

**West Stockbridge Planning Board
Special Permit Application**
**Form SP
02/22/22**

Applicant Great Barrington Masonic Temple Association, Inc.
Address 172 S. Sandisfield Road
New Marlborough, Massachusetts 01230
Phone (413) 446-2996
Email catddgm31@yahoo.com

FOR TOWN CLERK USE ONLY
DATE & TIME FILED
April 25, 2022 2pm
TOWN CLERK SIGNATURE
ASST.
Marij Ryan

Property Owner Great Barrington Masonic Temple Association, Inc.
Address 172 S. Sandisfield Road
New Marlborough, MA 01230
Phone (413) 446-2996

Site Address 4 Sportsmen Club Lane, West Stockbridge, MA

Section of the West Stockbridge Zoning bylaw under which you are applying 6.3 (Special Permit)
and 4.11 (13) Private Club in R-1 District

Was the project/issue discussed with the Building Commissioner/Zoning Enforcement Officer X Yes 3/23/22 (Date) ___ No
 (Please note: It is always a good idea, prior to submitting your application to the Planning Board, to review your Special Permit Application with the Building Commissioner/Zoning Enforcement Officer who can help you determine exactly which permits apply to you)

Description of the Project or Changes Proposed (please attach additional pages as needed):
See Project Narrative, List of Attachments, and Attachments, all filed herewith.

NOTICE: The applicant shall provide: three (3) copies of the completed Application, either typewritten or printed clearly and legibly; three (3) copies of the plans and specifications (as required on Page 2); a Certified List of Abutters and one (1) pdf of the entire package including a stamped application from the Town Clerk, and a Certified List of Abutters sent to planningboard@weststockbridge-ma.gov.

The Certified List of Abutters must be obtained from the Assessors' Office (Fee of \$10)

In addition, the Applicant shall pay a **Fee of \$300.00** for processing the application, which includes notifying abutters and the publication of legal notices of the Public Hearing. (Please make check payable to the Town of West Stockbridge).

Signature Christopher Tanini **Date** 4/13/2022
DocuSigned by: 1DBF83655BD84B1... (Applicant)

Signature _____ **Date** _____
 (Owner)

Addendum to Application for Special Permit

Applicant: Great Barrington Masonic Temple Association, Inc.

Property Address: 4 Sportsmen Club Lane, West Stockbridge

Zoning District: R-1

Tax Map # 406-051

The Applicant is requesting a Special Permit under Sections 4.11(13) and 6.3 of the Zoning Bylaw of the Town of West Stockbridge (the "By Law") to use the former West Stockbridge Sportsmen's Club as a Freemasons Lodge. The Applicant is a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Project Narrative

The property was, for many years, owned by the West Stockbridge Sportsmen's Club (WSSC) and used as a social club of sorts where members of the public would gather to recreate. The WSSC became delinquent in the payment of their property taxes and abandoned the building. On January 28, 2019, the Tax Collector for the Town recorded an Instrument of Taking for non-payment of property taxes. On August 13, 2020, the Treasurer of the Town recorded a Foreclosure Notice.

The Applicant purchased the property on March 18, 2022 for \$120,506.63. All proceeds went to the Town of West Stockbridge (\$117,850.64 for the tax title payoff and \$2,655.99 for outstanding FY22 property taxes).

The property contains approximately five acres and consists of a primary structure, two small picnic pavilions, and two small accessory structures, as shown on the attached site plan. The property is abutted to the south by approximately 30 acres, formerly owned by the West Stockbridge Sportsmens Club, which was taken by eminent domain by the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game.

The Applicant intends to remodel and restore the primary structure on the property, which has sat abandoned for years. Plans include improvements to the interior kitchen, bathrooms, main level, exterior decks, ramp and exterior building. The Applicant does not have plans to change the footprint of the existing structure or to construct any new structures on the property.

The Applicant, Great Barrington Masonic Temple Association, Inc., is a Masonic Lodge also known as the Cincinnatus Lodge. The Cincinnatus Lodge is originally based in Great Barrington and is the sister lodge to Wisdom Lodge of West Stockbridge. The Cincinnatus and Wisdom Lodges intend to use the property for their weekly and monthly meetings. The Cincinnatus Lodge holds weekly meetings on Wednesday nights from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM. Wisdom Lodge holds its meetings on Thursday evening meetings from 6:00 to 9:30 PM. Both lodges also meet monthly on the Friday on or before the full moon, excluding July and August. In total, the two lodges would use the property for approximately 9 meetings per month.

The Applicant would also use the picnic pavilions and grounds for no more than five events per year, for example clam bakes, fishing derbies, steak bakes and outdoor activities. With respect to neighbors and abutters, the Applicant would keep noise levels to a respectful level and would notify them of any larger events that could happen. There is ample acreage between the pavilions and neighboring properties so that any such events would not create a disturbance to neighbors.

The Masons are famously good neighbors – their core beliefs include fellowship, charity and benevolence. Their own rules and regulations prohibit them from consuming alcohol on Lodge property. All meetings and events are quiet and respectful.

Zoning

Section 4.11 (Principal and Accessory Uses). Pursuant to Section 4.11(13) of the Bylaw, a Private Club in the R-1 Zoning District is a use which may be authorized by Special Permit from the Planning Board in accordance with the provisions of Section 6.3 of the Bylaw.¹ The Applicant's proposed use of the property for its meeting lodge fits within the definition of "Private Club" as defined in the Bylaw ("Land and/or buildings used exclusively by members of an organized group, who are elected by a committee or by membership, and not open to public use."). The property would be used exclusively by the Cincinnatus and Wisdom Lodges of the Massachusetts Freemasons. The Freemasons are an organized group whose officers are elected by membership votes. The property would not be open to public use.

The Applicant's proposed use of the property for its outdoor events (no more than five per year) qualifies as an accessory use as defined in Section 4.11(9) ("recreational facility not for commercial purposes"). Pursuant to Section 4.11(9) of the Bylaw, this use is permitted by right in the R-1 district. These events, like the regular monthly meetings, would be exclusive to the Freemasons and their invitees and would not be open to the public.

Section 6.3. Before granting a Special Permit, the permit granting authority shall find that the proposed use:

a. Is in compliance with all provisions and requirements of this bylaw, and in harmony with its general intent and purpose;

As discussed above, the proposed use of the property as a lodge for the Applicant's meetings falls within the bylaw's definition of a private club. The meetings are not open to the general public and are lightly attended. The proposed use of the property to host 5 outdoor events per year falls within the by-right accessory use as a non-commercial recreational facility.

¹ The Applicant notes that the Bylaw provides for an alternate route under Section 6.1.5 (Abandonment), which provides that a nonconforming use which has been abandoned may be reestablished by grant of a Special Permit from the Board of Appeals. The property was formerly used as a social club before this use was abandoned. At this time, the Applicant is not pursuing a revival of the abandoned use, but is instead seeking a special permit from the Planning Board for a Private Club as defined in the bylaws. The Applicant's proposed use is significantly more benign and less detrimental to adjacent uses than the property's previous use as a social club.

The proposed use is in harmony with the purpose of the Bylaw in that it does not change the footprint of the existing structure; it does not cause overcrowding; it does not create additional congestion (it creates significantly less congestion than the property's previous use); and it does not burden natural resources or municipal services.

b. Is essential or desirable to the public convenience or welfare at the proposed location;

The proposed use involves the necessary improvement to the existing structure, which has been abandoned and fallen into disrepair. The restoration would provide an up-to-date meeting space that will be in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

The Masons' core beliefs are fellowship, charity and benevolence, and their goal is to use the property to further their mission to help others, including neighbors and the Town of West Stockbridge.

c. Will not be detrimental to adjacent uses or to the established or future character of the neighborhood;

The use of the property would largely go unnoticed, as it is abutted to the south by conservation land and to the west by a river. The property to the north (2 Sportsmen's Club Lane) contains a residence that is separated by more than 350 feet from the primary structure where meetings would be held. As discussed above, the actual use of the property would be limited to approximately nine meetings per month and 5 outdoor events per year. The existing structure lends itself perfectly to a meetinghouse.

The Applicant's proposed use is significantly less burdensome to the Town, neighbors and abutters than the property's previous use as a sportsmen's club. When the property was in use as a sportsmen's club, members of the public would gather there late into the night drinking alcohol and having raucous parties. The Freemasons would use the property primarily for quiet weekly meetings, and they are prohibited from drinking alcohol on Lodge property.

The property is not suited for residential use and could not easily be converted to a residence. It is difficult to imagine another non-residential use for this property, aside from the Applicant's proposed use, that could be less burdensome on surrounding properties.

The Applicant's use of the property would improve the character of the neighborhood - by restoring and repairing the abandoned building and maintaining the surrounding land, the Applicant would be preventing the property from going to waste and creating an eyesore.

d. Will not create undue traffic congestion, or unduly impair pedestrian safety;

Weekly meetings are lightly attended and would result in very little traffic. The use would not create undue traffic congestion or unduly impair pedestrian safety. The Freemasons are prohibited from consuming alcohol at a Mason lodge.

e. Will not overload any public water, drainage, or sewer system or any other municipal facility to such an extent that the proposed use or any existing use in the immediate area or in any other area of the Town will be unduly subjected to hazards affecting public health, safety, or general welfare.

The property is served by a private well and septic system. The Applicant's use of the property will not impact any public water, drainage, sewer system or any other municipal facility, nor will it subject the Town or the public to any hazards affecting public health, safety or general welfare.

List of Attachments

1. Site Plan ("Plot Plan Prepared for Great Barrington Temple Association, West Stockbridge, Massachusetts, March – 2022, Scale 1" = 80', Kelly, Granger, Parsons & Associates, Inc.")
2. Map showing locus and abutting properties
3. Certified List of Abutters

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CERTIFY TO: CHICAGO TITLE INSURANCE COMPANY &

LAZAN, GLOVER & PUCIOSKI, LLP
I HEREBY REPORT THAT THE BUILDING(S) SHOWN ON THIS PLAN
ARE APPROXIMATELY LOCATED ON THE GROUND AS SHOWN THE
BUILDINGS DO LIE WITHIN THE 100 YEAR FLOOD PLAIN AS
SHOWN ON THE H.U.D. FLOOD MAP. THIS PLAN IS NOT MADE
FROM AN INSTRUMENT SURVEY.

THIS IS NOT A SURVEY AND IS SUBJECT TO ANY STATEMENT OF
FACTS A SURVEY MAY REVEAL.

THIS PLAN IS NOT TO BE USED FOR BUILDING PERMITS, SPECIAL
PERMITS, VARIANCES OR FENCES, OR ANY OTHER PURPOSE THAN
TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE BUILDINGS ARE ON THE LOT BEING
CONVEYED BY DEED REFERENCED HEREON.

FOR ATTORNEY USE ONLY

THIS PARCEL IS SUBJECT TO AND WITH THE BENEFIT OF ALL
RIGHTS, RESTRICTIONS, CONDITIONS, EASEMENTS, LEASES,
ENCUMBRANCES AND APPURTENANCES OF RECORD.

LOCUS DEED: BK-409 PG-135 & BK-385 PG-46
PROPERTY ADDRESS: 4 SPORTSMEN CLUB LANE

LEGEND

- △ POINT COMPUTED
- IRON PIPE FOUND
- ⌵ WELL



Scale 1" = 80'

PLOT PLAN PREPARED FOR

GREAT BARRINGTON TEMPLE ASSOCIATION

WEST STOCKBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

MARCH - 2022 SCALE 1" = 80'

KELLY, GRANGER, PARSONS & ASSOCIATES, INC.

PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYORS

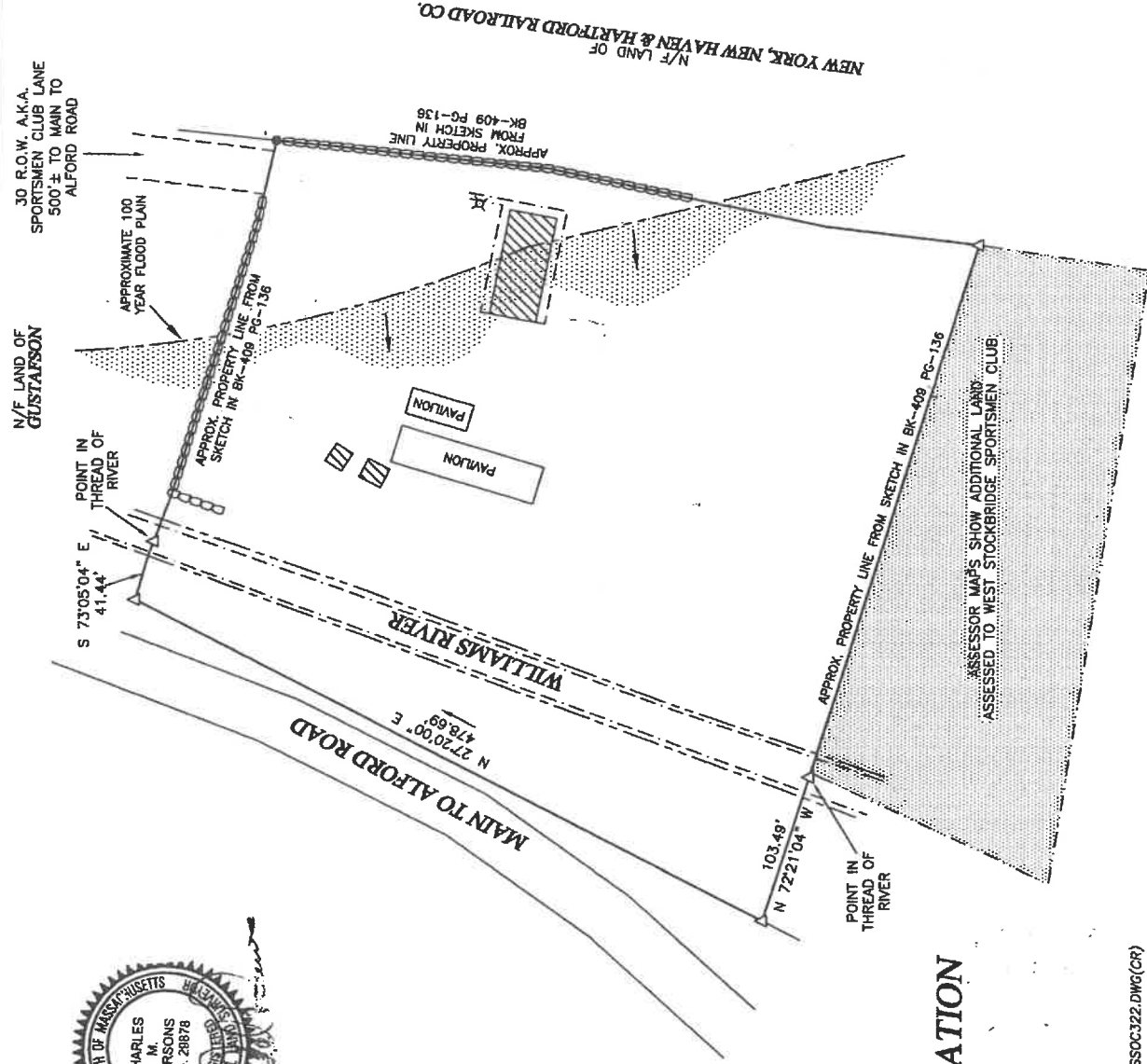
312 MAIN STREET P.O. BOX 88

GREAT BARRINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01230

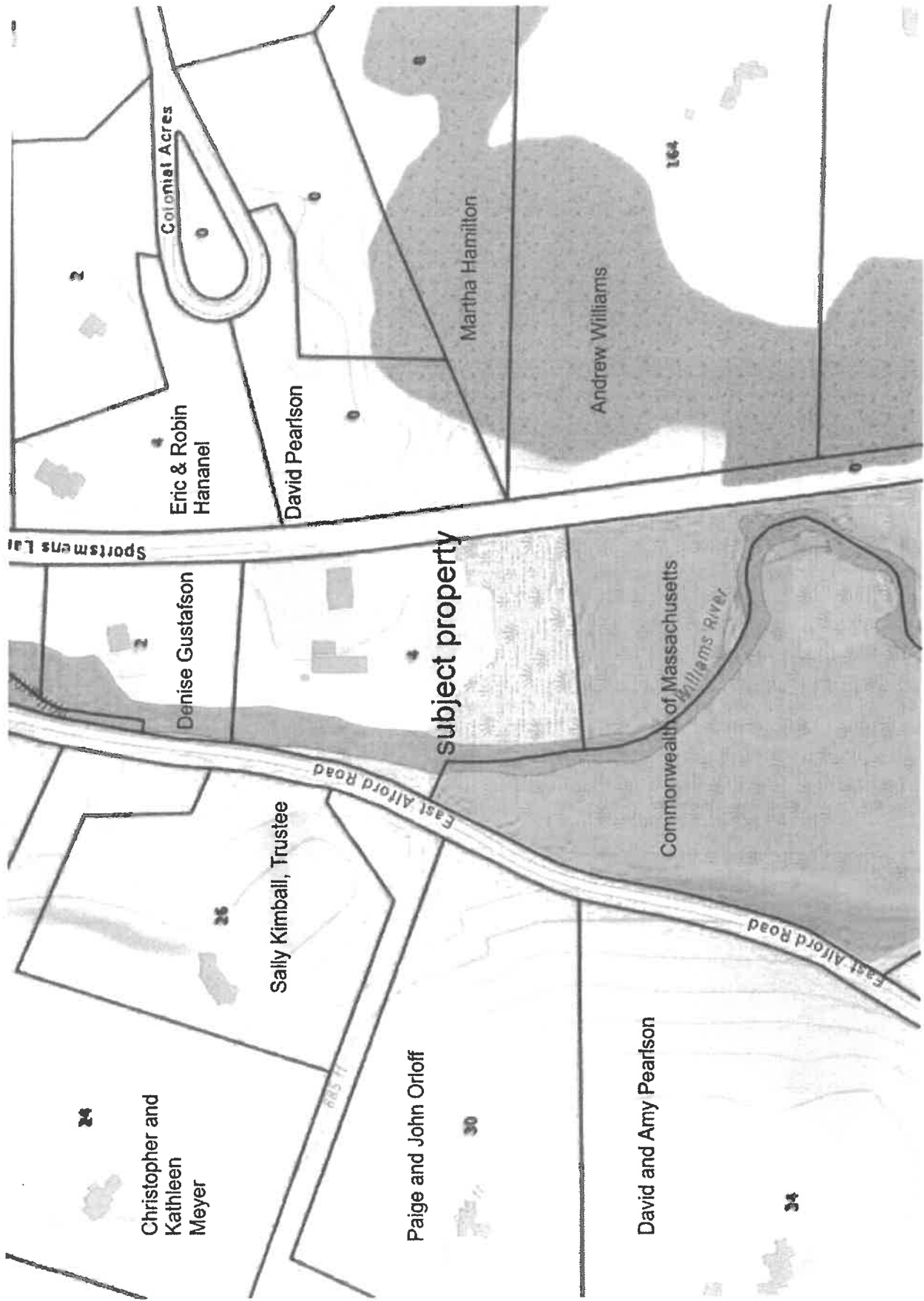
FAX (413) 528-1912

PHONE (413) 528-3291

C:\Carlson Projects\WEST STOCKBRIDGE\SPORTSMEN CLUB LANE\GB TEMPLE ASSOC\322.DWG(CR)



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300' ABUTTERS LIST	4 SPORTSMEN CLUB LANE	WEST STOCKBRIDGE MA			
MAP 406/051					
PARCEL ID	OWNER	ADDRESS	CITY NAME	STATE	ZIP
326/406.0-0000-0042.0	ORLOFF PAIGE & JOHN	30 EAST ALFORD ROAD	WEST STOCKBRIDGE	MA	01266-
326/406.0-0000-0046.0	MEYER, CHRISTOPHER R & KATHLEEN M	24 EAST ALFORD ROAD	WEST STOCKBRIDGE	MA	01266-
326/406.0-0000-0051.0	WEST STOCKBRIDGE SPORTSMENS CLUB	4 SPORTSMEN CLUB LANE	WEST STOCKBRIDGE	MA	01266-
326/405.0-0000-0028.0	DAVID PEARLSON INC	34 EAST ALFORD ROAD	WEST STOCKBRIDGE	MA	01266-
326/405.0-0000-0025.0	HAMILTON MARTHA	8 CARLOTTO ROAD	HOUSATONIC	MA	01236-
326/405.0-0000-0029.0	HANANEL ERIC & ROBIN	50 EAST 79TH ST. APT 14D	NEW YORK	NY	10075-
326/406.0-0000-0043.0	BRENNAN, SUSAN M	P.O. BOX 539	WEST STOCKBRIDGE	MA	01266-
326/406.0-0000-0047.0	LIZT, MADELINE	22 EAST ALFORD	WEST STOCKBRIDGE	MA	01266-
326/406.0-0000-0052.1	COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS	251 CAUSEWAY ST. SUITE 400	BOSTON	MA	02114-
326/404.0-0000-0041.0	MASSACHUSETTS ELECTRIC CO PROPERTY TAX	40 SYLVAN ROAD	WALTHAM	MA	02451-
326/405.0-0000-0024.0	WILLIAMS ANDREW	164 GT. BARRINGTON RD	HOUSATONIC	MA	01236-
326/405.0-0000-0036.0	GUSTAFSON, DENISE	PO BOX 32	WEST STOCKBRIDGE	MA	01266-
326/406.0-0000-0041.0	PEARLSON, DAVID & AMY	34 EAST ALFORD RD	WEST STOCKBRIDGE	MA	01266-
326/406.0-0000-0045.0	KIMBALL, SALLY TRUSTEE	2540 OTTER LANE	JOHN'S ISLAND	SC	29455-
326/405.0-0000-0037.0	COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS	251 CAUSEWAY ST SUITE 400	BOSTON	MA	02114-
Ed Sporn, Member					
Michelle Laramée-Jenny, Member					
Susan Lupo, Member					
This document reflects the data for a certified abutters list for 4 Sportsmen Club Lane, map 406 parcel 51 as prepared by the West Stockbridge Board of Assessors.					
<i>Mary K. Stodden</i>					
Mary K. Stodden, Administrative Assistant					