

WILLIAMSBURG NEWS SPRING 2011

A PERIODIC NEWSLETTER OF THE TOWN OF WILLIAMSBURG



Annual Town Meeting

Monday June 6 at 7:00
P.M. at the Anne T. Dun-
phy School
Call 268-8418 for child-
care information

THE 2011 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING IS FAST APPROACHING!

There will be a few new line items for the Town to consider in the proposed Fiscal Year 2012 budget. Based on the recommendations contained in the Building Needs Committee report the proposed budget requests \$20,000 to begin funding **general building maintenance** and \$6,000 for a **Building Superintendent/ Maintainer** to oversee the condition of Town properties. This person's responsibilities would include regularly surveying and reporting on Town buildings, establishing an ongoing prioritized list of building maintenance projects, and working with the Select Board to procure services to carry out maintenance projects. Priorities would be to halt deterioration of existing buildings and then plan upgrades to outdated buildings. In addition, a separate warrant arti-

cle is proposed to begin the process of preserving the Old Town Hall. While minor roof repairs were done on the building earlier this year, the building, and the historic collection it contains, is rapidly deteriorating.

The budget will also contain a new **Emergency Manager Expenses** line item to enable the Town to install a reverse 911 system that will automatically send every household in Williamsburg that has opted in to the service a voice, text, and/or email message to provide information, direction, and reassurance.

The Town is being asked to consider three **capital purchases** for next year. The police department is seeking to replace its 2005 **police cruiser** with a new four-wheel drive vehicle; the new vehicle will enable officers to reach any location in town rapidly, no matter the weather conditions. The cost of the vehicle, \$35,000, is about the same as the cost of a new sedan cruiser, which would not

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COUNCIL ON AGING

Williamsburg Council on Aging Community Survey

Did you know that most people do not take advantage of the services offered by their local COA until they are in crisis? Here at the Williamsburg Council on Aging it is our job to match people's needs with the appropriate services. We also want to help prepare people, *before they retire*, for a satisfying and active life as a senior.

But we need your input to help us do this better. As

an insert to this newsletter you will find a brief survey that will help us better understand the needs and interests of seniors and the ability and willingness of other residents to help out.

We are looking for feedback from people of all ages in Burg. This survey will take 2-3 minutes of your time.

Each returned survey will be entered into a raffle for a \$25 BigY gift certificate.

Don't wait until you or your family member is in crisis. Come to The COA and get involved, get informed and get empowered!

FARMERS' MARKET

New Farmers' Market opens in Williamsburg Center on May 12th!



The Burgy Thursday Market will run every Thursday from May 12th through October 27th, 2:30-7:00 pm on the Meekins Library riverside lawn. The market will feature fresh produce, meats, eggs, cheeses, flowers, baked goods, maple products, specialty food products and local crafts. Regular vendors will include Bread Euphoria (Haydenville), Crabapple

Farm (Chesterfield), Good Field Farm (Williamsburg), Mockingbird Farm (Easthampton), Paul's Sugar House (Williamsburg), Power of the Petal (Williamsburg), Town Farm (Northampton) and Twin Maples Farm (Williamsburg); a wide variety of other vendors will offer their products on a rotating basis, so every week will bring something

new. Come to the market to support local farmers, visit with your neighbors, enjoy the live music, and learn more about what's going on in town. Be a part of the Burgy Thursday bustle!

For more information or to sign up for the Market's e-newsletter, please contact Andrew Huckins at:

burgymarket@gmail.com

TRIAD

The SALT Council of Triad is looking for members, not just seniors, to work with the town's police, fire and ambulance departments to make the Williamsburg safer for seniors and everyone. If you would like to learn more about serving on the SALT Council, please call Larry West at 268-3315.



BOARD OF HEALTH

The Board of Health is looking for people to help in case of a Public Health emergency. People are needed for emergency flu clinics and other emergencies requiring distributing mass quantities of antibiotics to townspeople. But you don't need medical training in order to help — people are also needed to control traffic and parking, to help people navigate the clinics, and with recordkeeping. Anyone interested should leave your name and phone number with either the Board of

Health (268-8404) or the Town Clerk (268-8402) and someone will get back to you.

Transfer Station Stickers: Starting July 1 new stickers are needed in order to dispose of trash; stickers are now available by mail or in person from the Town Clerk. To buy a sticker you will need a copy of the registration of the vehicle to which the sticker will be affixed and, if mailed, a self-addressed stamped envelope. Stickers cost \$60.00 payable to

the Town of Williamsburg.

Recycling: Revenues were strong during the second half of 2010; the Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative uses these revenues to support local recycling efforts and purchase new containers and repair old ones. Between July 1 and Dec. 31, 2010 Williamsburg recycled 82.6 tons of paper and cardboard and 43 tons of bottles, plastic and cans, which generated over \$4,700 in revenue.

Certain **empty** aerosol cans are now accepted at the transfer station. Cans that can be recycled include:

health and beauty products (sun block, first aid spray, hair spray and mousse, deodorant and shaving cream); food products (cooking spray, whipped cream, cheese whiz, and frosting); laundry products; and air fresheners.

Cans that contained spray paint, insecticides, cleaning products, craft products, adhesives, automotive sprays, waterproofing and lubricants will **not** be accepted for recycling. For more information contact Eric Weiss: 268-3845; hrrmc@crocker.com

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Williamsburg now has an up-to-date Open Space and Recreation Plan, making the town eligible to apply for state funding for land protection and recreational activities. Members of Williamsburg's Open Space Committee joined a special Open Space and Recreation Plan Update committee and received support from Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to complete the update. The plan development process included a public visioning session to get community input on open space and recreation needs and opportunities, a survey of town residents to gauge interest in recreational facilities and natural areas in town, and a public

meeting to share the draft plan. This plan is valid through 2018.

The Open Space Committee is planning a series of neighborhood conversations about land protection options, available to landowners, to ensure landowners are aware of their options and to help people make connections to land conservation organizations that could help protect

natural areas in town. The committee also has detailed information about the ecological value of all areas of town for a range of criteria. Anyone interested in learning more about land protection options or hosting a neighborhood meeting should contact the Open Space Committee.



2011 Town Meeting *continued from page 1*

have four-wheel drive.

The Town is also being asked to consider beginning implementation of recommendations of our Technology Committee and our Information Technology consultant to provide a more centralized, secure, reliable and up-to-date computer system at the Town Offices by installing a **single central server**. The purchase and installation of this equipment (which should cost around \$25,000 and can be moved if the Town Offices are relocated) will allow for increased security from viruses and spyware, automate the backup of data, allow for the future centralization, and reduce the number of printers and copiers.

The third capital request the Town is being asked to consider is an **air conditioning system** for the Meekins Library. This \$31,000 system will provide a better environment for patrons of the library and its own historic collection, both of which suffer from summer heat and humidity.

Town Meeting will also be asked to consider adoption of the "**stretch energy code**" for new building construction. The stretch code was adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Building Regulations and Standards in May 2009, as an optional appendix to the Massachusetts Building Code 780 CMR. It is based on the current state building code but requires a higher level of building efficiency than the base code.

Town meeting adoption is a requirement for Williamsburg to gain Green Community Designation and grant funding. No amendments can be made to the "stretch code" as the requirements are already established by statute. The Town's Energy Committee is holding 2 public information meetings on the code on Wednesday May 18th and Thursday May 26th, both at the Meekins Library beginning at 7 PM. For more information on the Stretch Code and Green Communities go to: <http://greenwilliamsburg.wordpress.com/2011/03/21/going-green/>

Town Meeting will also be asked whether to accept the provisions of MGL Chapter 138 section 33A, which would allow **liquor-license holders** to sell alcohol between 1:00 A.M. and 2:00 A.M. on Sundays and certain legal holidays; and of MGL Chapter 138 section 33B, which would allow these license holders to begin selling alcohol at 10:00A.M. (rather than 11:00 A.M. as is currently allowed) on Sundays, the last Monday in May and on Christmas day or on the day following when they occur on Sunday.

Finally, the Town will be asked to rescind a portion of article 26 of the Annual Town Meeting of May 4, 1998 that set up The Brassworks **Recreation Trust Fund**, with any funds remaining in that fund to be transferred to the Recreation Revolving Fund.

WILLIAMSBURG LIBRARIES

Meekins welcomes the new **BURGY Thursday Market** on the riverside lawn from 2:30-7:00pm!!

May is National Foster Care Month, and on Saturday, May 14th from 10-12 the **Williamsburg DCF Foster/Adoptive Parent Support Group** will hold an informational meeting on what foster parenting is all about. Throughout the month come and see their display **"Hanging Together; Fostering our Future"** at the Meekins Library near the circulation area, and find many resources on foster care as well as the dates for future foster parent training.

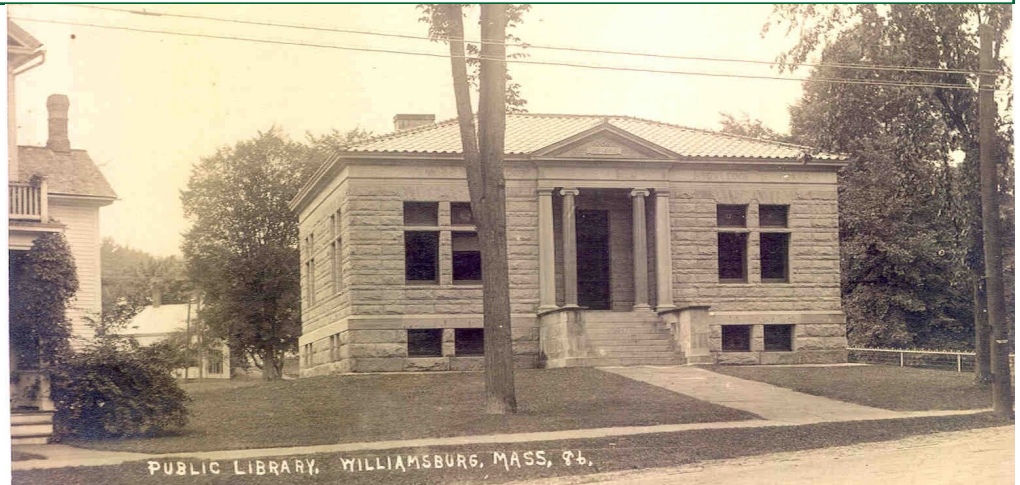


May 24th at 7pm at the Meekins, as a part of the "Lives of the Valley" series, Eric Weber, local historian, will present **"Wrack & Ruin: the Mill River Disaster of 1874."** Weber's liberally illustrated talk

will cover the immediate and long-term effects of the May 16, 1874 disaster on the people of Williamsburg, Skinnerville and Haydenville, which was frontpage news across the nation. Call the Meekins for more information. Transportation is available for local residents.

Now at the Meekins Library in the Neil Hammer Gallery, **"Drawings of Italy"** by Roy Superior, artist, Italophile and Williamsburg resident. The drawings are the result of several residencies and travels through central and northern Italy, mainly Tuscany, including many of the hill towns of the Garfagnana, and the cities of Lucca and Florence. Some were done on location, the rest from sketches and photographs taken by the artist. On June 8th at 7pm Superior will give a slide lecture on his work. On June 18th from 10-4 he will conduct a drawing workshop, "Drawing Demystified". Call the Meekins to sign up and for more details.

On the last Monday of every month from 7-8 pm join a new **French conversation group** at the Meekins. Please call for more information.



On the last Saturday of every month from 3:10-4:40 join the newly reformed **Spanish casual cultural get-together**, not a class but an opportunity to speak Spanish and enjoy Hispanic music, food, and culture. Call for more information.

Not one, not two, but three **summer reading programs** this year! Join the fun when, on Saturday June 25th, sign-ups begin for the new adult summer reading program: "Novel Destinations," teen reading: "YOU ARE HERE" and children's summer reading program: "One World, Many Stories." Stories and books galore as well as fun prizes. Entertainment will be provided by storyteller and musician Tim Van Egmond at the kickoff on June 25th at 1:00. Call for more information.

For more information on any of the above please call 413-268-7472 or check the library webpage www.meekins-library.org, as dates and times may change. Ask about signing up to receive WOWBRARY, an email information weekly about new additions to the Williamsburg Libraries.



Goodbye Mr. Venne

At March's school committee meeting Fred Venne, principal of our two elementary schools, announced his resignation, and his acceptance of a position as Museum Educator of the Natural History Museum and Bassett Planetarium at Amherst College, effective July 1. We have close personal contact with many public servants in a small town like Williamsburg, but perhaps no one's influence is as comprehensive and as deeply felt as our local school principal. Mr. Venne is leaving? No way. The immediate feelings of shock quickly gave way to a mixture of anxiety, sadness, deep appreciation, and good wishes as he takes on his next opportunity. In a busy world of change and unpredictability one thing has remained constant and has anchored our school community for 16 years: Fred Venne. It seems unimaginable to consider our

two elementary schools without his steady and visionary stewardship.

Fred's tenure occurred during a time of tremendous challenge in public education, including major state and federal school reform initiatives, school choice, the introduction of standardized testing, tight budgets, not to mention the ongoing maintenance of two aging buildings. Over the past 16 years, the demands on public education have grown exponentially, as have the choices for Williamsburg families on where to send their children to school. These trends have all occurred during a time of decreasing federal and state revenue for public education.

Fred was more than up to the challenge. Our schools have thrived during his time here. He leaves us

with an impressive record of accomplishments, too numerous to mention here. As he steps down he leaves a school that is meeting, or exceeding, all state benchmarks *and* with an array of innovative programs unique to Williamsburg and integrated into the community. He leaves a strong and dedicated faculty committed to high-quality teaching. And finally, he's laid the groundwork for the final steps of a new or renovated school building.

Though his accomplishments are many, it is Fred's personal touch as principal that will be his most memorable legacy. Always approachable, with both children and adults, Fred's gentle manner always left you feeling you'd been heard and your perspective taken seriously. While students knew he meant business, they never

feared him and never doubted their principal was someone who deeply cared, and would treat them fairly. His work ethic and willingness to take on any school-related task, whether it be crossing guard, maintenance man, or substitute teacher, were legendary. There will be many images of Fred that will be missed in the years to come, none more so than seeing him shovel snow off the James School roof this past winter. He often went above and beyond the call, saving the school's precious resources while creating a safe and stimulating environment in which our children could grow and learn.

The Williamsburg School Committee wishes to extend its most sincere gratitude to Fred Venne for his many years of service, and its best wishes in his next endeavor.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Williamsburg Historical Commission welcomes inquiries from those seeking to discover their roots in this area. Many descendants of the Town's early folk have returned to visit the sites of their ancestors. Quite recently a Nebraska rancher made contact to learn more about the 1874 Flood when his grandfather, 10-year-old George W. Roberts, miraculously was able to haul himself to safety out of the raging flood waters that took his mother, father and two little sisters to eternity.

Old Pictures of Williamsburg Farms and Farm Life Wanted

The Historical Society and Friends of the Williamsburg Library are looking for pictures of men and women working on farms for a historical display of Williamsburg farm life. Pictures of people canning, tilling the land, hanging clothes, sewing, working or harvesting fields, or milking, and pictures of old machinery would be especially valuable.

The pictures will be treated as the valuable historical documents they are; they will be scanned into a computer file and the files printed and mounted for display. All original pictures will be returned to their owners immediately after they are scanned.

If you have pictures you would be willing to share, please place them in an envelope and include your return and contact information (name, address and phone number). Most importantly, include a short description/explanation of the picture with the who, what, where and when information. Picture envelopes may be given to Charlotte Otis (268-7982) or you can drop them at the Meekins Library to the attention of Daria D'Arienzo (268-7679).

Special requests for access to Williamsburg Historical Society collections should be made with the:

Williamsburg Historical Society Secretary, Ralmon Black, call [413] 268-7767, RalmonBlack@gmail.com or

Williamsburg Historical Society President, Mary Bisbee at [413] 268-3225, mbisbee52@hotmail.com

WILLIAMSBURG CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Wetlands Protection Act and YOU!

The Conservation Commission will be reminding residents periodically that it is in their interest to know about and abide by the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Rivers Protection Act. If you are considering a project that will alter areas that are jurisdictional and protected by these Acts, you or your contractor should notify the Conservation Commission. If you are unsure if the areas are jurisdictional (see below) you should still file with the Commission a WPA Form 1 – A Request for Determination of Applicability. Following the proper procedures can save residents time-consuming and potentially costly enforcement actions by the MA Department of Environmental Protection. Again, when in doubt, ask the Commission

to make a determination.

The Wetlands Protection Act, passed in 1973, affects any person proposing to “remove, dredge, fill, or alter” any wetland area. The law and regulations protect areas called buffer zones, which extend horizontally 100 ft. from a wetland’s edge. These buffer zones protect the natural integrity of wetlands and streams, support flora and fauna habitat in these zones; protect groundwater and drinking water sources and reduce flood peaks and downstream flooding. The Rivers Protection Act of 1996 offers protection to the Mill River and the town’s perennial streams (those that flow year round) by creating a 200-foot river-front corridor that extends outward from the streams’ edge.

If you are planning work within 100 feet of a wetland or within the 200-foot river-front area you should first file a Request for Determination (RDA) with the Commission. Depending upon the nature and location of the proposed project and the determination reached by the Commission, a further more involved submittal called a Notice of Intent may be required. If an applicant is sure that a Notice of Intent will be required, submittal of an RDA is not necessary.

The Conservation Commission office, in the Town Hall, is available to the public for picking up hard copies of various forms. You can also go to our town website: www.burgy.org. Click on “Boards and Committees”, select Conservation Commission, then Additional Links. A public meeting of the Commission to address an applicant’s

request for determination must be held within 21 days of the receipt of a completed RDA. A legal notice for a public meeting should be published in the Daily Hampshire Gazette or the Country Journal; the applicant is to bear the cost of publishing the notice. The legal notice must be published at least 5 days before the public meeting. The Legal Notice of Public (Open) Meeting form is also available on the Commission’s page of the town’s website. The Commission secretary holds office hours on Wednesday mornings from 9:30 – 11:30 upstairs in the public meeting room.

If you have an interest in serving on the Conservation Commission please contact Brenda Lessard, the Town Clerk. The Commission meets usually on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Williamsburg Police Department welcomes two new faces to its patrol ranks

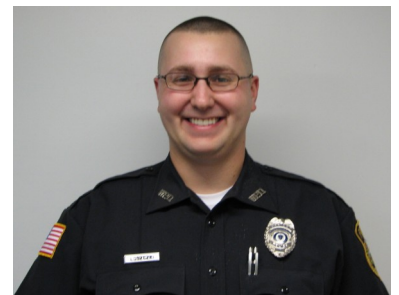


Robert K. Reinke: I grew up in the Florence section of Northampton and have lived in the town of Worthington for the past 20 years. I have 2 daughters and a son. My son is currently serving in Afghanistan. I’m a grandfather to

one grandson and will welcome two more grandsons later this year. In 1994 I started a repair business that I continue to run in Worthington. In 1995 I joined the Worthington Volunteer Fire Department and in 2002 joined Chesterfield Volunteer Fire Department of which I am still a member today. In 2005 I graduated as the president of my class from Reserve Police Academy. I am currently employed as a part-time officer on three local police departments including Williamsburg. I have the utmost respect for the position and look forward to

protecting and serving the residents and visitors of Williamsburg for years to come.

Bryan Luszczi: I am originally from Augusta, Maine. I came to Massachusetts to attend college at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. I graduated from the University in the spring of 2007 with a Bachelor’s Degree in Sociology concentration Criminal Justice. I attended the reserve / Intermittent Academy in 2008. I am also employed as a Correctional Officer at the Hampshire Sheriff’s Office in Northampton.



Hampshire Regional School District

It appears that spring has finally found New England and to quote Shakespeare: "April hath put a spirit of youth in everything." The feeling of energy and renewal is around us as evidenced by the increased outdoor activity in our school communities and budding plans for the last weeks of the school year.

While this winter was long, it was also a season of significant accomplishment in our schools: the HRHS Chamber Singers performed in Williamsburg and on WGBY; Mr. Venne shoveled snow from the roof of Helen E. James School; "Bye Bye Birdie" entertained us; "Warrior" book series author Tui Sutherland visited eager fans at Norris; 8th grade students built hardy cold frame garden boxes for spring planting; Westhampton students learned the benefits of healthy eating and cooking; teachers at New Hingham piloted systematic universal screening and tiered instruction and celebrated world cultures through art and music; the HRHS Wrestling Team, Girls' Basketball and Cheerleaders all won their league titles; and, HRHS was selected as the District F recipient of the MIAA Sportsmanship Award. In addition, HRHS students completed community service activities in all five towns and beyond, securing their commitment to learning and service.

Throughout the District, teachers and administrators are working together developing a Literacy Action Plan, participating on the District Data Team, orienting themselves to the New Curriculum Frameworks, implementing Race to the Top initiatives, improving differentiated instruction, and taking on the challenge of integrating rapidly changing technology into all aspects of our schools. If you can find the time, don't miss the opportunity to learn about "Compassionate Math -- 21st Century Skills in Action" at HRHS, "Integrating Technology Across the Curriculum" at Norris, or the "PK-8 Robotics" project implemented throughout the District.

All of these events – and many more – confirm that, in spite of the rhetoric and debate about school funding and the quality of public education we hear in the national dialogue, we do not have to look far to find strong, creative teaching and committed professionals who have strong support from parents and other community members who recognize the essential importance of vibrant, high-achieving public schools.

Supporting our cycle of continuous improvement and our goal of continuing to increase coordination between and among our schools there are two documents on the Superintendent's website that you are encouraged to review. The first is "HRSD Goals" which was presented at the February 17, 2011 All School Committees Meeting and clearly captures much of the work being done to improve in-

ASSESSORS

The Assessors have been performing routine annual tasks in order to keep their records current. They have reviewed the exemption applications for fiscal year 2010 and have filed for and received approval of reimbursement from the state. Applications for abatement of real estate taxes also have been reviewed and completed.

The Assessors will be reviewing the 2010 building permits in the near future. You may see them measuring and updating their information. The Assessors are also continuing to replace outdated photos of properties. If you have any concerns regarding this process, they can be reached at 268-8403.

struction and enhance learning opportunities for our students. The second document is the "District Improvement Plan 2010-2012" which summarizes the activities and strategies currently guiding district improvement. Both documents can be accessed by clicking on the link found on the Superintendent's website.

As we approach the conclusion of this school year with MCAS, spring sports, graduations, and town meetings, we are also looking forward to the 2011-2012 school year. The upcoming school year presents us with fiscal challenges but opportunity and change, as well. There will be coordinated work on curriculum alignment with the New Frameworks in all of our schools, administrative changes at HRHS and Williamsburg, and continued movement toward a new or renovated school in Wil-

liamsburg. As you know, the students and staff of your public schools appreciate and depend on your support. Working together, we can ensure that our schools remain robust and safe with learning opportunities that teach strong academic skills and enhance critical thinking, creativ-

ity, collaboration, and communication skills that will prepare our students for rewarding and meaningful lives. By holding on to the spirit of youth that spring brings, each of us can sustain the work that is required to educate our children.



TOWN OF WILLIAMSBURG

141 Main Street
PO Box 447
Haydenville, MA 01039
Phone: 413.268.8400
Fax: 413.268.8409
Web-site: www.burgy.org

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 7
Haydenville, MA 01039

Resident/Boxholder
Williamsburg, MA
01096

PUBLIC GARDENS NEWS

Williamsburg

The new Meekins Mill River Park has been prepared to host the new Burgy Thursdays Farmers' Market commencing on May 12th. The lawn is finally filling in and is reaching maturity for the summer-long Market series.

Working with the Town Highway Department, new Goshen Stone bench pads have been installed to meet the new walkway grade and will soon hold repaired benches, and the new topsoil will be

seeded with the aim of establishing green lawns by Memorial Day if all goes well. The stone was generously donated by Gary Warner of the Goshen Stone Company, and represents yet another example of his continued generosity on behalf of the public places in Williamsburg.

If you are interested in helping to maintain the plantings in any of the Public Gardens, please call Nick Dines at 268-3295. The "Williamsburg Dead-Head Society" wel-

comes volunteers of all abilities.

Haydenville

Haydenville Residents—Do you admire the beautiful plantings in the center of Williamsburg? Would you like to see some plantings in the Haydenville Village Center? If so, please join interested village residents and Nick Dines for an organizational meeting of the "Haydenville Dead-Head Society" on May 17 at 6:30 PM at the Town Offices. The Society is looking for anyone interested in planning, planting, and helping to maintain

plantings. Can't make this meeting date? Call (268-0064) or e-mail [Laura Baker \(lbaker@crocker.com\)](mailto:lbaker@crocker.com) to connect or, if you don't have time to participate, but would like to donate to help buy plants / supplies, please let us know.

