

The BallardVale Gazette

Newsletter of the BallardVale Historic District Commission

Volume 2, Number 1

BallardVale, Massachusetts

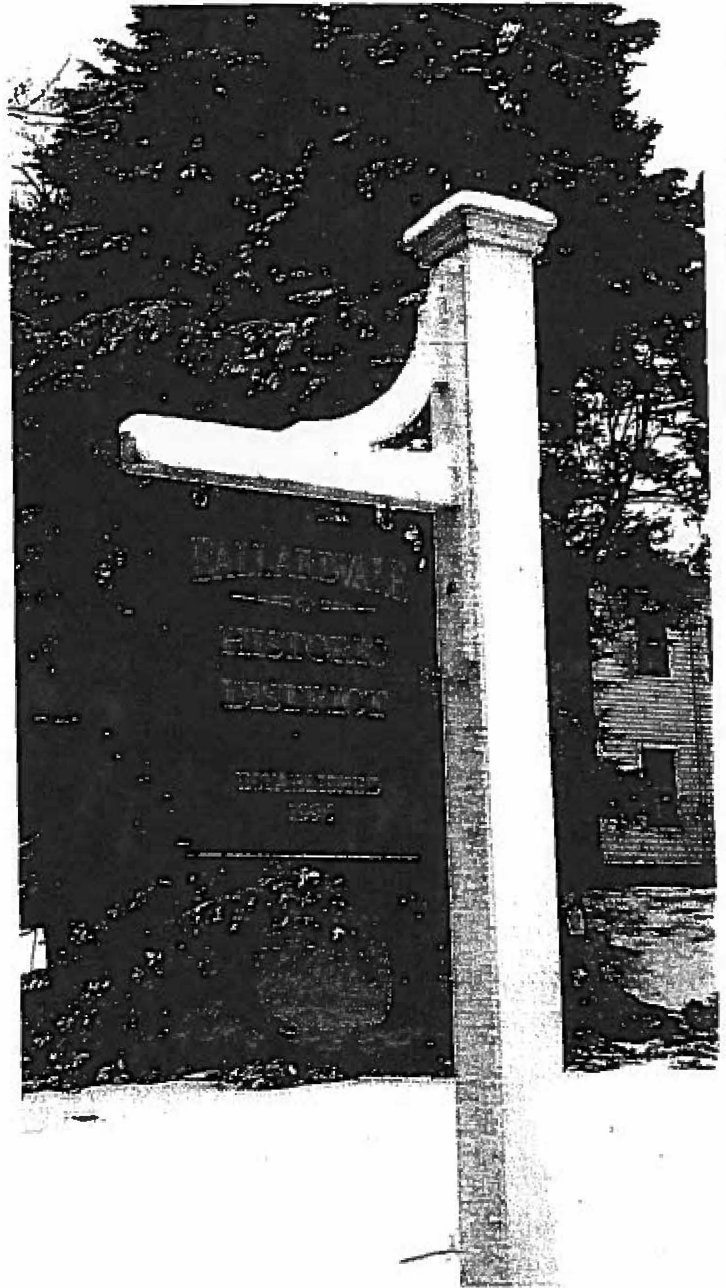
March 2002

HISTORIC DISTRICT SIGNS

More than one person wondered why several eight-foot tall white posts had sprung up around the neighborhood this past fall... But once the brackets and signs were added, the mystery was solved. Five new signs now mark entry into the BallardVale Historic District. Look for signs located at the perimeters of the district on Tewksbury Street, River Street and Clark Road, and one each near the intersections of Andover Street with Hall Avenue and Woburn Street.

TREE LIGHTING: A BRIGHT SPOT IN THE HOLIDAY SEASON

It didn't matter that there was no snow on the ground or in the air. Everyone who gathered on BallardVale Green on Sunday, December 2, to celebrate the tree lighting was in high holiday spirits. Over one hundred BallardVale neighbors and friends held candles and sang carols together as the tree was lit for the holiday season. Great thanks and appreciation go to Dick Bowen for decorating the tree this year and every year in the past, and for his wonderful idea to make this a neighborhood celebration. Thanks also go to Diane and Jessica Derby and Brian Major for leading everyone in song, and for everyone who brought hot chocolate and holiday treats to share. We look forward to this becoming one of the annual and much-loved events in BallardVale.



Historic district sign at the corner of Andover Street and Hall Avenue.

WE'VE BEEN ASKED...

Do I Really Need Permission to Put Up a Shed?

The long answer is yes, you do need permission to put a shed on your property. Any owner or resident within the historic district contemplating work on any part of his or her property that is visible from a public way should notify the BallardVale Historic District Commission by filing an application for changes to be made. "Work" should be interpreted to include alterations, rebuilding, new construction, restoration, removal, demolition or changes in exterior composition. "Building" refers to a combination of materials forming a shelter for persons, animals or property. The BVHDC guidelines include, but are not limited to, architectural style, general arrangement and setting, building materials, fences and walls, sheds, garages, outbuildings, style of windows, doors, lights, signs, and other exterior features. Both homeowners and business owners must be in compliance with historic district regulations.

Historic Districts have three major purposes as stated in Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws: to preserve and protect the distinctive characteristics of the buildings and places significant to the history of the Commonwealth's cities and towns; to maintain and improve the settings of those buildings and places; and to encourage compatibility with existing buildings when new buildings are planned within the district. Historic district commissions do not prevent changes from occurring, nor do they prevent new construction. Their purpose is to ensure that changes and additions are harmonious, and to prevent changes that might detract from the aesthetic and historic values of the district. The Commission does not halt growth, but allows for the careful consideration of change. A local historic district is not meant to be burdensome to property owners, but is established to administer changes and enhance the value of the district.

The short answer is yes, you do need permission to put up a shed on your property. The BVHDC recommends that applications for a

certificate for a shed, or any other project like those described above, be submitted 60-90 days prior to the commencement of any project. Applications may be obtained from the Department of Community Development and Planning on the lower level of Town Hall (36 Bartlet Street), and should include a drawing of the proposed plan and its relationship to existing buildings on the lot, along with dimensions, type and style of materials to be used. Completed applications should be returned to the Department of Community Development and Planning a minimum of 14 days prior to the regularly scheduled meeting of the BVHDC (normally the first Wednesday of each month). Remember to secure all appropriate work or building permits from Town Hall in addition to Commission approval before you begin work on your house, property or building.

WE'VE BEEN ASKED... is a regular feature of the BallardVale Gazette. Please send your question to BallardVale Gazette c/o M.P.Bogan, 139 Andover Street, Andover MA 01810.

SPRING CLEAN UP

Join friends and neighbors to celebrate "Clean Up, Paint Up, Fix Up Week" in BallardVale! On a Saturday in mid-May (TBA), choose from a multitude of activities aimed at sprucing up BallardVale including painting fire hydrants, curbing and signs, picking up trash and litter, weeding and raking the playground, BallardVale Green and other historic district public areas, and planting bulbs and flowers. Bring your tools (some supplies will be provided by the town) and your energy for a morning of work and fun. Coffee and doughnuts will be provided. Look for more information in the Townsman and on posters around BallardVale as the date draws near. Remember no one can do everything, but everyone can do something. And it'll be fun! See you in mid-May.

Open Burning Dates – Jan. 15 to May1, 2002.
Check with the Fire Department for guidelines and restrictions. A burn permit is required.

The Community Preservation Act

Protecting Andover's history and quality of life

The Community Preservation Act (CPA), General Law 44B, is new legislation that helps Massachusetts communities create a permanent stream of funding dedicated to:

- Preserving open space
- Preserving historic buildings and landscapes,
- Creating and maintaining affordable housing.

CPA funds are raised through a local surcharge on the property tax plus state matching funds. The state funds come from deed transfer fees and are about \$25 million each year. The state match is 100 percent right now.

Because of CPA Andover has the opportunity to create a dedicated source of funding to accomplish the goals of preserving land, protecting Andover's singular history and supporting affordable housing.



Mary N. French Reservation

What could Andover do with the CPA money?

- Create and preserve open space
- Acquire and preserve historic resources
- Preserve land for recreational use
- Create and support community housing
- Rehabilitate or restore such open space, historic resources, land for recreational use and community housing that is acquired or created with CPA funds
- With respect to community housing, encourage the use of existing buildings or construction of new buildings on previously developed areas.

Why is this important?

Historically Andover has planned wisely. Town boards have written a comprehensive master plan, an open space and recreation plan and an affordable housing plan. In addition, for the past ten years Andover citizens have spent an average of \$432,000 per year on purchasing open space. Now the town has the opportunity to gain a dedicated stream of funds, that is money coming in each year and targeted for these three areas, to continue to carry out these plans. The added bonus is a state match of up to 100 percent right now.

Is Community Preservation a public process?



The CPA Act requires a new bylaw to set up a Community Preservation Committee to recommend to Town Meeting how to spend the money. They are: one member each from the Planning Board, Preservation Commission, Conservation Commission, Housing Authority, Housing Partnership Committee, one member representing recreation and open space interests and three appointed by the Town Manager. The CPA Committee holds public meetings and makes recommendations to Town Meeting. Town Meeting decides how to spend the money.

How does Andover adopt the Community Preservation Act?

- Pass the act at Town Meeting, April 22, 2002
- Then, pass the act at the ballot box at the state election, Nov. 5, 2002.

How will CPA affect property taxes?

Taxpayers currently exempt from property taxes under Chapter 59 of the Massachusetts General Laws are exempt from CPA surcharge.

The average assessment in Andover is \$352,852.

Based on this, the average yearly surcharge is **\$117, in Fiscal Year 2003, at 3 percent.** These figures assume an exemption of the first \$100,000 from the assessed value. More than 80 percent of the homes in Andover are assessed below \$400,000.

How much will it raise for Andover?

With the first \$100,000 exemption, the **3 percent surcharge** will raise from taxation **\$1,413,000 per year.**

How about that state match?

The state match will likely be 100 percent in the first year. It will decline in future years as other municipalities pass it and more have to share the \$25,000,000 state fund.



Provided by Andover Community Trust

How long will CPA remain in effect?

CPA remains in effect for a minimum of five years from the date it is approved. After five years it can be revoked through a Town Meeting vote followed by voter approval at the polls. The level of surcharge and optional exemptions can be changed at any time after CPA is approved, through the same process.

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

At this year's Town Meeting, held on April 22 and 23 (also April 29 and 30 if necessary), Andover residents will be presented with a unique opportunity to preserve historic areas and architecture during a time when development pressure is the primary force determining the character of Andover. Among the many articles put before the town, three may be of particular interest to BallardVale residents: Traffic Calming Measures in BallardVale, the Community Preservation Act, and the Historic Preservation Overlay District. Residents of BallardVale are encouraged to attend the meeting and be heard.

Because of the length of the warrant articles, it is impossible to print them in full below. A summary for each is provided, however, and hopefully these offer some answers to the questions generated by the articles. The enclosed League of Women Voters insert provides information on the Community Preservation Act. Please refer to the Town Warrant for information and the official language of the following warrant articles.

I. Traffic Calming Measures in BallardVale

Warrant Abstract: In June 1999, the Town of Andover established BallardVale/Lowell Junction Traffic Management Task Force to address a wide variety of traffic and traffic-related issues in the BV/LJ area. This group, made up of area residents, local organizations, industry leaders, representatives of Town boards and departments, and legislative representatives, met monthly and held a series of public meetings discussing issues related to traffic congestion, vehicle speed, pedestrian safety, public spaces and historic character. The above warrant article represents a request to construct traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements that have been identified as critical in protecting the health, safety and welfare of the residents of BallardVale. The following is a brief description of the planned improvements. 1. Four (4) speed tables on Clark Road. 2. Four (4) crosswalks on Andover

Street in the following locations: BallardVale Playground, Post Office, Dale Street, and near River Street just after the bridge. 3. Sidewalk and intersection improvements at Dale Street and Andover Street. 4. Sidewalk and intersection improvements at Tewksbury Street and Andover Street. This warrant article is brought on the request of the BallardVale/Lowell Junction Traffic Management Task Force.

II. Community Preservation Act

Please refer to the insert published by the Andover/North Andover League of Women Voters in this issue of the Gazette.

III. Historic Preservation Overlay District

Warrant Summary The Historic Preservation Overlay District warrant article allows the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant a Special Permit to reduce the dimensional requirements for lots in the South Main Street SRC Zoning District so that historically significant structures can be relocated and saved. It does not create a historic district and it does not impose any additional requirements in land in the overlay district. In order for the Zoning Board to grant such a permit it must find that it will not be unreasonably detrimental to the established or future character of the neighborhood. The dwelling must be (a) listed on the National register of Historic Places; or (b) listed on the State (Commonwealth of Massachusetts) register of Historic Places; or (c) listed on the Andover Historic Building Survey. This article gives the Town a historic preservation tool to encourage the relocation (saving) of historically significant structures. This warrant article is on the request of Michael Ristuccia and others.

NOMINATIONS FOR PRESERVATION AWARDS

The Preservation Awards are a collaborative effort of the Andover Preservation Commission and the Andover Historical Society. We ask for nominations for houses, landscapes or businesses located throughout the town of Andover that have done sensitive historic restoration to exteriors, sympathetic additions to an historic structure, appropriate adaptive reuse of an historic building (i.e. the Bradley School in BallardVale) or interior restoration to an historic building. We also recognize the special craftsmanship of individuals.

If you have a nomination for a Preservation Award, please notify Karen Herman of the Preservation Commission as soon as possible. Nominations are being considered now and awards are given in May. Those nominations received too late for this round will be considered for next year's award. Contact Karen by phone at 978-470-2671 or by email at KVWHerman@attbi.com.

CALENDAR

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| Mar.11 (Monday) | Selectmen's Meeting: discussion of warrant article submitted by BallardVale/Lowell Junction Traffic Task Force requesting funds for traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements in BallardVale. Town Offices – Selectmen's Conference Room – 7:30PM |
| Mar. 13 (Wednesday) | BallardVale Historic District Commission monthly meeting
Town Offices – 2 nd Floor Conference Room – 7:00PM |
| Mar. 19 (Tuesday) | Planning Board: Public Hearing/ Amend Zoning: private article P-61 and 62 to create historic district overlay. Town Offices – 3 rd Floor Conference Room – 7:30PM |
| Apr. 3 (Wednesday) | BallardVale Historic District Commission monthly meeting
Town Offices – 2 nd Floor Conference Room – 7:00PM |
| Apr. 22 (Monday) | Annual Town Meeting
Collins Center of Andover High School – 7:00PM |
| Apr. 23 (Tuesday) | Annual Town Meeting (see above...Town Meeting will continue on the evenings of April 28 and 29 if necessary. |
| May 1 (Wednesday) | BallardVale Historic District Commission monthly meeting
Town Offices – 2 nd Floor Conference Room – 7:00PM |

BallardVale Historic District Commission

*Andover Town Offices
36 Bartlet Street
Andover, MA 01810*

US POSTAGE
PAID
ANDOVER, MA
PERMIT NO. 41

See you in May for Spring Clean Up!