasons, and so for all those who are working in leadership in Winchendon, I think that’s a testament, because we’ve been in silos for a very long time, and I’m seeing great movement towards breaking out of those.

“But silos still remain. Micro-community bubbles are still there. We need to continue to rebuild bridges. In my own work with the Council of Churches, we are working continually to build relationships and partnerships between all the churches in town, and so we’re seeing those things begin to shift and move. A lack of central hubs limits chance encounters that build trust, but we’re seeing those things begin to shift. There’s definitely a participation gap, win-lose mindset in local politics sometimes prevents compromise needed for town-wide progress. That came up in our conversations. Economic disconnect, digital barriers, Facebook can, many times, be a problem. We discussed that at length, and an information void.” Many residents are simply unaware of resources like the *Courier* or Town website, they found. Negative voices on Facebook can overpower the optimistic majority, creating a fear of participation.

[Side note: This has been an issue with internet forums for many years before any “social media” platform ever went online, and very strong, “tough love” moderation is the only solution that really works.]

“It was very clear from what everyone was saying that the environment in our town now is open and ripe for what’s next, and that’s important,” Ms. LaPointe said.

“Yeah, and we were a diverse group that was conversing there,” Pastor J said. “There were people from across the generations, but also across silos from a lot of different agencies, and even people who weren’t involved in agencies, who were saying there’s something going on here that’s different than they’ve seen before. So that was very encouraging to us.

“In our fourth conversation, we talked about moving from consumerism to citizenship, we talked about the resident paradigm shifting from treating residents as passive consumers of town services to active, engaged citizens. ATV—Authentic, Transparent, and Vulnerable—engagement approach, targeted outreach projects serving the whole community while considering

the needs of all community members. One of the words that Jane introduced to us was targeted universalism and personal connection, building on personal relationships within town.”

Ms. LaPointe said, “That was very important. That came through over and over and over again about how do we begin to break down some of these barriers and deal with some of the resistance or the hesitations that people might have, and it’s the personal invitation, it’s the reaching out, it’s the inviting people to come to something. We can put all we want out there on flyers and Facebook and social media and this and that. But at some point, that will work for some people, but for the majority, no. We need to reach out, and people seemed willing to do that.”

Pastor J said, “In our final conversation, as these conversations move forward, we always wanted it to end in action, not just talk. And so we asked, ‘What are we willing to do?’ Four things came out of that conversation that were pretty clear. Number one, there was a desire to build resilient volunteers. I’ve already met with this committee about the VolunteerHub program and things, but there were other people in that room, other than just me and the people from my church, who said we really need to create resiliency in our volunteerism within town. There was also an incredible conversation based around information, the information center and building deeper levels of communication, on using the kiosk at Front and Pleasant Street with new maps and signage and utilizing all the information that’s at the Beals Memorial Library as an information hub.”

Part of the “siloeing,” Pastor J said, is that “the right hand doesn’t know what the left hand is doing, and it appears that there’s probably more than two hands working on the same projects at the same time.”

At the conclusion, he said, “there’s great desire to continue the conversations. We are going to begin to do that, and also the Livable Winchendon project was brought up, and talking about nine circle groups focused on the domains of livability as part of a continuing conversation. So we are actually in the process of moving forward with more community conversations at this point.”

Ms. LaPointe said that the new Livable Winchendon initiative (*Courier* readers will be seeing a lot more about this) started out at the Senior Center with the Council on Aging, but they want it to be relevant to the whole community. “Now, when we think about Livable Winchendon, we’re thinking of it as the umbrella, if you will, under which the different pieces, different committees, boards, community organizations that are related to what we’ll be getting into with these different domains, how they can begin to connect, to see themselves together, to rally, to amplify the work that’s already being done to get more leverage out of it, and that for me personally, that’s what I’ve been hoping for, I think ever since I moved back to town. Now I see where it might be happening. We’re going to be looking at how this blends in with the [HEAL Collaborative] work, the Community Heart & Soul work that was done, and the things that got appended to the Master Plan. My guess down the road is I think there’s going to be something here that’s going to help to inform the work and priorities of many different boards, committees, and civic organizations, and I think it will also inform perhaps an update to the Master Plan.”



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Winchendon News

BOS Initiates Ongoing Discussion About the Future of the Town Communications Committee

by Inanna Arthen

At the Board of Selectmen's meeting on Monday, July 13, Board Chair Andrew Beauvais introduced, under New Business, "a discussion regarding the current status and the future review of the Communications Committee." He began, "Communications is one of the biggest things that we struggle with just across the board. One of the reasons for bringing this forward, just as a preliminary discussion, was this was one of, if not the most common thread from [the recent roundtable meeting of town board and committee chairs], all of the various board and committee chairs felt that communication, both between the boards and committees, and also the departments, and all of the aspects in the various communities in town, we could do more to improve and to work on that."

Board member Audrey LaBrie said, "In my tenure here on the board...it seemed to me that the main focus of the Communications Committee was to negotiate the contract with Comcast, and I don't think it really went much beyond that. So I really appreciated seeing this on here, especially going back to our early conversation about let's look at all the committees and commissions, and what we have in town, and revitalize them, change as we need to."

Mr. Beauvais said, "as I mentioned, the preliminary purpose is to just begin board-level discussions regarding the current status, purpose, and future direction of the Winchendon Communications Committee. The intent is to review the information that's currently available to identify questions that require further research or input, and to determine an appropriate process for evaluating the committee's future."

"A little bit of background for those that may not be aware, and I actually found this to be quite interesting because I was unaware that it's a seven-member committee appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Members serve a three-year staggered term, and their current published charge is to assist in expanding local access programming and the communications with the residents of the community."

"From the available records that I could find, it was originally established on June 16, 1975, as the Communications Advisory Committee. So they've been around for a little while. However, back then when they were established, it was a significant focus on local access programming. Modes of communication and information gathering has significantly changed since 1975, of course, modern examples including the town's website, online services, social media, email, digital communications, live stream, and recorded public meetings, etc. So I think that we should consider whether the Committee's current charge, structure and responsibilities remain appropriate for the town's communication needs."

Ms. Labrie said that in 1975, she remembers learning how to use IBM punch cards for computers. Technology has changed drastically in the last 50 years.

Mr. Beauvais went on to list current concerns with the Communications Committee. "Lack of quorum," he said. "They seem to be unable to currently maintain a quorum and cannot conduct regular business meetings, through no fault of their own. And the folks that do still remain, I believe, there's two or three of seven. A big shout out to those folks for hanging on and remaining, but unfortunately, they cannot meet...considering all boards and committees reorganize after Town Meeting, they have not had the ability to [elect a current Chair]."

So, the current membership is outdated, Mr. Beauvais said, and the committee's charge is

outdated and very broad. It doesn't clearly identify any recent goals, deliverables or recommendations produced by the Committee, because they haven't been able to meet for a year. "But does the town still need a communications committee?" he asked. "I think the obvious resounding answer is yes."

"Perhaps it's not called a Communications Committee, but what is it? So, if so, what problem should the Committee be responsible for helping the town solve? Does the existing charge adequately reflect the town's current communication needs? I think we've already established that. Is a seven-member committee still the most practical structure? I say perhaps not," Mr. Beauvais said.

Board member Erika Eitland said, "I think the seven-member committee structure.. we say it all the time, all these boards, commissions, committees are all volunteer-based. So when you have a seven-member committee, what it allows is that if whoever can make it, they have quorum. So five means that you only have the buffer of maybe two people being out, where there's just a little more flexibility in seven."

"I also feel like it requires an intergenerational group...going back to the Community Conversations piece in thinking about livability and those domains, communication and information is one of those domains within it. But what do our older adults within our community need versus the way that this digital era is changing and rapidly, and the misinformation, AI, all of those pieces. So to me, I feel like the seven-person committee gives them the flexibility to meet and make quorum somehow."

"I think there's value in that, but I also think it allows for more diversity of skill, perspective, value. Just seeing Dani Cutler come forward for the Economic Development Task Force, to me having Dani on say, a Communications Committee is valuable from some of the different expertise that she would bring to that."

Ms. Eitland went on to say that she could imagine the Communications Committee having people who could take something that Town Manager Bill McKinney mentioned earlier in the meeting, how to get information out to the public about the new tax bills, and put the information out as social media posts and in other formats that would reach more people. Tasks like that could be handed over to the Communications Committee.

"Are we the ones to propose something new and draft that and bring that forward?" Ms. Eitland asked. Mr. Beauvais said yes, they are. Ms. Eitland said, "The remaining members of the communications committee, I would like to see them."

"Glad you mentioned that because after this preliminary discussion, my intent was to invite them to a future discussion," Mr. Beauvais said.

Ms. LaBrie said, "Under suggested outcomes, you mentioned that, making sure they have a voice."

Ms. Eitland suggested, "changing the scope allows more people to feel like they have a place at this. Because if I read this, you know, local access programming and the communications with residents of the community, I don't know if I would see myself in it."

She went on, "I think it's not capturing the visual, the digital, the fact that we're thinking about this all from what's written in a visual thing, but what about auditory announcements and other things for people who can't see? And are we making sure we have alt text and things on images and stuff that we're putting out? I think there's actually people from the Commission on Disability who could help us, be a part of this?"

So, can you fill those seven roles with appointees from some of our commissions and committees who are maybe not elected, but say we want you to be a part of it. Like, Dani, you're a representative from Economic Development Task Force. Renee's got people."

Mr. Beauvais said that he liked the thought, but sometimes people on boards feel strong-armed to serve as representatives on groups outside of the town, such as the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission. "You know you don't want to ask even more of volunteers, so it's a balance," he said.

Ms. Eitland said, "In this case though, if the goal of balancing the Communications Committee is to get the word out about what the town is already doing, it is in every commission's, committee's, whoever's best interest, to at least be in shared conversation. So even if we're with Manuel from the library and saying here's our big list of juicy updates and things, can you help us make it beautiful? At least they're in conversation. So I think no, we don't ask more. But this is ensuring that the work that they're doing is being heard, appreciated, understood, or resources are being accessed that they're all creating anyway."

"Like the Master Plan Implementation Committee, we were doing a lot of work. We were putting together information and decks and analysis, and nobody really saw it other than the Committee, unless we came and presented to the Board of Selectmen. So I think this is a chance to mix it up a little bit and fill those vacancies quickly."

Mr. Beauvais agreed with that, and said they need to redefine the charge and the purpose, which might take several meetings to refine, with feedback from current members.

He went on, "That's one of my recommended next steps: is just confirm the current status and who the current members are, and to invite input from them. One thing about volunteers, burn-out happens, especially when it's an unpaid and sometimes, let's be honest, thankless position. I think we can all attest to that. But we do it because we believe in this town and its potential and the residents, and so the more we can include, going back to the conversation that happened earlier about the VolunteerHub and getting people engaged, et cetera, it's very important we keep that momentum, keep that discussion alive."

"The one thing I hesitate is putting all of this solely on volunteers, and the reason for that is, we're looking at it right now, and the reason it breaks down because the torch is sometimes passed or it's dropped and it's not carried forward. So I feel like one thing that would be worth considering is, and this would come down to day to day. So this would be up to the Town Manager to decide. But having a liaison that's on payroll in Town Hall that can ensure that the work of the Committee, whether the composition of members change or the charge changes, that there's somebody designated that can ensure that it continues on forward and not falling apart."

He concluded, "Should the committee have specific annual goals or deliverables rather than a broad ongoing mission? What should the committee's relationship be with the Town Manager, town staff, departments, boards, and committees? And finally, what input should be requested from the remaining current or recently active Committee members before the Board considers any changes? That's really all I have. So I would just like us to all start thinking about what do we want to do? Do we completely scrap what exists

Winchendon News

Beals Prize for Poetry Call for Entries

WINCHENDON, MA, June 29—The Beals Memorial Library in Winchendon, Massachusetts seeks entries into the seventh annual Beals Prize for Poetry. Ten finalists will be chosen by the judges to read their work at the awards presentation on Thursday, September 24, 2026. Prize money of \$250, \$100 and \$50 will be awarded to the top three competition finalists. Submissions for the contest are now being accepted through Friday, August 15th. There is no fee to enter.

Entrants may submit only one, original and unpublished poem. Contestants must live in Massachusetts or in one of these New Hampshire towns: Keene, Swanzey, Richmond, Fitzwilliam, Troy, Marlborough, Dublin, Peterborough, Jaffrey, Rindge, New Ipswich, Greenville, and Sharon. Submissions must be emailed to: bealspoetryprize@gmail.com (Word docs preferred). Competition finalists will be notified on or before

Friday, September 11, 2026. All entries will be judged blindly. Previous Beals Prize first place winners are not eligible to participate, and submitters should be at least 18 years of age.

The judges for this year’s competition are poets Sara Letourneau, 2023 winner of the Beals Prize for Poetry, Managing Editor at Heart of the Story Editorial & Coaching Services and author of “Wild Gardens”; Maria Williams, author of “White Doe,” which won the 2023 Verse Daily Prize, and “A Love Letter to Say There is No Love;” and Karolina Zapal, current holder of the 2025 Beals Prize for Poetry.

The Beals Prize for Poetry is funded in part by the Winchendon Cultural Council and by the Friends of the Beals Memorial Library. Call the Library at 978-297-0300 or go to bealslibrary.org for more information.

Beals Memorial Library Joins in Nationwide Public Reading of The Declaration of Independence



The volunteer readers listen as Beals Memorial Library Director Manuel King (in top hat) reads “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

Photo copyright Town of Winchendon

by Inanna Arthen

After the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776, public readings of it were held in towns and cities all through the colonies. In honor of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration, on July 8, Beals Memorial Library

held a public reading of the entire document in the open air to all who came to listen, just as was done 250 years ago. Around a dozen community members volunteered to each read a section of the complete document as it was approved by the Second Continental Congress and sent to King George III.

Readers gathered on the library’s front steps, while listeners stood or sat on the lawn facing them. The reading started with bells ringing from the steeples of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon and the United Parish church on Front Street, along with an antique hand bell rung from the library steps. After the closing words of the document itself, the names of each delegate who signed were read.

WinchendonTV videorecorded the entire proceeding, which took about 15 minutes. The video may be seen on WinchendonTV at <https://winchendon.cablecast.tv/internetchannel/show/405?site=1>

Rail Trail will Get Improvements and Repairs Thanks to DCR and Winchendon RDA

(July 16, 2026) The Town of Winchendon has been awarded a \$16,000 MassTrails grant through the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. With an additional \$4,000 contribution from the Winchendon Redevelopment Authority, this represents a total investment of \$20,000 in accessibility and user-experience improvements along the Rail Trail.

Planned enhancements include:

- New benches to replace damaged infrastructure and provide additional resting areas
- Waste and recycling stations to help keep the trail clean
- Pet waste stations for the convenience of trail users
- Picnic tables where residents and visitors can relax, gather, and enjoy the trail

These improvements will help maintain the appearance of the Rail Trail while making it a cleaner, more welcoming, and accessible recreational space for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.

A big thank-you to everyone who helped move this project forward, including the Economic Development Task Force, Planning Coordinator Nicole Roberts, DPW Director Patrick Wood, and the Winchendon Redevelopment Authority. This was truly a collaborative effort, and we greatly appreciate everyone’s hard work and support!

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Run a business card or double-card size ad every week in the online *Winchendon Courier* and you’ll get a discount AND the same ad placed in the print edition, for no extra charge!

Contact us for full details:
editor@winchendoncourier.net

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By Light Unseen Media LLC is a for-profit business, but we publish the *Courier* as a service to the town of Winchendon – because every town needs a local newspaper.

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Are you a former resident of Winchendon now living out of town?

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Community Connector

Welcome to The Community Connector! In this pull-out section of the printed *Winchendon Courier*, you'll find a complete calendar of local events, a page of events and activities by category, and where to find more details about the organizations and groups that help make Winchendon a great place to live.

At The HUB 5 Summer Dr

Kids Bowl Free!

Wednesday through Saturday
10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.
\$3 shoe rental not included (for those without their own bowling shoes) - Register to play two free games of bowling every day from now through October 31, 2026.

Senior Strikers Bowling

Fridays
10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.
\$5 suggested donation, pastry & coffee, lunch available through Senior Center—call 978-297-3155 by Thursday to order a lunch, suggested donation \$3.

Brunch & Bowl

Saturdays
10:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.
\$10 suggested donation, bowling, coffee, pastries, breakfast sandwich, cartoons and free bowling for kids.

Free Teen Drop-in

Fridays
4:00-7:00 p.m.
No cost. Just drop in to hang out and chill, bowl for free, enjoy some games, maybe some music or a movie, whatever happens to be going on. No pressure, just good vibes. Bring a friend—or make some new ones!



Need a Ride?

Book a ride with the Community Connector app, or call 978-297-8089. All rides are FREE! Please book your ride at least one week in advance.

Summer Fun @ The HUB

THE
HUB
WINCHENDON, MA

Book Bowling, Parties & Patio Rentals



Lane Rentals

\$25/hour



5 Lanes / 2 Hrs

\$250



Entire Facility

\$500



Outdoor Patio Rentals

From \$75



Great times.
Right here. ♥



Kids Bowl Free



Open Bowling Wed-Sat



Friday Night Fun

Book now at the-hub.org



978-297-1667



5 Summer Drive, Winchendon, MA

Beals Memorial Library Summer Reading Club 50 Pleasant St

Summer Reading Club One-Off Events

(see Calendar listings on following pages 8-9 for details)

Monday, August 3: Dorm Room Cooking Workshop
Thursday, August 6: Astronomy: Moon Trees and Space Seeds
Friday, August 7: Buzzy Bees Beekeeping
Tuesday, August 11: Pressed Flower Bookmarks
Thursday, August 13: End of Summer Reading Flashmob

It's Not Too Late to Join the Summer Reading Club!

FOR ALL AGES! All reading counts! Short, long, for work, for entertainment, graphic novels, audio books, stories you read aloud and stories someone reads to you—it's all READING! You just record the hours you spend reading in your log—help the Beals break last year's all-time record!

Register and get your log at the library or online. Start at any time, right up to the last day, August 14! For more info, go to:

bealslibrary.org/summer

"Pins for Possibilities"

A Fundraising Project for The HUB sponsored by by Winchendon Community Action Committee, GALA- Gardner Area League of Artists and Sound Bites Events

CALL FOR ENTRIES

Grab your gesso bowling pin and create a piece of Art!

This "Call for Entries" is open to artists and everyone 15 years of age and above.

This is a Fundraiser project. Proceeds will go towards GALA's Art programming and to purchase new bowling shoes for the HUB's new revitalized bowling alley.

If you are interested, please register online to receive a pin and start working on your art piece. There are NO Rules to turning your pin into an amazing piece of art!

You will donate your finished art piece back to GALA. There is no cost to enter. Check out the Registration Form for more details.

The Pin Artworks will be judged in special categories. Ribbons will be awarded and pins will be auctioned off.

We will have a spectacular Evening Event that includes a Pin Art Silent Auction, Awards, LIVE Music, Food, Drink, Free Bowling, Raffle Baskets.

We will be displaying your pins two weeks prior to the main event at the HUB (bowling alley). This will allow the public to be able to admire your art pieces and participate in the silent auction. These bowling pin artworks will be auctioned off.

There are 12 ribbon art categories the Judges will award. Award ribbons will be announced at the main event and placed next to their pins.

These 12 Ribbon Categories are:

Nature, Most Original, Funniest, Scariest, Pet Inspired, Animals, Realism, Pop Art, Expressionism, Abstract, Historical, Sports.

Each Registered person will receive a few Perks

You will receive a coupon for 4 Free Bowling Passes (games) anytime when the Bowling Alley is Open. You will also receive a \$10 coupon towards Food at the Sunshine Cafe.

"Pins for Possibility" is a community-building fundraising and arts engagement initiative designed to strengthen volunteerism, expand community participation, and increase access to arts and recreation opportunities in Winchendon.

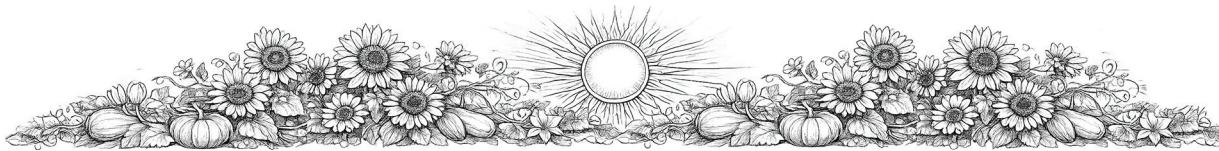
Since purchasing and revitalizing the formerly abandoned bowling alley in 2023, the Winchendon CAC has transformed The HUB into a vibrant community center serving many residents each month through youth leadership initiatives, makerspace programming, art programs, workforce development, afterschool enrichment, and free community events.

The facility still relies on very old, heavily worn bowling shoes inherited with the original lanes. Now let's all get together and get them some NEW Shoes!

This project intentionally brings together people from all communities, different ages, backgrounds, and abilities in a joyful, welcoming environment centered on creativity, service, and community pride.

Register at:

<https://form.jotform.com/261976795549986>



AUGUS

SATURDAY AUGUST 1

Pashmina Picnic at Winchendon Community Park

2:00-10:00 p.m. \$15 adults, \$10 ages 13-18, kids 12 and under free. The Pashmina Picnic is about keeping things simple: great music, good company, and the freedom to enjoy both however you like. Food vendors will be limited, so we encourage everyone to bring their own favorite snacks, meals, and refreshments (no glass containers). The amphitheater offers ample seating, and picnic tables are available throughout the grounds. You're also welcome to spread out on the lawn and make yourself comfortable. Music by HUNAYE, Felicity's Hubris and Carolyn & the Cable Car x2. Music starts at 2:30 p.m. Sponsored by Captivated Minds and Winchendon Parks & Recreation. For more details, see www.facebook.com/events/943092435466533. At Winchendonm Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

MONDAY AUGUST 3

Summer Reading Club - Dorm Room Cooking Workshop

3:30 p.m. For teens/tweens age 10-18, join us for a hands-on workshop on how to create a delicious meal using a microwave and other dorm-approved appliances. Limited space, registration required. Register at www.bealslibrary.org/summer, call 978-297-0300 or visit the library. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

TUESDAY AUGUST 4

Social Art Circle with GALA

1:00-3:00 p.m. Explore a variety of art in a supportive social environment—a group with different skill levels who wish to learn, explore, laugh, share, connect, and be inspired in a safe, low key, non-intimidating space. Bring your portable works in progress or try and pick from the shared community art supplies we have on hand. This is a self-led group, but there will be classroom monitors who will assist you. No cost, but registration required, at <https://form.jotform.com/253415023143949>. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 5

Teen Gender & Sexuality Alliance at the Beals

3:30-4:30 p.m. A safe space for teens to meet, exchange information, receive support, socialize, build a community, and talk about issues and concerns related to sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

THURSDAY AUGUST 6

Our Neighbor's Kitchen Dinner

5:15 p.m. at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church. Served in the Parish Hall. This week the menu is TBA. Free-will donation \$2 per person, \$5 per family; no one turned away. 52 Spruce Street, Winchendon.

Summer Reading Club - Astronomy: Moon Trees and Space Seeds

6:30 p.m. Join Jim Zebrowski for an exciting presentation discussing the science of plant growth in a microgravity environment in low earth orbit, and how it helps improve agricultural yields on Earth for millions of people! At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

FRIDAY AUGUST 7

Summer Reading Club - Buzzy Bees Beekeeping

2:00 p.m. Join Dave and Annie from the Worcester County Bee Association to learn all about our friends, the honeybees! At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

SATURDAY AUGUST 8

Art Critique with GALA

10:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. Are you looking for encouragement and support from other artists? Bring up to 2 pieces of your artwork (finished or unfinished) to share with your circle of artist friends. The first 15 minutes will be social time, then we will go into sharing our artwork. You may bring snacks to share with the group. Free to all GALA members. New artists: first 2 classes are free. Janet Dupuis will help guide us during our time together. Email Janet to let her know that you will be joining us at Jandu516@gmail.com. For more info about GALA see www.galagardner.org. In the 1st floor Gallery of the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

Into the Floyd Concert

7:00-9:00 p.m. Tickets \$20. Based in Central Massachusetts, Into The Floyd brings the music of Pink Floyd vividly to life, performing an authentic and expansive catalog spanning the band's entire career—from their earliest psychedelic works of the 1960s through their final studio recordings. Get tickets at www.eventeny.com/events/into-the-floyd-2026-27905. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

TUESDAY AUGUST 11

Summer Reading Club - Pressed Flower Bookmarks

6:00-7:30 p.m. Add a little nature to your reading! Join us at the library for a relaxing workshop where you'll design your own beautifully pressed flower bookmark. We'll provide all the materials, just bring your creativity. Limited space, registration required. Register at www.bealslibrary.org/summer, call 978-297-0300 or visit the library. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

THURSDAY AUGUST 13

Denis Cormier - Songs of Yesteryear

10:45 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. Enjoy timeless tunes, familiar melodies, and a touch of nostalgia as Denis performs favorites from years past. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

Our Neighbor's Kitchen Dinner

5:30 p.m. at UU Church of Winchendon. Dinner will be served in the Parish Hall; take-out available after indoor diners are served. This week's menu will be zucchini beef bake and fresh salad. Free-will donation \$2 per person, \$5 per family; no one turned away. 126 Central Street.

Summer Reading Club - End of Summer Reading Flashmob

6:00-7:00 p.m. Come celebrate the end of summer by participating in silent reading at the library. Bring or pick out a book, find a cozy place inside or outside the library and read! Afterward there will be snacks provided and you can share what you have read this summer. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

FRIDAY AUGUST 14

Sound Bites Community Open Mic

6:30 p.m. Who doesn't LOVE a GOOD Open Mic? Well we have just the one for you. Sign up at 6:00. Music Starts at 6:30. You get 15ish minutes or three songs. Just bring your instrument, some friends and have fun. Food & Beverages, Beer, Wine & Seltzers available through the Sunshine Cafe. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

4EverFab Concert

7:00-9:00 p.m. Tickets \$5. Celebrating 14 seasons together, 4EverFab is New England's premier Beatles tribute band, featuring the original four founding members who have performed together for more than a decade. With over 325 shows under their belt, they've mastered the sound, spirit, and excitement that made The Beatles a global phenomenon—and they deliver it with infectious energy and total authenticity. From early favorites like “She Loves You,” “I Want to Hold Your Hand,” and “Twist and Shout,” to later anthems like “Come Together,” “Hey Jude,” and “Let It Be,” this show is a nonstop sing-along packed with timeless hits that span generations. Whether you're a lifelong Beatles fan or just love a great summer concert, you'll find yourself clapping, dancing, and singing every word. So all together now—bring your friends, grab a lawn chair or blanket, and get ready for a night of classic songs, big harmonies, and pure joy under the summer sky. This is one Beatles experience you won't want to let it be without you there! Get tickets at www.eventeny.com/events/4everfab-concert-27914. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

SATURDAY AUGUST 15

Operation Winchendon Cares “Lazy Days of Summer” Drive

9:00-10:30 a.m. Collecting donations for “care packages” for our military members with a tie to Winchendon. See <http://www.winchendoncares.com/WP/> for guidelines on what to donate—or just come down and help fill packages! At Winchendon American Legion Post #193, 295 School St.

Winchendon Electronics Recycling Event

9:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. This is a day of community wide action to declutter and clean out those old electronics. We're accepting all electronics, appliances, ANYTHING with a plug or batteries, as well as reusable bicycles! Items will be recycled responsibly for a small fee. For complete details about items accepted and fees, see <https://www.facebook.com/events/1571484357779271/>. Materials handled by Green Day Recycling. At Immaculate Heart of Mary Church parking lot, 52 Spruce St, Winchendon.

Italian Street Fest

12:00 p.m. Tickets \$5. Join us for a lively afternoon celebrating Italian culture, music, food, and community! Stroll through the park and enjoy delicious Italian eats, specialty vendors, and festive fun for the whole family. Music by Italo DeMasi, Sounds Like Frank and Ambrosini. Food vendors and local crafters/vendors. Get tickets at www.eventeny.com/events/italian-street-fest-28905/. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

MONDAY AUGUST 17

Walking Beside You Caregiver Support Group

6:00-7:30 p.m. We invite all parents, grandparents, and caregivers raising individuals who are neurodivergent, on the autism spectrum, or have other special needs. We aim to create a safe space to come together, support each other, and share the joys and challenges of raising individuals with unique needs. 3rd Monday of each month. For more information visit the library or see bealslibrary.org. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

TUESDAY AUGUST 18

Growing Places Farmers Market

10:30-11:30 a.m. Fresh local vegetables available for purchase using cash, debit/credit or SNAP/HIP benefits! At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

SATURDAY AUGUST 22

Snowbound Summer Jam 2026

1:00-9:00 p.m. The Wingmen, Fern & Friends, Blakkat Bone and Rusty Truck Saloon Band all Outdoors! Tickets: \$15 Advance & \$20 @ Door. Daltons Grille will be open all day! Raffles & Cash Bar available. Bring a lawn chair & some friends! At The Snowbound Club, 130 Baldwinville Rd, Winchendon.

“My Hiding Place” at United Parish

3:00 p.m. Join us for a one-person show performed by Brenda Lillie: “My Hiding Place: Recollections from Carrie ten Boom,” a story of love and forgiveness at any cost. Free admission; a Love offering will be taken. For more information, call 843-819-0180 or contact rick@unitedparish.org. At United Parish, 39 Front St, Winchendon.

MONDAY AUGUST 24

Cookbook Book Club

6:00-7:00 p.m. Each month, participants will cook a recipe from the selected cookbook, bring a dish to share, and discuss how it turned out, what worked well, what they would change and what they enjoyed. For this month's cookbook, contact the library at 978-297-0300. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

THURSDAY AUGUST 27

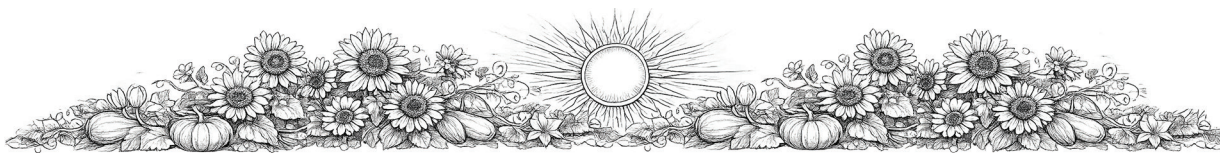
FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL IN WINCHENDON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

7:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. Classes begin for grades 1-12 in Memorial Elementary, Toy Town Elementary and Murdock Middle High Schools. Drive carefully and be aware of children walking. STOP FOR SCHOOL BUSES - IT'S THE LAW!

Community Game Night at the Beals

5:30-7:30 p.m. Play one of our games or bring your favorite to share! This event is open to everyone in the community. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

T 2026



Our Neighbor's Kitchen Dinner

5:30 p.m. at UU Church of Winchendon. Dinner will be served in the Parish Hall; take-out available after indoor diners are served. This week's menu TBA. Free-will donation \$2 per person, \$5 per family; no one turned away. 126 Central Street.

BINGO! At The HUB

7:00 p.m. Bring your friends, grab your lucky charm, and get ready for a fun-filled evening of bingo and prizes! 15 games, last game is a coverall with a guaranteed \$75 pot. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

FRIDAY AUGUST 28

Community Open Mic & Picnic in the Park

2:00-8:00 p.m. FREE! This all-ages community event invites neighbors, friends, and families to gather outdoors for an evening of live local talent, including music, comedy, storytelling, and more. Whether you're stepping up to the mic or enjoying the performances from the lawn, this is a great chance to connect, unwind, and celebrate community creativity. Bring a picnic, blanket, or lawn chair and enjoy the beautiful park setting while supporting local performers. Performers of all experience levels are welcome—sign-ups will be available on site. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

SATURDAY AUGUST 29

Blues, Brew & BBQ

3:00-9:00 p.m. Tickets \$15. Bring your appetite and enjoy BBQ favorites, local craft beer, and great company in a laid-back outdoor setting. Whether you're a blues lover or just looking for a fantastic Saturday night, Blues, Brew & BBQ has something for everyone. Be sure to bring a lawn chair or blanket, gather your friends, and settle in for a night filled with music, food, and community.
3:00 PM - Memphis Kelly
5:00 PM - Ottomatic Slim & The Deadly Sins
7:00 PM - Wildcat O'Halloran Band
Get tickets at www.eventeny.com/events/blues-brew-bbq-2026-27915. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

RECURRING WEEKLY EVENTS

MONDAY through FRIDAY

Pickleball - Open Courts

9:30 a.m.- 1:00 p.m. Drop in and play pickleball! At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

MONDAYS

Gentle Yoga with Paula

10:00 a.m. Chair yoga tailored to the older generations to increase flexibility, balance, and breathwork to lower stress levels. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

Friends' Book and Used Media Sale

1:00-3::00 p.m. The Friends of the Library Book Sale is back! Browse a wide selection of used books, DVDs, puzzles, music and more. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Lego Club for Kids at the Beals

4:00-5:00 p.m. Join us for fun-filled afternoons building Lego creations straight from your imagination! For for information, contact the library at 978-297-0300. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Yoga With Chantal from Shadow Academy Wellness

4:30-5:30 p.m. Unwind, relax, and celebrate the beauty of yoga. All skill levels welcomed! Mats and Blocks are available, if needed. Open to adults and teens. For more info, contact 978-297-0300, bealsmemoriallibrary@gmail.com or visit www.bealslibrary.org. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

AA Meeting

7:30 p.m. Open meeting, all are welcome. UU Church of Winchendon, 126 Central Street.

TUESDAYS

Men's Shed Club

10:00-11:00 a.m. Mainly for older guys. We have tools and materials for pursuing our interests and passions, for learning something new and sharing skills. We join to make stuff and tinker, make friends and enjoy life. May be in different locations, call for more information. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

Family Friendly Story Hour at the Chapel

10:00-11:00 a.m. For preschool age children. Parents must stay with their children for the story time. At the Chapel Dntown, 286 Central St, Winchendon.

Taste of Home Lunch

11:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. Enjoy a homecooked lunch made by volunteers! Call 928-297-3155 to reserve a spot. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

Teen Dungeons & Dragons Club

3:30-5:00 p.m. A tabletop roleplaying club for teens! Membership is limited, contact the library at 978-297-0300 to sign up. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

WEDNESDAYS

Ukelele Class with Julie

9:00-10:00 a.m. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

Open Bowling & Sunshine Cafe

10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Kids Bowl Free!

10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Gentle Yoga with Paula

10:00-11:00 a.m. Chair yoga tailored to the older generations to increase flexibility, balance, and breathwork to lower stress levels. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

RUMMIKUB

10:15-11:15 a.m. Learn to play Rummikub. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

Bingo!

12:30-2:30 p.m. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

THURSDAYS

Open Bowling & Sunshine Cafe

10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Kids Bowl Free!

10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

CFCE Preschool Playgroup at the Beals

1:00-2:00 p.m. Join us for an afternoon of free play, a craft, story time and music & movement. This program is in partnership with the Winchendon CFCE. Contact the library at 978-297-0300 for more information. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Friends' Book and Used Media Sale

5:00-7::00 p.m. The Friends of the Library Book Sale is back! Browse a wide selection of used books, DVDs, puzzles, music and more. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Open House "Porch Night" at the WHCC

6:00-8:30 p.m. Come join us for our summer favorite - Thursdays on the porch! Bring some wine, cheese, or snack and beverage of your choice and enjoy the beautiful mansion! Tour our buildings at your leisure and go back in time at these beautiful properties! There is NO CHARGE for this event! Acoustic music provided by local musicians. At Winchendon History and Cultural Center, 151 Front St.

Cub Scout Meetings

6:30-7:45 p.m. For more information, please contact ccpack193@gmail.com.

FRIDAYS

Story Time at the Beals

10:00 a.m. Join us for a fun half hour of stories with Ms. Kristin and Ms. Melissa. This program is in partnership with the Winchendon Community Playgroups & CFCE. Contact the library at 978-297-0300 for more information. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Open Bowling for the Public

10:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. FOR DETAILS and TO RSVP VISIT: <https://www.the-hub.org/community-bowling>. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Kids Bowl Free!

10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Senior Lunch and Senior Strikers Bowling

10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Come in and enjoy lunch, free bowling, and fellowship! Please call 978-297-3155 at least 24 hours in advance to reserve a lunch. Bowling is free for all seniors 55+ from 10:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. Suggested donation, \$5. At the The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, WinchendonFriends' Book and Used Media Sale

Friends' Book and Used Media Sale

12:00-2:00 p.m. The Friends of the Library Book Sale is back! Browse a wide selection of used books, DVDs, puzzles, music and more. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Free Teen Drop-in at The HUB

4:00-7:00 p.m. Come hang out, bowl for free, grab some ice cream, and chill with friends. No cost. No pressure. Just good vibes, games, and a place to be. Bring your friends and make it your Friday tradition! Sponsored by United Way of North Central MA. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

SATURDAYS

Brunch & Bowl at The HUB - Kids Bowl FREE!

10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Come on over to The Hub and grab brunch and enjoy bowling! Fun for the whole family. PAJAMAS welcome! Continental breakfast, unlimited coffee, 1 hour of bowling (shoes included), beverages available to purchase. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Open Bowling for the Public

10:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. FOR DETAILS and TO RSVP VISIT: <https://www.the-hub.org/community-bowling>. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Winchendon Farmers Market

10:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m. Crafts, fresh farm produce, baked goods. In front of The HUB, 5 Summer Drive, Winchendon. Rain or shine! In inclement weather, the Market will move inside The HUB, which is open on Saturdays.

Shopping Transportation to Rindge for Seniors

3:30-4:30 p.m. Leaves from the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. Must reserve your ride one week in advance. Call 978-297-3155.

North Central Collective Greenhouse

5:30-7:00 p.m. Join us for a meal, message and worship. NCC is a collective of likeminded churches who purpose to establish a Gospel presence that leads to Gospel proclamation in our region. At The Chapel Dntown, 286 Central St, Winchendon.



Thoughts and Ideas

Summer Reading Club - Astronomy: Moon Trees and Space Seeds

August 6, 6:30 p.m. Join Jim Zebrowski for an exciting presentation discussing the science of plant growth in a microgravity environment in low earth orbit, and how it helps improve agricultural yields on Earth for millions of people! At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Summer Reading Club - Buzzy Bees Beekeeping

August 7, 2:00 p.m. Join Dave and Annie from the Worcester County Bee Association to learn all about our friends, the honeybees! At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

“My Hiding Place” at United Parish

August 22, 3:00 p.m. Join us for a one-person show performed by Brenda Lillie: “My Hiding Place: Recollections from Carrie ten Boom,” a story of love and forgiveness at any cost. Free admission; a Love offering will be taken. For more information, call 843-819-0180 or contact rick@unitedparish.org. At United Parish, 39 Front St, Winchendon.

Food and Meals

Brunch & Bowl at The HUB - Kids Bowl FREE!

Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Come on over to The Hub and grab brunch and enjoy bowling! Fun for the whole family. PAJAMAS welcome! Continental breakfast, unlimited coffee, 1 hour of bowling (shoes included), beverages available to purchase. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Our Neighbor’s Kitchen Dinner

August 13 and 27, 5:30 p.m. at UU Church of Winchendon. Dinner will be served in the Parish Hall; take-out available after indoor diners are served. Free-will donation \$2 per person, \$5 per family; no one turned away. 126 Central Street.

Our Neighbor’s Kitchen Dinner

August 6, 5:15 p.m. at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church. Served in the Parish Hall. Free-will donation \$2 per person, \$5 per family; no one turned away. 52 Spruce Street, Winchendon.

Italian Street Fest

August 15, 12:00 p.m. Tickets \$5. Join us for a lively afternoon celebrating Italian culture, music, food, and community! Stroll through the park and enjoy delicious Italian eats, specialty vendors, and festive fun for the whole family. Music by Italo DeMasi, Sounds Like Frank and Ambrosini. Food vendors and local crafters/vendors. Get tickets at www.eventeny.com/events/italian-street-fest-28905/. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

Growing Places Mobile Farmers Market

August 18, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Fresh local vegetables available for purchase using cash, debit/credit or SNAP/HIP benefits! At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

Taste of Home Lunch

Tuesdays, 11:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. Enjoy a homecooked lunch made by volunteers! At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

Winchendon Farmers Market

Saturdays, 10:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m. STARTS MAY 16. Crafts, fresh farm produce, baked goods. In front of The HUB, 5 Summer Drive, Winchendon. Rain or shine! In inclement weather, the Market will move inside The HUB, which is open on Saturdays.

For Kids

Lego Club for Kids at the Beals

Mondays, 4:00-5:00 p.m. Join us for fun-filled afternoons building Lego creations straight from your imagination! For for information, contact the library at 978-297-0300. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Family Friendly Story Hour at the Chapel

Tuesdays, 10:00-11:00 a.m. For preschool age children. Parents must stay with their children for the story time. At the Chapel Downtown, 286 Central St, Winchendon.

CFCE Preschool Playgroup at the Beals

Thursdays, 1:00-2:00 p.m. Join us for an afternoon of free play, a craft, story time and music & movement. This program is in partnership with the Winchendon CFCE. Contact the library at 978-297-0300 for more information. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Story Time at the Beals

Fridays, 10:00 a.m. Join us for a fun half hour of stories with Ms. Kristin and Ms. Melissa. This program is in partnership with the Winchendon Community Playgroups & CFCE. Contact the library at 978-297-0300 for more information. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Cub Scout Meetings

Thursdays, 6:30-7:45 p.m. For more information, please contact ccpack193@gmail.com.

Community Game Night at the Beals

August 27, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Play one of our games or bring your favorite to share! This event is open to everyone in the community. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

For Teens

Summer Reading Club - Dorm Room Cooking Workshop

August 3, 3:30 p.m. For teens/tweens age 10-18, join us for a hands-on workshop on how to create a delicious meal using a microwave and other dorm-approved appliances. Limited space, registration required. Register at www.bealslibrary.org/summer, call 978-297-0300 or visit the library. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Teen Gender & Sexuality Alliance at the Beals

August 5, 3:30-4:30 p.m. A safe space for teens to meet, exchange information, receive support, socialize, build a community, and talk about issues and concerns related to sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Teen Dungeons & Dragons

Tuesdays,, 3:30-5:00 p.m. This is for kids in grades 8-12. Membership is limited, contact the library to sign up. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Free Teen Drop-in at The HUB

Fridays, 4:00-7:00 p.m. Come hang out, bowl for free, grab some ice cream, and chill with friends. No cost. No pressure. Just good vibes, games, and a place to be. Bring your friends and make it your Friday tradition! Sponsored by United Way of North Central MA. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Check out the full online town directory at
winchendoncourier.net/directory.htm
and the online community calendar at

winchendoncourier.net/index.html#connector

Entertainment

Pashmina Picnic at Winchendon Community Park

August 1, 2:00-10:00 p.m. \$15 adults, \$10 ages 13-18, kids 12 and under free. The Pashmina Picnic is about keeping things simple: great music, good company, and the freedom to enjoy both however you like. Food vendors will be limited, so we encourage everyone to bring their own favorite snacks, meals, and refreshments (no glass containers). The amphitheater offers ample seating, and picnic tables are available throughout the grounds. You’re also welcome to spread out on the lawn and make yourself comfortable. Music by HUNAYE, Felicity’s Hubris and Carolyn & the Cable Car x2. Music starts at 2:30 p.m. Sponsored by Captivated Minds and Winchendon Parks & Recreation. For more details, see www.facebook.com/events/943092435466533. At Winchendonm Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

Denis Cormier - Songs of Yesteryear

August 13, 10:45 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. Enjoy timeless tunes, familiar melodies, and a touch of nostalgia as Denis performs favorites from years past. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

Into the Floyd Concert

August 8, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Tickets \$20. Based in Central Massachusetts, Into The Floyd brings the music of Pink Floyd vividly to life, performing an authentic and expansive catalog spanning the band’s entire career—from their earliest psychedelic works of the 1960s through their final studio recordings. Get tickets at www.eventeny.com/events/into-the-floyd-2026-27905. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

Snowbound Summer Jam 2026

August 22, 1:00-9:00 p.m. The Wingmen, Fern & Friends, Blakkat Bone and Rusty Truck Saloon Band all Outdoors! Tickets: \$15 Advance & \$20 @ Door. Daltons Grille will be open all day! Raffles & Cash Bar available. Bring a lawn chair & some friends! At The Snowbound Club, 130 Baldwinville Rd, Winchendon.

Blues, Brew & BBQ

August 19, 3:00-9:00 p.m. Tickets \$15. Bring your appetite and enjoy BBQ favorites, local craft beer, and great company in a laid-back outdoor setting. Whether you’re a blues lover or just looking for a fantastic Saturday night, Blues, Brew & BBQ has something for everyone. Be sure to bring a lawn chair or blanket, gather your friends, and settle in for a night filled with music, food, and community.

3:00 PM - Memphis Kelly

5:00 PM - Ottomatic Slim & The Deadly Sins

7:00 PM - Wildcat O’Halloran Band

Get tickets at www.eventeny.com/events/blues-brew-bbq-2026-27915. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

Art, Music and Dance

Social Art Circle with GALA

August 4, 1:00-3:00 p.m. Explore a variety of art in a supportive social environment—a group with different skill levels who wish to learn, explore, laugh, share, connect, and be inspired in a safe, low key, non-intimidating space. Bring your portable works in progress or try and pick from the shared community art supplies we have on hand. Spend a few hours to be a part of our social art gathering with artists, friends and seniors! Share your project and make new friends. This is a self-led group, but there will be classroom monitors who will assist you. No cost, but registration required, at <https://form.jotform.com/253415023143949>. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

Art Critique with GALA

August 8, 10:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. Are you looking for encouragement and support from other artists? Bring up to 2 pieces of your artwork (finished or unfinished) to share with your circle of artist friends. The first 15 minutes will be social time, then we will go into sharing our artwork. You may bring snacks to share with the group. Free to all GALA members. New artists: first 2 classes are free. Janet Dupuis will help guide us during our time together. Email Janet to let her know that you will be joining us at Jandu516@gmail.com. For more info about GALA see www.galagardner.org. In the 1st floor Gallery of the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

Summer Reading Club - Pressed Flower Bookmarks

August 11, 6:00-7:30 p.m. Add a little nature to your reading! Join us at the library for a relaxing workshop where you’ll design your own beautifully pressed flower bookmark. We’ll provide all the materials, just bring your creativity. Limited space, registration required. Register at www.bealslibrary.org/summer, call 978-297-0300 or visit the library. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Sound Bites Community Open Mic

August 14, 6:30 p.m. Who doesn’t LOVE a GOOD Open Mic? Well we have just the one for you. Sign up at 6:00. Music Starts at 6:30. You get 15ish minutes or three songs. Just bring your instrument, some friends and have fun. Food & Beverages, Beer, Wine & Seltzers available through the Sunshine Cafe. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon. Wednesdays, 9:00-10:00 a.m. Come to the Winchendon Senior Center and learn how to play the Ukulele, no experience necessary! At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

Community Open Mic & Picnic in the Park

August 28, 2:00-8:00 p.m. FREE! This all-ages community event invites neighbors, friends, and families to gather outdoors for an evening of live local talent, including music, comedy, storytelling, and more. Whether you’re stepping up to the mic or enjoying the performances from the lawn, this is a great chance to connect, unwind, and celebrate community creativity. Bring a picnic, blanket, or lawn chair and enjoy the beautiful park setting while supporting local performers. Performers of all experience levels are welcome—sign-ups will be available on site. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

Recreation

Yoga With Chantal from Shadow Academy Wellness

Mondays, 4:30-5:30 p.m. With Chantal from Shadow Academy Wellness. Unwind, relax, and celebrate the beauty of yoga. All skill levels welcomed! Mats and Blocks are available, if needed. Free with a suggested donation. For more info, contact 978-297-0300, bealsmemoriallibrary@gmail.com or visit www.bealslibrary.org. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Beals Memorial Library
50 Pleasant St, Winchendon
978-297-0300
bealslibrary.org

Old Murdock Senior Center
52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon
978-297-3155
facebook.com/oldmurdock

The HUB / Winchendon CAC
5 Summer Dr, Winchendon
978-287-1667
www.the-hub.org
facebook.com/winchendoncac

UU Church of Winchendon
126 Central St, Winchendon
978-297-0554
uucw.ncmuuc.org

Immaculate Heart of Mary Church
52 Spruce St, Winchendon
978-297-0280
www.heartofmary.net

Winchendon American Legion Post #193
295 School St., Winchendon
978-297-0754

G.A.R. Park
Grove St and Murdock Ave,
Winchendon
Winchendon Community Park
86 Ingleside Dr, Winchendon
Winchendon Parks & Rec, 978-297-5410
facebook.com/Winchparksandrec

Murdock Middle High School
3 Memorial Dr, Winchendon
978-297-1256
www.winchendonk12.org

Clark Memorial YMCA
155 Central St
978-297-9622
www.theclarkymca.org

Winchendon News

RAILROAD ST continued from page 1

whether parking spaces would be assigned, whether a family had a teenager and so on who needed a car because there isn't much public transportation available. She also asked, what about visitor parking? Mr. Stengel said that there is some public parking on Railroad Street (the angled spaces right in front of the buildings).

Timothy Grace, senior engineer with Tighe & Bond who has been working on the project, came forward to say that "the applicant has met the minimum requirements" and "There is obviously a need for additional parking, especially in downtown areas."

There were more questions about increased sewer and water usage. Board member Amanda Phillips expressed skepticism that peak sewer use would only be 53.8 percent of capacity, considering that some families would use more water and send more wastewater down the drains than others. Mr. Stengel said that guidelines for municipal sewer systems, TR-16, are "less conservative" than the guidelines for private septic systems, known as Title V. The studies done compared the rate of flow throughout the town with their projections for this project. The sewer line from Railroad and Spruce Streets connect to Grove Street, which connects to Central Street, which are all 8-inch lines. Those meet a 15-inch line down by Beech Street.

They were calculating about 70 gallons per bedroom per day, totaling roughly 3,000 gallons per day from the project, he said. "The 3,000 gallons per day, roughly, that's generated by this development is a fraction of a percent once you get into the capacity of a 15 inch pipe."

After some further discussion of whether the estimates for the project were too low, Ms. Phillips asked about snow removal plans, referring to her experience with this at the Winchendon Housing Authority. "Where are you putting the snow if you have all these cars here?" she asked. (Side note: Winchendon typically has an on-street parking ban during the winter months.)

Mr. Stengel said, "On the site plan we do show snow storage areas surrounding the parking and the park. If the Board doesn't feel like we are providing enough snow storage, we can designate additional areas. I know that most of

the parking is curbed. We could provide areas where there is no curbing, we could provide snow storage area signs, so that there are designated areas for the snow to be moved during the winter." The snow storage areas are grassy lawn areas, not parking spaces.

Another Board member suggested that there were many large vacant buildings around town that at one time had used water and generated wastewater and now do not, so she didn't think the impact of this development was a concern. Wouldn't the lack of industrial/commercial usage that existed in the past offset new demands from new residential projects? Mr. Stengel said that in his opinion, he thought that it would, as long as the treatment plant was not currently at its limit for the town's needs. It was also clarified that the construction would have a Phase 1 and a Phase 2, with each one connecting to the sewer lines at different points, and they would be evaluating the effect of those connections as construction went on.

(Side note: some of the old vacant mill buildings, when built, originally released their wastewater directly into the Millers River, and when this changed, many of them were not operating at high capacity. The comparison may not be straightforward.)

Mr. Grace said, "when it comes to sewer analysis, there's a fair amount of hand waving involved." It was hard to know just how much wastewater a unit might generate per bedroom or per bathroom. He also explained that while the town knows where its infrastructure is, the actual condition of all the pipes involved is a variable. Some of them were installed in the late 1890s. Some of them are vitrified clay pipes which have probably cracked and that means some "infiltration" or leaking of groundwater into the pipes.

Board member Mary Harrington said, "I think that you need to look at exceeding the standard, because this has a potential to really overload our sewer system as it is already, and we need to go down the line and really do an analysis and figure out the actual condition of the pipes, not just the location, not when they would put in and all that, and I think that it may be impetus to upgrade, which would be a great partnership, since this is a huge undertaking, and I think it's

very positive, too. Look a little bit beyond just the minimum in parking and sewer system, a lot beyond the minimum."

Asked about whether any of the apartments would be affordable, Mr. Stengel and Mr. Garcia said they didn't really know what the owners planned to do, ultimately, with the project when it was completed. They had purchased the building to renovate it and make it habitable for people.

The Board opened the floor to comments from the public.

Resident Mike McRae came forward to say, "I did some research myself, and I found out that a 22 unit building can use upwards of 2300 gallons of water a day, that's 800,000 gallons a year. I also did more research, and found out that you can put 51 to 65 people in a 22 unit building, and they've said that you figure anywhere from 80 to 90 gallons of water a day per person, so you take the low end of that, you get 80 times 55 people, that's 4400 gallons of water times 365 that's 1.6 million gallons of water.

"Okay, one, do we have the storage capacity up on the hill to handle that extra volume? As a taxpayer, I don't feel like building another [water] tank for that, but if we have to, okay. But my point is the wastewater treatment plant. When we did the Lincoln Avenue extension, I checked with Roy Gilbert, and we were told by the town that we were near capacity at the wastewater treatment plant. That thing has never been built out. Okay, so you've got all that capacity that's not being figured into this thing. Okay, now if you take that much water or wastewater going into that facility down there, I wonder who's going to pay for that. Because you just can't go into a wastewater treatment plant and do 10 percent. If you're going to go in there and do anything, you're going to have to upgrade that facility from beginning to end, all up to local codes, state regulations, and everything else. That's huge money, and I've been in construction my whole life."

He had spent \$17,000 upgrading his own septic system, Mr. McRae said, and while he understood paying taxes for his fair share of Town Hall, the schools, and so on, he didn't want to pay for an upgrade to the treatment plant.

"Before you move on any of this stuff, we have people in town that work for the town, they know what

is the capacity of our water tanks, they know what the capacity is of the wastewater treatment plant," Mr. McRae went on. "We got to get them in here before you go any further, and find out what they got to say first...this thing scares the hell out of me. I don't have a problem with that development, but this other stuff, I got a real problem as to who's going to pay for this."

Kim Hayes, a resident of Grove Street, came forward to express concerns about "the Grove Street corridor." She said, "the Grove Street corridor is the main spine, the backbone of that whole neighborhood. It was interesting when they were talking about the parking, because I can tell you where the overflow parking is going to go, and it's going to go onto Grove Street. I have a couple of questions about the parking study, and I want to know if the parking study included the Grove Street Corridor, because that corridor is a local destination hub. It's not only used by residents, it's used by the whole town, whether it's G.A.R. Park, whether it's the elementary school, whether it is the [Catholic] Church. That is a busy line, and now it's turned into a speedway as people connect from Central Street to 12 North, so it is already being used for things it's not intended to be used for."

She went on, "We can't forget about the 44 units on the other end of Spruce Street, which is where the vets are going to be going. Now I'm a vet, so I'd like to welcome the vets, but they need to be safe coming down that corridor, and people from the Railroad Street development will be using that cut through Spruce Street. It's right there, and right at that intersection is where the kindergarten to second grade bus stops twice a day, and parents are already nuts about the speeding traffic that goes up that street. There are no sidewalks on the east side of it, and what is on the left is crumbling and can't be plowed. It turns into a skating rink, it freezes over where the water drainage comes in."

The design planning for the Central Street Reconstruction project mentioned how dangerous Grove Street is, Ms. Hayes said. In addition to all of this, when the Blair Square project begins, huge amounts of traffic will be taking Grove Street to get from Central to School Street and vice versa.

Turn to RAILROAD ST page 12

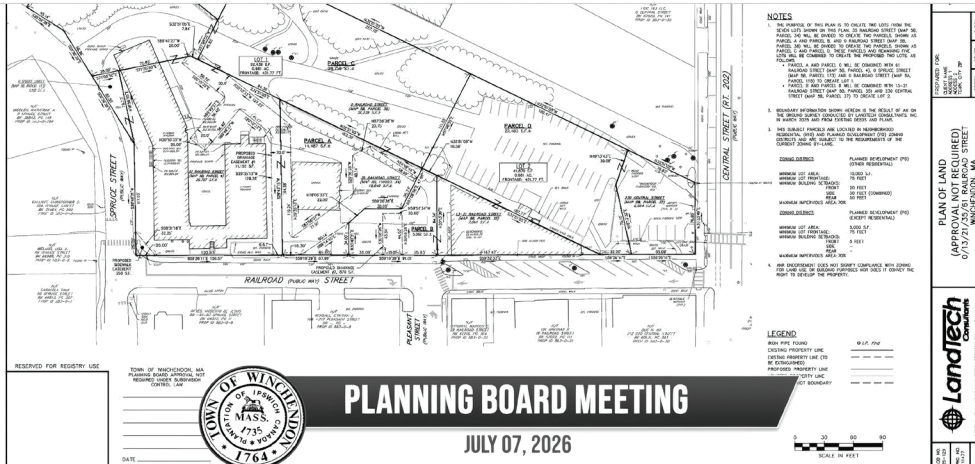
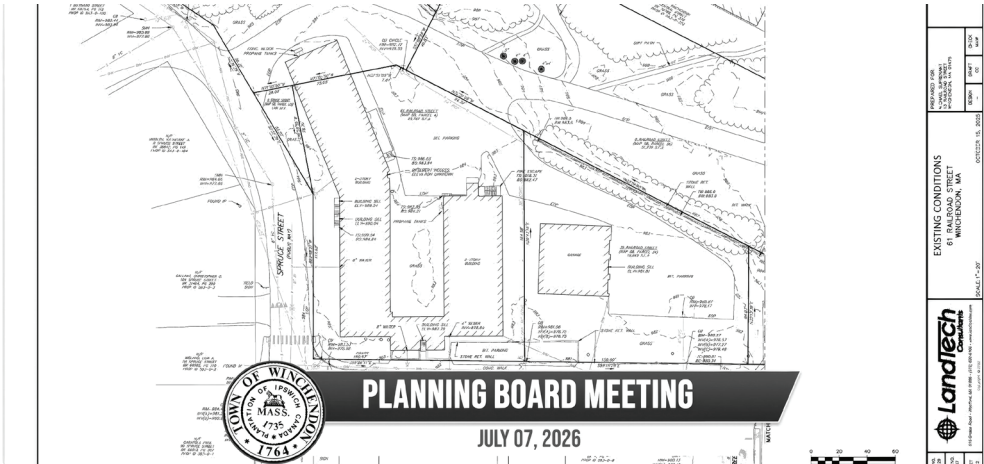


Image copyright Town of Winchendon

Winchendon News

RAILROAD ST

continued from page 11

"They're going to head right over into those interior streets that are not built for this. That's interstate traffic," she pointed out—School Street/Route 12 is a principal route to New Hampshire.

"I have high hopes for Winchendon," Ms. Hayes said. "I've been here for seven years. I think it's an awesome place. I think it sits in a great location. There is going to be money that's going to have to be spent from wherever. I know there's Complete Street money, I know there's other types of money out there that needs to be looked at, and you're right. I think this is a great opportunity for some private/public partnership in making sure that we do this, but we do it right, and we keep our kids safe."

Maynard Street resident Adrienne Tomasi came forward to ask about lead abatement—a new, 2026 state law bans sale of homes to families with children under the age of six unless they're certified lead-free, she said. She also asked how the project will handle trash management, since there is no municipal trash pickup in Winchendon. "What promises can you make to the community that were won't be trash everywhere?" she asked. Mr. Garcia said that the project will

have dumpsters for residents. "I live on the street. I've lived here for four years. I just simply do not think that this town has the capacity, the infrastructure, any of the money to foot the bill on these guys' development project based on the infrastructure that we have," Ms. Tomasi said.

Maynard Street resident Sharon Turcotte came forward to ask about the parking area entrance off of Spruce Street, saying that visitors and so on will end up parking on that street. She questioned whether there would be water flow off the property from leaking pipes, or melting snow, that would end up in the basements of homes in the neighborhood. She also questioned how often the dumpsters would be emptied and whether they would be visible and unsightly to the neighbors. Mr. Corbosiero said that by law, dumpsters must be enclosed with a privacy fence to keep them out of sight.

Asked again whether the units would be for the general market, low income people, seniors or so on, Mr. Garcia reiterated that the owners would make that decision depending on what worked for them financially. They might end up being condos, rather than rental units. "Right now it's a warehouse that's not occupied, so we want to

make it occupied, make it a nice place for people to live," Mr. Garcia said. "There's a crisis in the nation where there's not enough houses, so we want to make a positive impact to this town."

There were no further questions or comments from members of the Board or the public. The Board voted to continue the hearing to August 18, which would give everyone time to consider the extensive feedback and comments made to the plans so far.

Some background information:

The legal notice of the public hearing names Seed Amor Enterprises LLC as the owner of the property. According to documents filed with the Secretary of the Commonwealth Corporations Division, Seed Amor Enterprises LLC was organized on November 11, 2024. Its purpose is given as "purchase, renovation, management and sale of real estate" and its address is given as 13 Railroad Street, Winchendon, MA—in other words, the vacant property itself. This is typical of real estate LLCs of this type. The two managers of the LLC are Michael Surprenant and Andre DuBois.

The Town of Winchendon Assessor's database lists the owner of the properties as George J. Ladeau (also with a mailing address at 13

Railroad Street). The *Courier* took a dive into the Worcester County Registry of Deeds to see if there was updated information there. It turns out that George Ladeau remains the owner of record for the properties because he actually holds the mortgage for them. On November 14, 2024, Seed Amor Enterprises LLC purchased a bundle of linked parcels (as Mr. Stengel said at the beginning of his presentation), with addresses on Railroad, Central and Spruce Streets, for \$650,000. Seed Amor Enterprises LLC is responsible for all property taxes and other expenses.

Mr. DuBois also had an interest in Winchendon properties on Main Street and School Square, but his mortgages for those properties have been discharged, and his name is not recorded as being connected with them now. The School Square property is listed as owned by Clear Path Properties & Management, LLC. According to the Secretary of the Commonwealth Corporations Division, Clear Path Properties & Management, LLC was organized in 2022 to rehabilitate and manage rental properties. Its sole manager is listed as Michael Surprenant, with an address in Chelmsford, MA.

COMMUNICATIONS

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and start with a completely new committee, a new structure, a new charge? Would that be easier to do? Or do we work with what's currently in existence, and then make modifications?"

Ms. LaBrie said, "My initial thought for more discussion is it might be cleaner to start fresh. I did a quick Google search, different names for a town communication committee, and there's all kinds of options out there. But one that kind of struck me, I know that quite often in police departments, they have a PI officer, a public information officer, whose responsibilities are to talk to the people, get the word out, let let them know what's going on. So maybe a public information and communication committee or something like that. And I don't think what we have is enough to build off of. I think we need to start fresh."

Ms. LaBrie added that they should bring in the existing members to get their input.

Mr. Beauvais said, "I think it's worth inviting them. Not requiring their attendance, of course. You can't require it, but if we can, I'd certainly like to invite them to the next meeting, and if they choose to come, I would like to hear their thoughts. But do keep in mind we are all trying to work together here. But I wouldn't want that to prevent us from moving forward if nobody does choose to participate...so it is within our purview to make these changes."

This was the last agenda item and the meeting segued into the second Public Comment period. Renee Eldridge came forward to say, "So I wanted to, if I may, circle back to what you're all speaking about the Communications Committee. I did inquire with one of the current or present members, and

just it was shared, that there's really nothing to share, so I just want to give you that. And as far as reaching out to other people to be on this, I think youth are very important. You spoke to the AI, right? And if you're going to hold something at 4:00 that would give the youth the advantage to be there, so that's my recommendation. We always want youth at the table, and the seniors. I think they would love to be able to share what's going on, and we would love to have people that we've learned or know that have some type of hearing or visual disability to be able to contribute. I love the idea of having someone from each committee be a part of that because I think that's important."

The current, or at least, last elected, Chair of the Communications Committee is/was Inanna Arthen, who had attended the roundtable meeting of committee and board chairs the previous week. The agenda item about the Communications Committee was "a last minute addition" to the agenda, according to Mr. Beauvais, and the Communications Committee Chair was not notified about it sufficiently in advance of the meeting to prepare for an in-depth discussion of the Committee's last two years.

Ms. Arthen and Committee member Shaina Cunningham gave an update on the Communications Committee to the Board of Selectmen on Monday, September 8, 2025, although there was no follow-up to the presentation. The video of this meeting is on WinchendonTV at <https://winchendon.cablecast.tv/internetchannel/show/291?site=1> and the Communications Committee update starts at 0:21:00 on the video.

BOS Hear Updates on Mabardy Capping, Projects Around Town

by Inanna Arthen

At their meeting on Monday, July 13, the Board of Selectmen heard updates from the Town Manager and DPW Director about a number of projects happening around Winchendon.

Town Manager Bill McKinney gave the Board a timeline for the Mabardy landfill capping project off of River Street which has continued for several years now and which is reportedly close to its completion. Mr. McKinney said that W.L. French, the firm doing the

work on the site, should now be finished bringing in COMM97 fill for the capping. That should have finished by June 30, he said.

"It was asked when they are supposed to complete, and that date they've given me is November 17th," Mr. McKinney said. "So according to their schedule, which was as of June 30th last week, they would have drilled the gas venting wells for the rest of the month. They'll be installing the bedding layer, and then liner installation will be going on around the same

time. The geocomposite installation should be done by August 25th. The diversion berm installation should be done by October 27th, the topsoil installation November 10th, and the hydro seeding November 17th. So this is something we can put on the website as well to keep people informed of what's happening."

(The Mabardy landfill reports are found, rather counter-intuitively, under the Zoning Board of Appeals tab on the town website—and Clyde the AI does not tell you this. The Mabardy page is at

<https://www.townofwinchendon.com/418/Mabardy-2021-to-2026-Reports>, for those looking for it.)

Later in the meeting, Department of Public Works Director Patrick Wood was asked about a number of ongoing projects in town. Residents have noticed the street sweeping going on, Mr. Wood said. "There is a lot to it, so he's taking the time to show them how to operate the machine, where to hook up the water, where to dispose of

Ideas & Information

Gardening

Maintain the Flavor and Freshness of This Year's Harvest



Cool-season root vegetables, like carrots, can be left in the ground longer in cooler climates for an even sweeter flavor.

Photo courtesy of MelindaMyers.com

by Melinda Myers

Keep homegrown vegetables and those purchased at the farmer's market fresh and tasting their best. Selecting and harvesting vegetables at their peak and storing them properly will provide maximum flavor and nutritional value from every bite.

Check the garden regularly and harvest vegetables as recommended for the best flavor and nutritional value. Look for harvesting guidelines from reliable sources like your local extension service.

Harvest ripe vegetables early in the morning for the best quality and when the plants are dry to avoid spreading disease. Take a basket or container large enough to accommodate the harvest to minimize stacking that can lead to bruising that shortens the storage life. Use a knife, snips or pruners for harvesting vegetables that can't easily be removed from the plant. You'll reduce the risk of damaging the plant during harvest. Move the harvest to a cool, shaded location or properly store to extend its shelf life.

When purchasing fresh vegetables from the farmer's market, buy what will be consumed or preserved in the next few days. Canning, freezing and dehydrating excess produce is a great way to enjoy vegetables long after the harvest season has passed.

Regular harvesting keeps the plant producing. Do remove and compost those past their prime. Leaving them in the garden to rot attracts unwanted insects and increases the risk of disease.

Wait to wash vegetables until right before preparation. In the meantime, store them properly to help extend their shelf life. Onions, garlic, white and sweet potatoes and tomatoes are best stored out of the refrigerator. Onions and garlic lose their crispness; tomatoes turn mealy and they all can develop unsavory flavor and texture when exposed to cold temperatures. Store lettuce, greens, broccoli and its relatives, root crops and similar vegetables in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Placing vegetables in perforated plastic bags provides cold moist conditions for the short term. Don't use unperforated sealed bags that create too much humidity and condensation that can lead to mold and bacterial growth.

Thoroughly wash and rinse vegetables under running water right before preparation to remove dirt and pesticide residue. Use a small brush for potatoes, cucumbers or other vegetables with skins that contain nutrients and fiber. If you opt to immerse the vegetables in water, use a clean bowl as your sink drain may harbor microorganisms.

For longer term storage, match the storage temperature and humidity to the vegetables. Some vegetables like lettuce, other greens, and leeks prefer 32 to 41 degrees F and high humidity. Others, like cucumbers, snap beans and peppers, prefer a bit warmer temperatures, 45 to 55 degrees F and humid conditions. Pumpkins, winter squash and potatoes prefer a bit warmer temperatures at 50 to 60 degrees and lower humidity. Store dry garlic and onions at room temperature (65 to 70 degrees F) and out of direct sunlight.

Carrots, turnips, and parsnips are all cool-season root vegetables that thrive in cooler soil temperatures and can be left in the garden longer for an even sweeter flavor. Spread mulch around these plantings once the soil around the plants is cool to protect the plants from temperature extremes

and make winter harvesting much easier. Finish harvesting before the ground freezes and damages the roots.

Enjoy the flavor and nutritional benefits fresh-from-the-garden vegetables provide. Then extend these benefits with proper handling and storage.

Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, including The Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition and Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" instant video series and the nationally-syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and her website is www.MelindaMyers.com.

Financial Focus®

Debunking five common Social Security myths

Social Security is often one of the most important income sources in retirement. Yet widespread myths about how it works can lead to confusion, unnecessary worry and poor planning decisions. Here's the truth behind five of the most common misconceptions.

Myth 1: Social Security is going broke. You've probably heard this one, but the full picture is more nuanced. According to the 2026 Social Security Board of Trustees Report, if Congress does nothing, the program would need to reduce benefits starting in 2032, paying roughly 78 cents for every dollar owed.

But that's just one scenario. Congress could raise the combined payroll tax from 12.4% to 16.65%, which the trustees estimate would secure full benefits through 2100. Other options include eliminating the earnings cap subject to payroll tax or adjusting retirement ages. Lawmakers have tools to address this.

Myth 2: Social Security will cover all your retirement needs. Think of Social Security as a financial foundation, not the full building. According to the Social Security Administration, benefits replace only about 40% of pre-retirement income for a median earner. That means you'll likely need to account for most of your retirement income yourself. Building a strong personal savings strategy now can help close that gap.

Myth 3: You lose benefits permanently if you keep working. Not true. Social Security does have an "earnings test" that can temporarily reduce benefits for people who claim early and keep working. If your earnings exceed a set annual cap—which changes each year—Social Security will withhold a portion of your benefits. But once you reach full retirement age, the Social Security Administration adjusts your monthly check higher to repay those withheld amounts over time.

Myth 4: An ex-spouse's benefits come out of your own. If you were married for at least 10 years and are currently unmarried, your former spouse may be eligible to collect on your earnings record, or you may be able to collect on theirs. Divorced spouse benefits can be up to 50% of the other person's full retirement benefit. But those payments don't affect yours. Your monthly benefit is not reduced by anything paid to an ex-spouse or even a current spouse.

Myth 5: Social Security benefits are no longer taxed. Recent legislation caused some confusion here. The One Big Beautiful Bill Act did not eliminate taxes on Social Security benefits. If your combined income exceeds certain thresholds, you'll still owe taxes on a portion of your benefits.

The law also created a temporary deduction (available through 2028) for people 65 and older. Eligible taxpayers can deduct \$6,000 per qualifying filer if their modified adjusted gross income is \$75,000 or less for singles or \$150,000 for couples. The deduction phases out at \$175,000 for singles and \$250,000 for joint filers.

The more you understand Social Security, the more control you have over your retirement outcome. Grounding your decisions in facts rather than assumptions can make a meaningful difference in your long-term financial security.



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News, events, police logs, obituaries, community directory
and archives of every previous issue back to September, 2019
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Uploaded every
Thursday night

Winchendon News

CUMMINGS RD
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The floor was opened to members of the public. The first speaker introduced himself as Jeffrey Allen Bartley and said he was a carpenter who had been doing a lot of work on the 10 Cummings Road house. He described replacing walls and supports that were completely rotted out because previous owners did a lot of “Mickey Mouse” DIY. He asked permission to read into the record a letter from Robert Grady. The letter in part said,

“I promise to rent these apartments to local families, including my son. Neighbors were misled by a woman I refused to rent one of the units to. She told them that I plan to move men from my sober houses up there. I own several rental properties in town. I have four sober homes on Walnut Street, and several two-families around town. I promised the town that I would only maintain sober homes on Walnut Street. I’ve kept my word. In every other home I own, I rent to families. I have offered to accept conditions to be included on the special permit, just to prove my sincerity. You can add a clause that says that whichever one of these units becomes vacant, I will advertise the unit for 30 days, then I will allow the same members of each household on Cummings Road to review the rental applicants, they will each get a vote and whichever applicant gets the most votes, will get the unit.

“I plan to do the same thing once I’ve renovated my Front Street property building, wwhich will have 16 to 20 units, and the Goodspeed property, which will have 40 to 60 units. I plan to work with some of the CAC staff to better ensure that those most in need of housing get these units. What apparently isn’t understood by the town’s residents is that by law up to five unrelated adults can occupy a housing unit. If this special permit is in fact denied, I could place five people on the first floor unit. I also have the 2.5 acres, besides this property, and plan to build a home there that I could legally do the same with. I am not going to do that, because I’ve given my word to all of you that I won’t. I’m only looking to create as many nice, clean, and safe and affordable housing units as possible in town. The town, and for that matter, the Commonwealth, are in need of housing. I ask that you please allow me to continue to work to contribute to fixing this problem. Between the Front Street property and Goodspeed, I will be investing more than \$4 million into affordable housing options in town.

“This is similar to last year, when you were all misled and all you accomplished was to keep a supermarket from opening on Summer Street. This has never been about money. I care only to break even, but most of all to contribute to a town that I have loved my entire life. Instead of working so hard to prevent me from accomplishing what I am trying to do, why not instead support me? Let me show you that all I want is to make Winchendon the best it can be. When I bought the Cummings Road home, it was deplorable. The previous family were running an illegal animal hospice, and we have eradicated all the home’s issues, and once completed, it will be beautiful.”

Cummings Road resident Dakota Brouillard came forward to argue at length that the increased traffic from two families and additional vehicles in the house would create “significant traffic changes.” The house is “right in the middle” of Cummings Road, not at the ends where new housing is being built, and the road is “barely holding together” and is “not kept up.” It’s also a tight S-bend in the road at that point.

Cummings Road resident Jason Dack came forward to say that he bought a \$400,000 home in that neighborhood because it was “serene, peaceful, quiet,” and he was confident that the area would always be single-family homes. “If I wanted to live in an area with multifamily dwellings, I would have moved to an area that had those existing, so I feel like I’m getting duped right now. My property value will go down, traffic will increase, and as the gentleman back there said, possible undesirables may or may not move in.” He went on, “I like where I live. I like this town. I was on the fire department in early 2000s. I was an EMT here. I’ve coached Little League, I’ve coached Dek Hockey. I’m 24 years law enforcement. I’m a good citizen. I pay my taxes. I will not be happy if you allow a two-family dwelling across the street from me. That’s the potential of housing people that I have to see every day at work. I don’t want to see them when I’m outside my house, and I know there are little kids in my neighborhood, and the potential is there to have that happen, and I will not be okay with that, and my house will be up for sale, and you’ll lose another taxpayer.” The new stairs

PROJECTS
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everything. I think they started on Elmwood. They did some of Maple last week, and they’re going to be targeting this week, they’re going to get down by the bridge by Beech Street, get that cleaned up, and they have their routes that they’re going to be doing throughout the rest of the year. It’s a long process. I will share with you same thing that they shared with me, that the bridge in

front of Beech Street constantly gets sand. So we we recognize that we’re going to do it once, might look good for a few days, after a couple rainstorms, we might go back to looking what it is. We’ll come back to it as soon as we can, but we do want to do the street sweeping around town. Makes it look look nice, and we also want to restripe our center lines and our fog lines this year as well. The roads need it, and they definitely need to be swept before

and deck in back are very visible and “not a pretty sight,” he said.

Cummings Road resident Brielle Bailey came forward to ask about the toxic materials such as asbestos and lead that would have to be removed from a 1790 house, and whether those would be getting into people’s wells. She also spoke about the issues with traffic on the road and parking on the property.

Cummings Road resident Tracy Keeney came forward to state that occupants of the second floor apartment would be able to see into all their neighbors’ yards from the “gigantic” deck, and possibly into their windows.

Resident Jennie LeBlanc came forward to say that she was familiar with the house from decades ago when she was a child in the neighborhood and called it “the Hoyt house” (“she was the lady that gave me raisins on Halloween”). She had seen the inside of the house and didn’t see how it could be converted into two apartments. The rooms are small, she said, and she would not want to be raising kids in a house that was right on the edge of the road.

Resident Sharon Ball then came forward with a different perspective. “I came to you this evening because I feel the need to help you better understand the matter at hand,” she said. “I met Bob Grady over the phone quite a few months ago, when he answered an ad that I placed to sell some of my husband’s tools. While speaking, I told Bobby that I recently lost my husband of 55 years, and that I was going to be selling my home and downsizing. He asked me where I’d be relocating to, and I told him the struggle I was having finding some new property, and he suggested I consider Winchendon, and we arranged for me to look at property he owns on Walnut Street. The apartment was beautiful, it’s very old, but it’s everything I need, and it’s just the right size. The apartment was to be a sober unit, and it was in a home that he had recently purchased...I was saddened to hear that the rent would be more than I could afford, at which, without hesitation, Bobby told me he would take the \$700 monthly loss rather than have me end up in a bad housing situation, and he told me that the apartment was mine for the rest of my life, and that I never again would have to worry about housing.

“Additionally, he explained how his sober homes operated, and told me why it was important to him to offer back to the community that he loved so much. He further told me how the sober men living in sober homes did volunteer work in the community, and for me too. When it was time to move, they would handle everything using some of Bobby’s trucks, and they did. They cleaned out my cellar and my garage, they packed things for me, they washed my kitchen floor, because my bursitis was so bad then, too. The men and women in the sober home treated me with the utmost respect... It’s been a long time since I’ve felt so safe and cared for. Where I lived, there were drug dealers on two sides of my property in Westminster.”

Ms. Ball said that people had been misled, that not all the men in the sober homes were convicted of sexual offenses, or of anything at all. “They all share one thing, a desire to put their drug and alcohol misuse lifestyles behind them,” she said. “The next thing I’d like to point out is that Bobby never had any intention of moving any of these men, or any future men seeking sober occupancy, to Cummings Road, and I’ve known that since last year, because we’ve talked over and over about it.” She stated that Robert Grady had been smeared by people with ulterior motives who spread lies about him.

The last resident to come forward was Tina Durand, who said she lived in one of Robert Grady’s properties and spoke strongly in his defense.

There was more discussion with Eric Grady about parking and where parking spaces would be on the property, traffic impact from multiple vehicles, landscaping, and ways to ensure neighbors’ privacy from the back deck of the house. The Board decided that they needed to make a site visit to the property before they made a final determination. Mr. Grady said that he would need to check with the state and their insurer due to some of the materials being remediated from the property – access was strictly limited for safety and liability reasons. Mr. Grady also brought up again concerns about his own safety and the death threats that had been made, and Ms. Carvill said they would request an escort from Winchendon PD.

The Board voted to continue the hearing to August 19, by which time they would have made the site visit and would hopefully be able to make a determination.

we invest some money into getting the line stripes.”

Work is proceeding with the dangerous meeting of roads at the Ash Street, Water Street, and Spring Street intersection. The DPW wants to be sure that the positioning of lines and stop signs makes the best sense before they’re put down permanently. “It’s going to end up having—I don’t know if you can picture it—but I think the biggest change is that there’s going to be

a right-hand turn in a straight lane as you’re coming off of Spring and heading down Ash, so the whole idea is to just channelize drivers and keep it as narrow as we can to slow down speeds through the intersection,” he said.

Board Chair Andrew Beauvais said that he thought the best solution for that intersection would be a rotary, or a roundabout as Mr.

Community Notice Board

Town Committee Monthly Meetings by Week All Meetings in Town Hall

week	MON	TUE	WED	THUR
1st	Board of Health 10:00am	Planning Board 6:00pm Parks & Rec Commission 6:30pm		School Committee 6:00pm
2nd	Board of Selectmen 6:30pm	Finance Committee 7:00pm	Economic Development Task Force 5:30pm Agricultural Commission 7:00pm	Conservation Commission 6:00pm
3rd	Winchendon Redevelopment Authority 5:00pm	Planning Board 6:00pm Parks & Rec Commission 6:30pm	Zoning Board of Appeals 7:00pm	School Committee 6:00pm
4th	Board of Selectmen 6:30pm		Economic Development Task Force 5:30pm	

Agendas, minutes and meeting recordings available on the Town website at www.townofwinchendon.com/129/AGENDAS-MINUTES, as well as on the pages for each Board or Committee.

Boards may cancel or change times for meetings, or add extra meetings, based on specific business at hand. Check the Town Meetings Calendar on the town website, www.townofwinchendon.com.

Toy Town Trolley Now Running Later on Saturdays!

We’ve expanded service hours to help more Winchendon residents—especially those in need of transportation to warming centers, shelters, and essential services.

New Saturday Hours are 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Book ahead! Saturday rides must be scheduled by 3:00 p.m. on Friday.

Door-to-door rides within Winchendon are available for:

- Medical appointments
- Grocery shopping
- Shelter and warming center access
- Pharmacy trips
- And more

Call (978) 297-8089 or email communityconnector@winchendon-cac.org.

Prefer to book with your phone? Download the Community Connector app at www.townofwinchendon.com/577/Get-the-App

Let your neighbors know! This expanded schedule helps ensure safe, reliable transportation for those who need it most — especially during colder weather.

Senior Workoff Program Applications for FY26 Available on Town Website

Applications for the Senior Property Tax Work-Off program for FY26 (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026) are now available at www.townofwinchendon.com/civicalerts.aspx?aid=40.

This program allows eligible senior citizens to do odd jobs for the town in exchange for an offset in their property taxes. The credit is equivalent to \$15 per hour for a maximum of \$1,100 per household during the fiscal year.

To qualify, a senior must be at least 60 years old, own and occupy a home in Winchendon, have an annual income of less than \$40,150 if single or a combined household income of less than \$45,900 if married, have transportation to work, and be able to work during regular business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Applications for the program are now available in the Town Manager’s office and on the town website at <https://www.townofwinchendon.com/documentcenter/view/226>, and will be accepted until the ten (10) slots are filled. There are different types of positions that are available depending on preference and qualifications of the resident and the needs of each department.

Types of past and current positions have been: Custodial services, clerical help for both School & Town, Library Aides, Senior Center Aides, Cable Station Operator, Bike Path Clean up, Painting, Light Outdoor Work and Classroom Volunteers.

Please contact the Town Manager’s Office at (978) 297-5431 or ddennis@winchendon-ma.gov for more information or if you need an application mailed to you.

Farmers, Homesteaders, Crafters: Vending Spots Still Open for the 2026 Winchendon Farmers Market!

If you are a farmer, producer, homesteader or crafter and would like to have a table at the Winchendon Farmers Market, there’s still space available! The 2026 season will begin on May 16, and the Market sets up every Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at The HUB, 5 Summer Drive. The Market is rain or shine—in inclement weather it moves inside The HUB, which is open on Saturdays. The application form to sign up is at <https://www.winchendonfarmersmarket.org>.

Winchendon Lions Want to Welcome You!

The Winchendon Lions meet at the Winchendon American Legion Post 193, 295 School St., downstairs hall, 7:00 p.m.

Meetings are on the third Tuesday of each month, September through June. Dues are used for all Administrative cost, which is why we can say “All money received through fundraisers go back to the community, eye research, or other natural disasters around the world!”

Feel free to join us and try it out. We would love to see you!

If you have any questions feel free to call Joni 978-297-2753. Please leave a message if no answer!

“WHERE THERE’S A NEED, THERE IS A LION”

No Soliciting, This is Winchendon!

Please be advised that the Board of Selectmen has issued a moratorium on solicitation permits. Therefore, no solicitation permits are being issued so anyone who tries to solicit is in violation of Town bylaws. Please call the police non-emergency number at 978-297-1212 to report.

Volunteers Needed for Town Committees

Winchendon needs citizens who would like to serve on several different town committees:

- Agricultural Commission
- Audit Committee

Anyone interested in being appointed to a committee should send a letter of interest to Deb Dennis in the Town Manager’s office, at ddennis@winchendon-ma.gov.

Details about committees may be found on the town website at <https://www.townofwinchendon.com/260/BOARDS-COMMITTEES>. Interested persons may also attend a meeting of the committee or contact the current Chair of the committee.

Toy Town FYIs

Transfer Station Hours

Wednesday 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. (June 1 to September 30)
Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Saturday 8:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m.
653 River Street
978-297-0395
Sticker price: \$95 (\$25 for additional stickers)
Pay-As-You-Throw bags required
33-gallon, \$5.25 per bag, 16-gallon, \$3.25 per bag as of July 1, 2026
2026-2027 Transfer Station sticker now on sale in Town Hall and at the Transfer Station.

Is Your House Number Clearly Visible from the Street?

The Winchendon Fire Department reminds all residents to make sure their house number is clearly visible for first responders who may need to find you. Numbers should be at least four inches high and facing the street, with lighting if possible. Put numbers on a contrasting background so they will stand out. If your driveway is long, put the number on a mailbox or pole on the street or at the end of driveway, facing in both directions. (Reflective numbers are helpful.) Check your house numbers to make sure foliage has not grown up in front of them without your being aware of it.

Report a Pothole to the DPW

You can report potholes directly to the DPW using this form on the town website: www.townofwinchendon.com/FormCenter/Public-Works-6/Report-a-Pothole-50

Questions or Concerns? Email the Town Manager!

A one-click email form has been added to the town website for all residents who would like to contact the Town Manager with concerns and questions about things happening in the community. The direct link is: www.townofwinchendon.com/506/



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Winchendon News

Resident Lauren Raps Appointed to Board of Health

by Inanna Arthen

At a joint meeting of the Board of Health and Board of Selectmen on Monday, July 13, resident Lauren Raps was interviewed for and appointed to the last open seat on what is one of the most important town boards, but one which has been challenging to keep filled. A current staffer at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Ms. Raps brings an impressive set of skills and experience to the BOH.

BOH Chair Monique Connor began the questioning, asking if Ms. Raps would be able to make the Board's meeting time of 10:00 a.m. on Mondays. Ms. Raps said that she teleworks most days and has a fairly flexible schedule. Asked what she envisions doing as part of the Board, Ms. Raps said, "I am a newer resident of Winchendon. I moved here about eight months ago, so I am still very much getting my groundings and my bearings of all the things in my new home and everything like that. So really, just learning to work with you all as the Board and take in everything that this cute little Toy Town has to offer."

BOH member Barbara Zisk asked if Ms. Raps would be available if there was a health emergency in town. Ms. Raps replied, "Yep. So, as part of my duties at the Mass Department of Public Health, I do work in the Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management, OPEM. So that does involve dealing with emergencies as they arise and everything like that. But part of that is also being part of a 12-member duty officer team. So if there was an emergency that was super local to my hometown, I do anticipate being able to swap out with somebody that would not have an emergency as local and be able to deal with that."

Board of Selectmen member Audrey LaBrie asked how Ms. Raps saw her background and expertise applying to the Winchendon BOH.

Ms. Raps said, "So my current role at DPH, I serve as a regional and logistics inventory coordinator. So it is very much dealing with all of the behind-the-scenes items and things and stuff that has amassed, particularly after COVID. But prior to that, my office did a little bit of a restructuring, and previous to my current role, I was a regional coordinator. So I was actually able to spend time with I think, 71 communities down in the southeast region of Massachusetts, working directly with their local boards of health, and getting a very good understanding what the structure of local health looks like in Massachusetts and some of the direct challenges that come with local health and all of that. So I do think that has prepared me to have a good understanding as to the various things that arise at the local level."

Ms. LaBrie asked, "Should you be appointed to the Board of Health, do you foresee any potential conflict of interest between something that may happen at the state level versus something

that's going to affect us directly? And how would you handle that?"

"I think you know, as a state employee, they do talk quite extensively about conflicts of interest and things like that," Ms. Raps said. "So I think if there was ever a question about a potential conflict of interest, I can always defer to the Mass conflict of interest line that they do have available, and take their legal advice on things like that, and defer to that aspect. But definitely, understand that certain issues may arise or things like that. But absolutely willing to kind of tackle them as they might occur."

BOS member Erika Eitland asked, "what is your experience working with data, public health data, and understanding how to make some of the decisions we want to? How can we be more responsive to that and what's available, especially for a town like Winchendon?"

"I think public health data is really the backbone of a lot of things in public health," Ms. Raps said. "We always like to say it: public health is science focused and data-backed and everything like that. And I think one of the biggest things available is looking at the various different reports and things that are available through the state level, and seeing how we can apply it here to our town, and really being able to integrate some of that data and seeing how we can apply it at the local level, and really have a good understanding as to how some decisions that are being made, maybe at the state level or even at the federal level, how that can impact us down here at the local level."

Ms. Eitland asked how Ms. Raps saw the issue of grants and funding, especially for parts of Massachusetts outside of the "inner ring" of 495 that gets most of the state gravy. Ms. Raps said, "I think grants perspective is a huge thing because funding is where things really always boil down to, right? Especially in times of funding crunches. So I think definitely evaluating what grants are available is an amazing option. But I think also looking into what other resources are available at the regional level, that we might not be tapping into currently, or what could we possibly expand upon? What partnerships could we form, and kind of various things like that. So I think that those are all absolutely things that we can look into."

Asked for examples, she went on, "I think a really good example, and I will be transparent in saying that because I did not previously work in the central area, or we like to call it in DPH, in the Worcester region. I don't have a very clear understanding of everything, but I will say that we have structures in emergency preparedness called the HMCCs, the Health and Medical Coordinating Coalitions, and they do provide various resources, and that is how the emergency preparedness funding is distributed at the local



Lauren Raps responds to questions from the BOH and BOS

Photo copyright Town of Winchendon

level. And with that, there are various things like caches of supplies and things like that. So I think there are various things. Just kind of being aware of it is some of the biggest challenges, and you know, not even knowing that those things are there. So I think that's one of the things that I've definitely been thinking about."

Ms. Eitland asked, "One thing that this town is, I think, really pushing hard for is transparency and communications. I think nothing is more important than, especially for Board of Health, how that's impacting families, especially in a community where intergenerationally we know that there's different needs across the entire spectrum. So I'm curious from your perspective, how would you approach communicating with this community? Are there strategies you've seen that have worked well in Southeast Region? How are you going to help this Board of Health be transparent and one with the community?"

Ms. Raps replied, "I think having a better understanding as to what we feel like our communication barriers are would be really helpful in going into that conversation more. But I think tapping into some of the existing local resources that we have, like at The HUB, at the YMCA, and just really making our messages aware and things like you know, do you guys know that we have a meeting today? And I know there's a lot of notice put out there and everything like that. And not everybody has time to go to meetings. But what other ways can we look at our messaging and what are we trying to get out there? Would be really great to really figure out."

Ms. Raps was asked if she had any questions, and she did not. Both Boards voted to nominate and appoint Ms. Raps to the Board of Health. As she is filling a vacated seat, her term will expire with the 2027 Town Election, so she will need to pull nomination papers and run for a full term at that time if she chooses to do so.

PROJECTS

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Wood said engineers call them. Mr. Wood agreed, saying, "There's a huge difference, but yeah, there are a lot of benefits, and I think the biggest pushback to them is just that they're new, and people, we're all hesitant to new things, but the data is out there, and the data supports that they do a lot of traffic calming. It reduces queues. It creates gaps in traffic so that people can get out. Collisions are a lot less. T-bones aren't a thing with roundabouts. So someday, if we ever need it,

we can look into it." They do take up a lot of real estate, he said, being at least 15 to 20 feet in diameter. "Otherwise, we'd probably see them everywhere."

Mr. Beauvais said that a roundabout there would help beautify that "gateway" into town.

Mr. Wood also said, "The sidewalk project in front of the school, it's going on right now at G.A.R. Park. We're putting sidewalks around the edges of G.A.R. that don't have sidewalks. We're extending sidewalks from the school up Murdock, and then we're going

to jump over, I think it's Pearl Street to Jackson Ave, where there are some missing sidewalks as well. So all of Jackson Street will have new sidewalks too, and this was part of the Complete Streets grant that we received two years ago."

Board member Erika Eitland said that she felt Water Street needed a sidewalk, because people come down High Street and are looking to connect with the walking trail, and they can no longer walk over the Front Street Bridge.

Mr. Wood said, "We can look at that. We're always trying to fill the

gaps in the sidewalk network. I'm not a huge fan, I was telling Bill this earlier, I'm not a huge fan of adding a ton of sidewalks around town. I'd rather fix up the sidewalks that we have. So it should be noted that there's no town funds being put into the new sidewalks that are going on at G.A.R. Park and Jackson Ave. That was a gift from Complete Streets for us. Second to that is filling in gaps in our sidewalk connectivity. So that would be something that we'd be very interested in doing."

The September print edition of The Winchendon Courier will go to press on Tuesday, August 25 at noon.

Content for that edition must be received by the publisher by Sunday, August 23.