

Local yokel

(n.) a country folk living in a quaint neighborhood community

West
Stockbridge
August
2021



Misty morning, West Center Road.
Photo by Emily Weiland

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 2005


Join us for the annual
West Stockbridge



Card Pond Party

Postponed to Sunday, August 1st
11am-1pm


Enjoy hotdogs, chips, watermelon, and more! This is a **FREE** community event brought to you by West Stockbridge Parks & Recreation. Bring your own chair or picnic blanket.

BOOK SALE!


Sponsored by the Friends of the
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Saturday, August 28, 9 am–5 pm
Town Offices Gymnasium,
21 State Line Road, West Stockbridge



A select offering of fiction, nonfiction, children's books, and cookbooks, including the beautiful Dudney collection

No book donations accepted this year—thanks!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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HAPPY MANY RETURNS AND LOTS OF LOVE

The West Stockbridge Historical Society presents:

WEST STOCKBRIDGE JAZZ SERIES



NED ROTHENBERG

Saturday, 25 September 2021
8:00 PM
The Old Town Hall at 9 Main St
Tickets: \$35
weststockbridgehistory.org

Select Board Meeting Minutes

[Editor's note: At the town administrator's request, the Select Board minutes here are reprinted verbatim with no editing of text. Official board minutes are available at the West Stockbridge Public Library and on the town website, <https://www.weststockbridge-ma.gov/>. Select Board meetings are on Zoom and may be viewed by clicking on the link in the meeting agenda posted on the town website calendar. Residents can receive e-mail notification of town events and meeting agendas by subscribing at <http://weststockbridgema.virtualltownhall.net/subscriber>].

Select Board Special Meeting Minutes Meeting via Zoom June 2, 2021

Open Meeting

Quorum present: Eric Shimelonis, Select Board Chair, Roger Kavanagh and Kathleen Keresey, Select Board Members, and Marie Ryan, Town Administrator.

Others in Attendance: Curt Wilton, Director of Public Works and Marc Portieri, Police Chief

Eric called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and announced the Board Members present.

This meeting is to discuss an issue of access to Harris Street via Merritt Way by property owners, which involves Amy Brentano, owner of the Foundry and Truc Nguyen, owner of The Orient Express.

Eric reported that Amy Brentano has recently reached out to Truc Nguyen with a proposal to allow the road to be open during all Foundry events; without interruption. Such an agreement is a private matter between the two property owners.

Eric pointed out that there have been a multitude of falsehoods circulating on this issue. He encouraged everyone to dig deeper before believing rumors or passing judgement on this issue, as it is a complex one. The Select Board doesn't have the legal latitude to regulate businesses follow the law.

Eric explained that prescriptive easements are established through a court process. None has ever been established on the property at # 2 Harris Street. Around 1995 when the Main Street bridge to Harris Street was closed down, Ed Merritt was approached about an easement for what is now known as Merritt Way, but no agreement was reached between he and the town at that time, and none was pursued by the town in the intervening years.

This Board must follow the law first, but will always use what latitude we have to support town businesses, and we will try to go above and beyond to be of assistance to all. On this particular issue, this Board has put in many hours of research and diplomacy, and has volunteered a number of solutions in an effort to help this difficult situation.

Eric reiterated that the planners in the town have been aware of the problems in our downtown street grid for some time, and that the Select Board has completed the important first step of finalizing a purchase agreement with National Grid for the land covering Moscow Road. The next step, and potential long-term and permanent solution to the Harris Street problem is the proposed *Harris Street Extension*.

Roger believes that the Town should work to fix the issue that has been allowed to sit dormant for years waiting for an occurrence. He made the following motion:

The Board will instruct the West Stockbridge Town Counsel to immediately begin the process of making the assumed right of way between Harris Street and Center Street into a legal and permanent right of way using whatever legal means necessary to make that happen.

Kathleen requested Roger repeat his motion, which he did. Kathleen asked Roger if he meant the right of way being Merritt Way, and he responded yes. Roger stated that the current ongoing negotiation is between two private property owners and his motion has to do with an assumed right of way that needs to be made permanent and legal. He feels it is the Town's obligation to take care of this right away.

The motion failed to get a second from either Kathleen or Eric.

Eric stated that would like to have the feasibility study of the *Harris Street Extension* completed first. It's a better solution, as it will not bifurcate a business owner's private property in half, in a prime location and at a critical placement. The *Extension* would also solve the issue of having Harris Street connected to a Town road. If it isn't somehow feasible to do the *Extension*, then perhaps the Board could re-visit Merritt Way as a solution, but he would like this to be a good-faith negotiation and not a court process.

Roger does not agree with this and feels the need for the Town to act now and get the issue clarified. The Town started this and now should fix this so it is a legal and permanent right of way. He said that Town waiting to get this completed is like kicking the can down the road. Roger agrees that the Harris Street extension is a great idea but it does not solve the right of way issue.

...continued on page 5



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2021 Annual Appointments

Approved by Select Board on June 28, 2021

Office		Term Expires	Length of Term
Town Treasurer	Karen Williams	2024	3 Years
Deputy Collector	Arthur Jones Inc.	2022	1 Year
Building Inspector	Brian Duval	2022	1 Year
Zoning Enforcement	Brian Duval	2022	1 Year
Animal Control Officer	John Drake	2022	1 Year
Veterans Agent	Laurie Hils	2022	1 Year
Gas Inspector	Robert Gennari	2022	1 Year
Oil Inspector	Larry Morse	2022	1 Year
Plumbing Inspector	Robert Gennari	2022	1 Year
Asst Plumbing Inspector	Bob Krupski	2022	1 Year
Wire Inspector	Karl Cooper	2022	1 Year
Asst Wire Inspector	Ted Piontek	2022	1 Year
Asst Wire Inspector	Lawrence Ray	2022	1 Year
Town Counsel	Kopelman & Paige	2022	1 Year
Smoke/Fire Alarm Inspector	Steve Traver	2022	1 Year
Board of Registrars	Ronni Barrett	2024	3 Years
Conservation Commission	Kathy Korte	2024	3 Years
	Lori Rose	2024	3 Years
Conservation Com Assoc	Tricia Hickey	2022	1 Year
Official Weighers	Marc Portieri	2022	1 Year
	Faith Libardi	2022	1 Year
Veterans Grave Officer	Wayne Cooper	2022	1 Year
ZBA Alternates	Elizabeth Digrigoli	2022	1 Year
	Thom Lipiczky	2022	1 Year
	Vacancy	2022	1 Year
Emergency Mgt. Director	Louis Oggiani	2022	1 Year
Right to Know Officer	Steve Traver	2022	1 Year
Consultant to Veterans Agent	Wayne Cooper	2022	1 Year
ADA Coordinator	Brian Duval	2022	1 Year
Parks & Rec Committee	Ashley Daigle	2022	1 Year
	Joe P. Roy	2022	1 Year
	JP Boscorino	2022	1 Year
	Caitlin Graham	2022	1 Year
	Helen Nolan	2022	1 Year
Cable TV Commission	Alexander Stein	2022	1 Year
	George Cox	2022	1 Year
Capital Planning Committee	Finance Committee	2026	5 Years
Town Historian	Bob Salerno	2022	1 Year
Historical Commission	Bob Salerno	2022	1 Year
	Patricia Soldati	2022	1 Year
	Earl Moffatt	2022	1 Year
	Scott Sawyer	2022	1 Year
Sewer & Water Commission	Alexander Stein	2026	5 Years
Council on Aging	Clay Hall	2026	5 Years
	Les Losaw	2026	5 Years
Agricultural Commission	Shannon Mulholland	2024	3 Years
Agricultural Com Alternates	Peter Negrini	2024	3 Years
	Curt Wilton	2024	3 Years
Beautification Department	Vacancy	2022	1 Year
	Vacancy	2022	1 Year
	Vacancy	2022	1 Year

Wisdom Lodge A.F. & A.M.



6th Annual Golf Tournament Sunday, August 29th

Donnybrook Country Club
Lanesboro, MA

8:00 A.M. - Shotgun Start
\$100/Player - \$400/Team
(Includes Lunch and Cart)
(Mulligans & Putting Strings 4 Sale)
"Public is Invited"

Reservations: catddgm31@yahoo.com
<https://app.eventcaddy.com/events/6th-annual-wisdom-lodge-golf-tournament>

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Kathleen disagreed that this is kicking the can down the road. She mentioned the motion from the last meeting where the Select Board voted to investigate a feasibility study for the *Harris Street Extension*. She said that just because it can't happen right away does not mean that it can't happen. Kathleen would like to see due process be allowed to play out.

Curt discussed the status of the feasibility study. He has solicited estimates from 3 vendors by email and is waiting for replies. He does not think this is kicking the can down the road. This is to connect a public way (Harris Street) to another public way (Moscow Road). This could solve the land locked Nguyen property.

Eric believes that in the short-term Merritt Way will continue to generously be left open as it has for many years. It will be up to the two property owners to coordinate and to agree on the logistics of Merritt Way staying open during events, and again, this is a private matter. The Board, in the meantime, is committed to a long-term solution by pursuing the *Harris Street Extension* before exploring other more detrimental solutions.

During citizen speak time, several people spoke with conviction that something needs to be done to assist the property owners as best we can.

Curt requested that the Board allow the Department of Public Works to assist the Foundry in securing a safe road way during their events by offering the use of any of their barriers, signs, etc. Eric made the following motion, Kathleen seconded:

The Board authorizes Curt and the DPW to lend any necessary materials to the Foundry for a safe opening of Merritt Way during their events.

Roll Call vote:

Eric, yes Roger, yes Kathleen, yes
Motion approved.

Roger suggested to Curt that while it is a good idea to assist by providing materials to help with safety, he would like the two parties to have their own conversation and process. Curt should step back and wait to be asked by them for what they may require. The Board and Curt agreed.

Roger made a motion to adjourn at 7:00 PM, Kathleen seconded.

Roll call vote:

Eric, Yes Roger, Yes Kathleen, Yes

Motion Passed.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie V. Ryan

Town Administrator

Select Board Special Meeting Minutes

Meeting via Zoom

June 7, 2021

Open Meeting

Quorum present:, Eric Shimelonis, Select Board Chair, Roger Kavanagh and Kathleen Keresey, Select Board Members, and Marie Ryan, Town Administrator.

Others in Attendance: Police Chief Marc Portieri and Public Works Director Curt Wilton

Eric called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

Roger made a motion to approve the minutes from April 26 and May 11, 2021, seconded by Kathleen.

Eric stated the minutes from May 24 will be approved at the next meeting.

Roll call vote:

Eric, Yes Roger, Yes Kathleen, Yes

Motion Passed.

Town Administrator Updates:

-There is a Special Town Meeting on Wednesday, June 23rd at 6 PM in the gym in regard to the Sewer & Water budget. Kathleen, out of concern about COVID 19, asked if the Board would allow requesting attendees to wear their masks at the meeting. The Board discussed this and Marie will post signs asking attendees to voluntarily wear masks.

-The post office boxes for all Town Departments have been closed. The new mailbox has been installed in the front of Town Hall for delivery and pick up by the post office. Marie thanked the DPW for installing the box.

-The Finance Committee is having a meeting with Earl Moffatt, Sewer & Water Commissioner Chair and Mike Buffoni, Sewer & Water Treatment Plant Operator to work on creating a long-term capital plan.

-Marie asked the Board if they would like her to work with Curt on mailing a notification letter to residents on Old Great Barrington Road, Oak Street and Moscow Road. The letter would inform the residents that the Police and DPW intend on painting marked parking spots on those roads and would ask if they had any feedback. Prior to painting those parking spots, Curt and Marie would give the Board the feedback they receive from the residents.

Waiver of First Refusal Option for 0 Birch Hill Road:

Assessor Mary Stodden explained that the property at 0 Birch Hill Road has a purchase and sale agreement. The parcel is 8.5 acres of which 2 acres will be given to Berkshire Natural Resources and the remaining parcel will become a building lot for a single-family home. Mary told the Board that the Town could purchase the land for \$275,000 or waive its right of first refusal. The Board asked her if most towns complete the waiver, or

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from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.*

Everyone's invited!



West Stockbridge Chamber Players concert (Photo: John Masiero)



Putting in the bridge which makes the Old Town Hall handicap accessible for the first time in its history. (Photo: Bob Salerno)

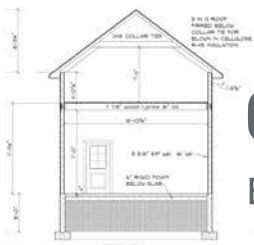


Housatonic Heritage Walk

- ✓ Meet up with your friends and neighbors—and say hello to the town's newcomers
- ✓ Cake and refreshments
- ✓ Free rides on the new elevator
- ✓ Unveiling of the "Building Blocks" quilt Lucy Bellville made during the pandemic and has donated to the Historical Society, along with a display of several of her beautiful quilts
- ✓ Take a tour through the 1854 building and see how we're restoring it to its former glory as a community gathering place and cultural center
- ✓ Find out about upcoming jazz and West Stockbridge Chamber Players concerts, historical walks, slide lectures, and other programs

West Stockbridge Historical Society
Restoring the past, building for the future
www.weststockbridgehistory.org

*Rain date:
Sunday, September 5th
from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.



On the Home Front

By Thom Lipiczky

Home

“There’s no place like home,” Dorothy chants in the *Wizard of Oz*, as a way to return to Kansas. In this column, I often ramble on about plywood prices, windows, kitchen counters, and other “hardware” in the house, but today I’m going to ramble about the “software,” that is, our emotional connection to the place we call home.

Part of this is because many of us are emerging from our 15-month pandemic-induced house arrest with a newfound interest in where we’ve spent so much time. Home improvement has become a huge business in the last year.

Part of my thinking about the emotional connection to “home” is the awareness of homelessness and loss due to disasters natural and human-made. Seeing the Florida condo collapse or the houses destroyed by wildfires in the West or tornados in the South or refugee camps in Syria and Sudan is heart-wrenching. And in San Francisco, 40,000 people—almost the population of Pittsfield—are living on the streets. (Future columns on affordable housing: watch this space!)

And part of this ramble is the thoughts coming from a conversation I had recently with Anne (my real “homey”) about memories of the houses we grew up in. I can remember amazingly specific details about the houses I’ve lived in from the time I was a baby: room layouts, views from windows, the way light cast across walls throughout the day, even creaks of individual stair treads—maybe that’s why I gravitated to being a designer/builder. My physical surroundings, and how they make me feel, are really important to me.

Let’s try an experiment. Close your eyes. (Wait, *don’t*. ‘Cause then you couldn’t continue reading. And maybe you’re reading this while driving. Don’t do that either!) OK, close your eyes *after* you’ve finished this deathless prose, and try to remember the room you slept in as a kid. Where was the door? How was your bed oriented? And your early childhood kitchen? What did you see when you ate your breakfast? Take a mental walk around the house, inside and out. Was there an attic or basement? How did each area make you feel? And when you mentally go to your “happy place,” what does it look like? Why are you happy there?

Feelings of safety and security are certainly part of our sense of home. The word “homecoming” is for me a deep well of feeling and memory and even longing—for a place that might be just in my imagination.

Pliny the Elder (not the beer, silly. The first-century Roman!) said, “Home is where the heart is.” James Baldwin said, “Perhaps home is not a place but simply an irrevocable condition.” T.S. Eliot: “Home is where one starts from.” But then there’s Thomas Hardy: “You can’t go home again.” Well, maybe you can, at least in your mind.

You may direct questions, comments, rants, and memories of home to info@localyokel.org.



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- Fall & Spring Cleanups
- Building & Maintaining Gardens
- Firewood

August History Quiz Question:

In 1924, West Stockbridge was 150 years old. To celebrate, the town put on a three-day party. Every day, residents enjoyed concerts, speeches, ball games, and block dances. The highlight was a big parade, with floats, bands, "cowboys" on horseback, politicians, and military units. People from all over attended the events, and the parade crowd was estimated in the thousands. It was a big deal for a small village of 1,200: all of the village center was decorated, and the town was at its best.

At the time, West Stockbridge was a small rural community with an industrial iron and lime quarry base, surrounded by dairy farming. The railroad linked it to the rest of the world. Roads weren't paved for another 10 years, and automobiles were just starting to be used for longer distance trips. To promote the town and its attractions to entice out-of-town visitors, the West Stockbridge Club created a brochure that provides a unique window on how the town saw itself almost a hundred years ago. What do you think the main features and aspects were then? Have they changed from how the town is seen now?

(Find the answer somewhere in this issue!)

When friends, neighbors, or relatives move, downsize, or just clean house, *please* ask them to think of the West Stockbridge Historical Society before they discard any old books, pictures, postcards, letters, or memorabilia of the Town of West Stockbridge. E-mail info@weststockbridgehistory.org or call 232-4270.



**West Stockbridge
Historical Society**
Incorporated in 1994

Select Board Meeting Minutes ...continued from page 5

do they purchase the land? Mary answered that she has never seen a Town decide to purchase a small parcel.

Roger made a motion to approve the Wavier of Right of First Refusal on 0 Birch Hill Road and Kathleen seconded.

Roll call vote:

Eric, Yes Roger, Yes Kathleen, Yes

Motion Passed.

Roots Rising Bike Ride placement of signs:

Mary Spina told the Board they held this bike ride last year which goes through Richmond, West Stockbridge and Canaan, NY. She requested permission to post signs in Town which give direction for the bikers. She stated that Richmond and Canaan, NY have already agreed to allow placement of the signs. The ride runs from June 18 through June 27 and the signs will all be taken down on Monday, June 28th.

The Board had no objections and agreed to allow for the signs to be placed in West Stockbridge.

TurnPark Events:

Jared Gelormino, Manager at TurnPark described the June 19th and June 23rd events to be held at TurnPark. He is asking for a One Day Liquor License and a One Day Entertainment License for these events.

The June 19th event will begin at 2 PM with a small parade of people in costumes from TurnPark, down Center Street, onto Main Street, over the bridge to Depot Street and back to TurnPark. The purpose of this parade is to advertise the event. Jared is coordinating this with the Police Chief and they will have two officers march with them and only block ½ of Main street then use sidewalks. TurnPark will be covering the cost of the Police Officer details and will keep one Officer after the parade to help with traffic. The celebration will begin at 4 with live acoustic music, food and drinks. There will be a concert from 7 PM – 10 PM. Parking will be allowed in their large parking lot off of Oak Street and the parking lot in the front of TurnPark. Police Chief Marc Portieri also mentioned that they may use parking at the Wastewater Treatment Plant down Moscow Road for overflow if needed.

Jared explained that the second event on June 23rd will be low key. They plan on having food, drinks and music on old phonographs. The Boondocks Film Society will be hosting a film screening in the back lot.

Curt Wilton asked Jeff Palfini and Jared to please make sure there is a sufficient amount of signage giving directions for parking.

Eric made a motion to approve the One Day Liquor License and One Day Entertainment License for both events at TurnPark on June 19 and June 23rd, Roger seconded.

Roll call vote:

Eric, Yes Roger, Yes Kathleen, Yes

Motion Passed.

Local Yokel Letter:

Roger explained that originally the Board wanted to send a letter to be published in the Local Yokel to address concerns that the Annual Town Meeting may not have been legal. He said that the minutes for the Select Board meeting that will be published in the Local Yokel, will clearly explain and cover the issue and there is no need to go further with an extra letter at this time. Eric and Kathleen agreed.

Roger also asked that the Board revisit the possibility of mailing out all the Town Reports next year so there is no confusion. Eric agreed and asked to place this on a future agenda for discussion.

Select Board Speak:

Roger is currently researching all the rights-of-way in the Town. After the issue with Merritt Way, he felt the Town needs to clarify the legality of all rights-of-way, especially those relied upon for town infrastructure. He would like to take on this project and continue researching all rights-of-

way and private property that the Town uses for passage and access. Eric and Kathleen agreed this was an important project.

Eric spoke to the Board about a new technical assistance grant being offered through the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission from D.O.E.R. to supplement the Green Communities grant. This would specifically help us to engineer solutions for replacing the Town Hall's ancient boilers, and to get the building closer to "net zero" status. He asked the Board for their approval in pursuing this grant, and they agreed. Roger asked if Eric would send the background information about this grant to the Board, Eric agreed.

Citizen Speak:

Curt Wilton thanked Eric for working on a grant to help with energy resources such as the Town Hall boiler. He said that the current boiler burns 65 gallons of oil a day between January and March. A new boiler and technology will save the Town a lot of money.

Eric made a motion to adjourn at 6:44 PM, Kathleen seconded.

Roll call vote:

Eric, Yes Roger, Yes Kathleen, Yes

Motion Passed.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Y. Ryan

Town Administrator

Documents:

Minutes: April 26, 2021 and May 11, 2021

Waiver of First Refusal Option for 0 Birch Hill Road

Email and sample signs for Roots Rising Bike Ride

One Day Liquor License application and One Day Entertainment License application

For TurnPark and Boondocks Film Society

Select Board Special Meeting Minutes

Meeting in Person

June 28, 2021

Open Meeting

Quorum present: Roger Kavanagh, Select Board Chair, Eric Shimelonis and Kathleen Keresey, Select Board Members, and Marie Ryan, Town Administrator.

Others in Attendance: Police Chief Marc Portieri and Public Works Director Curt Wilton

Eric called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Kathleen made a motion to approve the minutes from June 2 and June 7, 2021, seconded by Roger, all were in favor.

Town Administrator Updates:

-The Select Board executive session zoom meeting on Thursday, June 24 ended with some technical issues in which the Board did not get to make a motion to adjourn. Town Counsel stated as long as this is mentioned at the next meeting and noted, no formal action is needed since it is just a procedural motion.

-The Bloodmobile will be at Town Hall on Tuesday, June 29th from 9 AM – 2:30 PM.

-The rescheduled date of the Public Hearing for Rouge's application for a Wine and Malt Package store Liquor License is on July 12, 2021.

-Curt Wilton, Director of Public Works received two resumes for the new position in Public Works. Curt and Marie would like to review the applications and do the interviews. Curt will determine who he would like to hire and then present this person to the Select Board for approval to hire. The Board agreed with this procedure.

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Town of West Stockbridge Announcements



Parks & Rec Card Pond Party Has Been Postponed Until Sunday, August 1

Come and enjoy the party at Card Pond on Sunday, August 1, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

FY 2022 First-Quarter Real Estate and Personal Property Tax Bills Mailed

The first-quarter FY 2022 real estate and personal property tax bills were mailed on June 30, 2021. Payment is due by August 2, 2021, after which interest will begin to accrue.

Community News & Events

Due to the coronavirus health emergency, many meetings and events are being cancelled or postponed. We are including all information available to us up until publication, but with the likelihood of changes, readers should check with the office, department, or organization for the latest information.

Community Health Association

Weekly blood pressure clinics are by appointment only: 9 to 10 a.m. every Wednesday and Thursday, at the Town Offices, 21 State Line Road, West Stockbridge. Info: Emilie Jarrett, RN, 232-0122, or Emilie@charws.com.

The Stockbridge Grange Dinner

No public dinners will be served at the Stockbridge Grange during July and August.

Council on Aging

Council on Aging meetings remain suspended until further notice.

The Knitters

The Knitters group will meet on Wednesdays from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Community Room at the Town Offices.

Congregational Church Bake Sale

The West Stockbridge Congregational Church will hold a bake sale on Saturday, August 28, 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., in front of Baldwin's Extracts on Center Street.



Congregational Church bake sale. Photo by Cait Graham

Send your notices for Community News & Events to The Local Yokel, P.O. Box 238, West Stockbridge, MA 01266, e-mail info@thelocalyokel.org, or visit thelocalyokel.org.

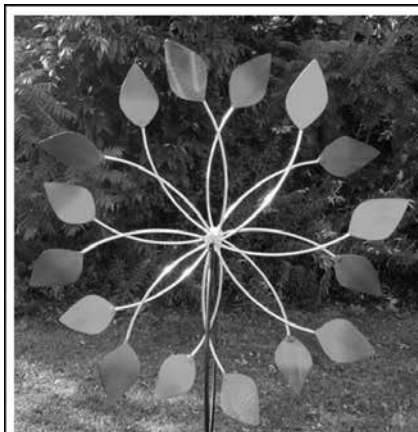
MASTER PLANNING PUBLIC SURVEYS

Thanks to all who participated in the first Master Plan Survey. That is now closed, and you can review the results on the town website: weststockbridge-ma.gov.

You have another opportunity to help the planning process: West Stockbridge is developing an Open Space & Recreation Plan, and your input is vital!

Please visit this site, and contribute to this second survey:

surveymonkey.com/r/WestStockbridgeOSRP



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-A letter was mailed to abutters of Old Great Barrington Road, Oak Street and Moscow Road, per instructions of the Board. This was to inform the abutters that the Town would like to paint marked parking spots on one side of these roads for additional parking in Town. The abutters were asked to respond by July 26th with any concerns or questions. So far, we have had two responses, one negative and one positive.

-The Request for Proposal for a new auditor was completed. Elaine Markham, Town Accountant, only received one proposal from our current auditor, Tom Scanlon. She attributes the lack of submissions due to COVID-19 and the additional paperwork that brings for auditors. Many firms do not want to take on a new client and also have to work on their additional paperwork from COVID money received. Elaine accepted Tom Scanlon's proposal at a fee of \$16,500 per year for the fiscal years 2022, 2023 and 2024.

-West Stockbridge is working with Great Barrington, Sheffield, Monterey and New Marlborough to hire a shared Human Resource person. We have worked together and received a Community Compact grant of \$75,000 which will pay for the first year of this position including their benefits. The Towns will need to pay for advertising. The ad for the position will be published soon and the due date for application is August 2nd. West Stockbridge will have this person for 2 hours per week.

-The Board agreed after the July 12th in person meeting, to hold all of their meetings by zoom. There may be occasional in person meetings depending on the agenda items.

Police Reform and Training: Police Chief Marc Portieri

Chief Portieri explained that due to the recent Massachusetts Police Reform Bill, there will no longer be a Part-Time Police Academy, there will only be a Full-Time academy. For those eligible, the State will also be offering a 7-week Bridge Class that would get part time officers up to the new training benchmarks required by the Reform Bill.

Chief Portieri proposed three possible scenarios to the Board for our part-time officers:

- A. The Town pays full hourly salary and costs for all seven part-timers, in addition to providing uniforms, necessary ammunition, and a cruiser.
- B. The Town does not pay salaries or full cost, but helps the part-timers that want to attend the Bridge Class with some of the costs, and use of a cruiser – with exact terms to be determined.
- C. The Town does not provide any of the salary or costs, and part-timers that want to follow through with the Bridge Class will have to do this on their time, and pay their own way.

The Board mentioned wanting to avoid subsidizing training for part-time officers who might leave West Stockbridge for full-time positions in other departments. Marc will follow up with Board as more details about the classes are available.

Approval of FY22 Board/Committee Appointments:

Eric made a motion to approve the list of appointments for FY22, Roger seconded and all were in favor. The Board acknowledged the handful of vacant positions, and will do what it can to fill them.

Draft Parking Lot Use Agreement:

Eric put forward a preliminary draft agreement for the Town to be able to partner with private property owners to create more municipal parking. It's

first use would be for the lot owned half by No. Six Depot, and half by the Werkshires. This first partnership would dramatically increase available parking in the downtown area. Kathleen asked how establishing this lot would work with the ideas being considered by the Master Plan process, and Eric stated that the addition of these parking spaces would be a start in offsetting parking spots that might be lost as part of future Master Plan initiatives. Roger asked Curt if there will be signage put up and Curt responded yes. Curt expressed his support and enthusiasm for this plan, and told the Board that he will give a sketch of his plan for clearing some brush and filling potholes to go along with the agreement to the owners. The Board discussed some of the language in the draft, and Roger proposed some clarifications and improvements, which Eric will integrate.

Select Board Speak:

Roger continues to work on his project of listing all of the Rights of Way in Town and finding all the written agreements. He is working with Curt to see these areas of Town. His goal is to have them all listed and all of the agreements. Once he has all of this information he will bring it to the Board and then have Town Counsel review to make sure all of the paperwork is legal.

Eric had a few items to discuss;

-The Local Yoke! would like to have two sets of minutes to print in each issue. He would like Marie and the Board to be more intentional about getting the minutes completed and approved to meet the deadline of the 15th of each month.

-There is an active Master Plan survey on the home page of the Town's website, and he encouraged everyone to take a few minutes to complete it.

-Eric asked if the Board would be willing to consider a motion later this year to adopt Indigenous Peoples Day on October 11th, and additionally to sign an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement. The Board agreed, so Eric will work on drafts for both for a future agenda.

Citizen Speak:

Joe Roy complimented the Board for increasing parking spots in Town and Roger for researching the legal Right of Ways in Town.

Lori Rose asked the Board to consider the Water & Sewer Plant for overflow parking. Kathleen told her that the Town already does use that parking area. TurnPark just recently used this area for an event. Lori thanked the Board and made clear that she does not want to see painted parking spots in neighborhoods.

Tricia Hickey asked the Board if there are plans for a new solar farm in Town. The Board did not know of any and asked her to let them know if she hears anything further about it. Eric stated that the recently adopted town bylaw with respect to Solar Power gives the Town more oversight than before, and would require a special permit process that would include a public hearing.

Roger made a motion to adjourn at 7:10 PM, Kathleen seconded.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Y. Ryan

Town Administrator

Documents:

Minutes: June 2 and June 7, 2021

FY22 Appointment List

Draft License Agreement for Municipal Parking Lot



The *Local Yoke!* is published monthly. Please mail submissions to: **The Local Yoke!, P.O. Box 238, West Stockbridge, MA 01266**, e-mail info@thelocalyoke.org, or visit www.thelocalyoke.org. Copy deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the publication. Editors: **John Parker, 394-4368, john.j.parker53@gmail.com; Vicki Grayson, 232-6131, vicki.grayson@rocketmail.com; Susan Fisher, 232-4443, suefish12@gmail.com; Anne Lesser, 717-0277, anne@annelessercommunications.com; Designer: **Kim Bradway, kim@bloominarts.com**.**

The *Local Yoke!* is supported in part by a grant from the West Stockbridge Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

August Donor Roll Call

Berkshire Athenaeum
John Bormolini
Brenda & John Elling
John Fülöp Associates, Architects
Hal & Jill Gaffin

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"We Remember When . . ."

Growing Up in West Stockbridge in the 1950s

A Series of Recollections by John Bormolini and Friends

Dr. William E. Persing (1895–1966), Physician and Humanitarian

From John Bormolini:

As Peter Angelini and I were talking on the phone after his move from Ann Arbor, Michigan, back to the Berkshires, after the death of his beloved wife Lila, he suggested we do a *Local Yokel* article about Dr. Persing. I thought it was a terrific idea because family physician Dr. Persing was part of the heart and soul of our hometown, West Stockbridge, for more than 35 years. I'd wager there was not a single family in town whose lives Dr. Persing had not touched. We were blessed that he decided to open a practice in West Stockbridge after graduating from Middlesex College of Medicine and serving in World War I.

As I pondered how Dr. Persing helped our family, it felt like it was mostly me needing his services. I recalled the time I needed stitches from a stupid sledding incident. My mother Anna was scared, but he managed to comfort her. Ironically, my mother was the weekly housekeeper for the Persings.

Peter shared with us the following remembrances of Dr. Persing's quick actions that were pivotal in the recovery of his mother Ruth and sister Katherine.

From Peter Angelini:

One Saturday night in the summer of 1948, after my sister, brother, and I were upstairs in bed, I heard my mom scream loudly from downstairs. She sounded as if she was in great pain, which was uncharacteristic because my mom was a generally quiet woman. Not knowing what was happening and being very frightened, I got out of bed and crept halfway down the stairs where I could see Dr. Persing in our kitchen with a pan boiling on the stove. I did not know then that he was sterilizing a hypodermic needle. I watched for a time but didn't hear anything else from my mom, so I went back to bed.

When I got up in the morning, my mom was lying completely still in a makeshift bed in the dining room that was darkened with all the curtains closed. My dad got breakfast for my sister and me, and we walked to church. After the service, my dad picked us up and took us to stay with two of our aunts. He told us that our mom was ill and had been taken to the hospital in Albany. Every Sunday for the next month, my dad picked us up and took us to church. Then we returned to our house where my grandmother, who was taking care of my younger brother, cooked Sunday dinner. Then we returned to our aunts' home for the next week.

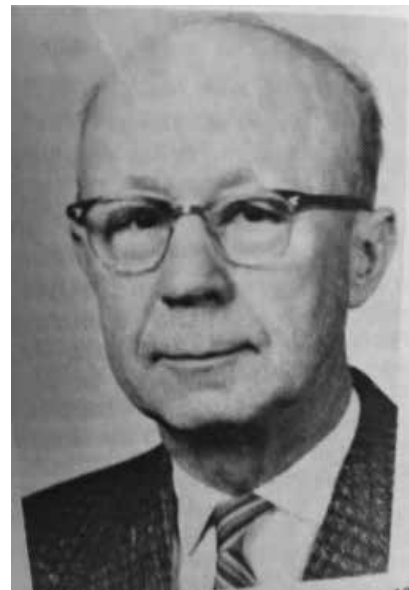
One Sunday, about a month after my mom went to the hospital, my dad took us for a ride. An hour or so later we arrived at Albany General Hospital. As we got out of the car, we saw our mom in an upper window waving to us. You can't imagine the immense relief we felt, knowing she was OK. She had experienced a cerebral hemorrhage, and Dr. Persing had made the decision that the required lifesaving surgery couldn't be performed in Pittsfield and she had to be taken to Albany. This was a high-risk maneuver because traveling that distance on a rough road—there was no New York Thruway then—could have been fatal. Thanks to Dr. Persing's immediate response and care, and the necessary surgery, she recovered completely and went on to live to age 94.

In 1955, I came home from school one afternoon and found my mom cradling my baby sister Katherine in one arm while holding her tongue with her other hand. My mom was a registered nurse and knew my sister was having a convulsion and could swallow her tongue. She told me to call Dr. Persing and get our neighbor, who was also a nurse. I opened the door so Dr. Persing could come right in when he arrived. As I got to the door, I saw Dr. Persing drive around the corner in his 1955 bright red Ford—I swear on two wheels—and pull into our driveway, slam on the brakes, and then very calmly get out of the car and say, in his unique Pennsylvania drawl, "Well, what's going on here?"

He realized my sister had an infection that had caused her elevated temperature and convulsion. After stabilizing her, he recommended she be taken to Children's Hospital in Boston, which my mom and dad did the next day. Thanks again to Dr. Persing's immediate response and his sound medical judgment, my sister was treated successfully first in the hospital and then at home.

This plain-spoken country doctor made critical split-second lifesaving decisions without the benefit of cell phones, Internet, sophisticated pharmaceuticals, and the like. He was a remarkable man, and West Stockbridge was very fortunate that he chose to live and work in our community from 1931 to 1966.

John Bormolini is a West Stockbridge "ex-pat," now residing in Leavenworth, Kansas. Readers who would like to share their stories of 1950s West Stockbridge are invited to e-mail John at johnbormo@aol.com.



*William E. Persing practiced medicine in West Stockbridge from 1931 to 1966.
Photo: From West Stockbridge,
Massachusetts, 1774–1974,
by Edna Bailey Garnett*

History Quiz Answer:

West Stockbridge in 1924 was in a period of transition. Peak population and industrial activity was noteworthy 40 years earlier when the quarries and lime kilns were running 7 days a week. Now, after World War I and the Jazz Age, it became more of a commercial center. Tourism to the Berkshires picked up, particularly with railroads advertising more comfortable train travel to vacation destinations. More roads became passable, automobiles more prevalent, and auto clubs formed to promote touring routes. The West Stockbridge Club brochure offers real insight on how West Stockbridge saw itself during this period of change.

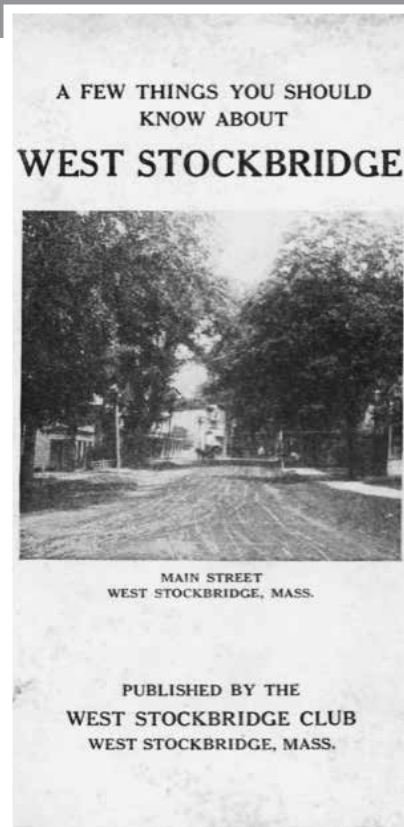
In the brochure, West Stockbridge assets are described as a "good hotel" (Crane Lake Inn) in the village center and numerous rooming houses. There are "five incoming and outgoing mails," and daily papers are received at 7:40 a.m. The town had two garage and auto livery, plus a livery stable for the road traveler. West Stockbridge has "good roads and is the motorist's paradise for scenery." While easily accessible, we were secluded and not disturbed by the hum and noise of manufacturing.

The largest amount of brochure space is devoted to "the individual who desires the ideal out-of-door activity with boating, bathing, fishing, canoeing, tennis, motoring, or tramping the mountains and woodland trails." Major hiking trails to Bissell's Peak, Bald Head Mountain, and Baker Hill are featured. A four-hour walk from the village center to Steven's Glen "fascinates the lover of nature." Well-traveled men describe the Baker Hill view to be the best of its kind to be found anywhere. The write-up describes a perfect 1920s outdoor center in the Berkshires.

The brochure offers many descriptions of our natural beauty, vegetation, and the golden foliage of autumn. "West Stockbridge has pure spring water, and air is pure, containing a high percentage of oxygen!! The altitude assures freedom from malaria and tuberculosis, and pure spring water from the mountains make typhoid unknown."

West Stockbridge had joined the rest of the Berkshires vacation attractions, bragging that the town was the "most hospitable and cordial community in Massachusetts." Its natives were hospitable and the tourist made welcome.

Except for the claim of oxygen percentage, perhaps not much has changed about the attractiveness and allure of West Stockbridge of over more than 90 years.



*West Stockbridge Club brochure
ca. 1924. Image courtesy of
West Stockbridge Historical Society*

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Harris, *Sweetness of Water*
Lansdale, *Moon Lake*
Lemmie, *Fifty Words for Rain*
Miranda, *Such a Quiet Place*
Clinton and Patterson, *The President's Daughter*

NEW ADULT NONFICTION

Sohn, *Man Who Hated Women: Sex, Censorship, and Civil Liberties in the Gilded Age*

NEW YOUNG ADULT AND CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Bourne, *Josephine Against the Sea*
Scanlon, *I Want a Boat!*
Johnson, *Truly Devious: A Mystery*
Johnson, *Vanishing Stair*
Mandanna, *Kiki Kallira Breaks a Kingdom*
Steinkellner, *Okay Witch*
Steinkellner, *Okay Witch and the Hungry Shadow*



Scrapbook August 2021: TEST YOUR TRIVIA KNOWLEDGE!

1. What independent film was made in West Stockbridge by BullMoose Pictures?
2. Whose barn was serving as a movie studio?
3. Who was the owner and director of Crane Lake Camp for many years?
4. Who bought Crane Lake Camp when it went up for sale in 1998?

1. *Worlds We Created* 2. Don Johnson's barn
3. Ed Ulanoff, 1950-9 4. Union for Reform Judaism



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Assessors Office	<i>Mary Stodden</i>	232-0300	ext. 303	Tues. 1–5 p.m.; Thurs. 9 a.m.–1 p.m.
Board of Health	<i>Earl Moffatt</i>	232-0300	ext. 314	Fri. 9 a.m.–4 p.m., or by appt.
Select Board	<i>Roger Kavanagh, Kathleen Keresey, Eric Shimelonis</i>	232-0300	ext. 319	Mon.–Thurs. 7 a.m.–3 p.m. Fri. 7 a.m.–11 a.m.
Town Administrator	<i>Marie Ryan</i>			
Building Inspector	<i>Brian Duval</i>	232-0300	ext. 313	Leave Message for Inquiries
Conservation Commission	<i>Jennifer Kujawski, Lori Rose</i>	232-0300	ext. 338	Leave Message for Inquiries
Council on Aging	<i>John Zick</i>	232-0300	ext. 340	Leave Message for Inquiries
Emergency Management	<i>Louis Oggiani</i>	528-2175		
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Highway Department	<i>Curt G. Wilton</i>	232-0305		Leave Message for Inquiries
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Post Office	<i>Colleen A. Wich</i>	232-8544		Lobby: 7 a.m.–7 p.m.; 7 days/week; Window: Mon.–Fri. 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Sat. 9 a.m.–12 noon
Seasonal Lifeguard		232-0315		
Sewer & Water Commission	<i>Michael Buffoni</i>	232-0309		
Town Accountant	<i>Elaine Markham</i>	232-0300	ext. 317	Leave Message for Inquiries
Town Clerk	<i>Ronni Barrett</i>	232-0300	ext. 300	Tues. & Thurs. 1:30–4 p.m.
Town Collector	<i>June A. Biggs</i>	232-0300	ext. 302	Wed. 3–6 p.m.; Thurs. and Fri. 10 a.m.– 2 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
Town Historian	<i>Robert Salerno</i>	232-4465		
Town Treasurer	<i>Karen Williams</i>	232-0300	ext. 316	Thurs. 9 a.m.–4 p.m.
Transfer Station	<i>Wayne Cooper</i>	232-0307		Tues. & Thurs. 10 a.m.–6 p.m. and Sat. 8 a.m.–6 p.m.
Tree Warden	<i>Andrew Fudge</i>	232-4322		
Veterans Agency	<i>Laurie Hills</i>	528-1580		
Zoning Board of Appeals	<i>C. Randolph Thunfors</i>	232-0300	ext. 300	

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August Art Calendar

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2021

May 26 - Sept 22, Summer Online Art Show. Visit www.berkshireartists.org for more info.

August 2 & 16, Procrastinator's Challenge, 10-11am. GBA members can join Diane Firtell for a jumpstart on their creative productivity via Zoom.

August 6, First Fridays Artswalk at TKG, Pittsfield, 5-8 p.m. For more info on what will be on display, visit www.berkshireartists.org.

August 9, Collage & Mixed Media Workshop, 1-3 p.m. Join Marion Grant for Collage & Mixed Media.

August 10 & 24, Positive Critique, 7:30-8:30 p.m. Join Michele Caplan for a positive critique session for Guild members via Zoom.

August 22, Berkshire Photo Gathering, 2-4pm. Online. See following webpage for more information: berkshirephotogathering.com/online-meetings

August 26, Art Book Gathering, 9:30-11am. Share a favorite book: artist, or process. Visit www.berkshireartists.org for more info.

TUESDAYS, Snapseed Workshop, 1:30-2:30pm. Work on mobile photo editing with others via Zoom.

TUESDAYS, Demo or Seminar, 3pm. Watch an artist demonstrate their creative process each week via Zoom.

MON, WED, & FRI, Art Together: Join GBA artists together online using Zoom. See website for times.

FRIDAYS, Meet the Artist, 5 - 6pm. Join a different artist each week to gain an insight into their processes and art.

Summer Online Art Show

29 artists | 53 works

www.berkshireartists.org

On Display Online:
May 26 - Sept 22

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The Local Yokel meets the 21st Century!

Visit our website for past issues, plus information about how to support your West Stockbridge community newsletter, submit material for publication, advertise, contact us, and more!

thelocalyokel.org



West Stockbridge
Local Yokel
 P.O. Box 238
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August						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



August 2021 Calendar of Events

Due to the coronavirus health emergency, many meetings and events are being canceled, postponed, or held online. We are including all information available to us up until publication, but with the likelihood of changes, readers should check with the office, department, or organization for the latest information.

8/1	Card Pond Party	11 a.m.– 1 p.m.	Card Pond
8/2	First-quarter real estate & property tax bills due		
8/5	WS Farmers Market	3–6 p.m.	The Foundry Green, Harris Street
8/6	Cemetery Commissioners meeting	6 p.m.	See town website for details
8/9	Parks & Recreation Commissioners meeting	5:30 p.m.	See town website for details
8/9	Select Board meeting	6 p.m.	See town website for details
8/12	WS Farmers Market	3–6 p.m.	The Foundry Green, Harris Street
8/15	*** Deadline for the next Local Yokel ***		Send to info@thelocalyokel.org
8/17	Vision Committee meeting	6 p.m.	See town website for details
8/19	WS Farmers Market	3–6 p.m.	The Foundry Green, Harris Street
8/23	Select Board meeting	6 p.m.	See town website for details
8/26	WS Farmers Market	3–6 p.m.	The Foundry Green, Harris Street
8/28	Congregational Church bake sale	9:30 a.m.–1 p.m.	Center Street in front of Baldwin's Extracts
8/30	Select Board meeting	6 p.m.	See town website for details