



Town of Sudbury

Historical Commission

Flynn Building
278 Old Sudbury Road
Sudbury, MA 01776
978-639-3387
Fax: 978-639-3314

historical@sudbury.ma.us

www.sudbury.ma.us/historicalcommission

MINUTES

NOVEMBER 9, 2020

Present: Chair Chris Hagger, Vice-Chair Diana Warren, Diana Cebra, Taryn Trexler, Jan Costa, Marjorie Katz, Steve Greene

Absent: Fred Bautze

Others Present: Rick Conard, Railroad Historian – Wayland Historical Commission

Mr. Hagger opened the meeting at 7:00 PM

Approval of September 22, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Hagger motioned to approve the September 22, 2020 meeting minutes. Ms. Warren seconded the motion. Roll call 7-0; Cebra-aye, Hagger-aye, Warren-aye, Greene-aye, Trexler-aye, Katz-aye, Costa-aye

CPC Application and MHC Grant Proposal – Historic Preservation Plan

Mr. Hagger informed the Commission that he would present the Historical Commission application at the CPC meeting on November 24, 2020.

Ms. Warren stated that she drafted a Mass Historical Commission pre-application, one-page statement (an initial notice of intent) for a grant for a community-wide Historic Preservation Plan. She asked for Commissioner's opinion on submitting this application and on the amount of the MHC Grant application to request \$30,000 to \$35,000. She recommended the higher amount explain that it is difficult to find a cultural resource consultant to take on the job of preparing a preservation plan.

Ms. Cebra endorsed MHC application and the amount of \$35,000, which would help to attract additional candidates.

Mr. Greene agreed with MHC application and the \$35,000 as well.

Ms. Trexler agreed with requesting \$35,000, and suggested checking with the Town of Salem, who received a grant for implementation of a Historical Plan. She mentioned that the Select Member Roberts asked at the recent CPC meeting if the Commission would be willing to follow the implementation recommendation that would be finalized in the Master Plan, noting that other Town committees/boards are seeking to be involved, as well.

Ms. Katz indicated that she was in favor of the suggested concept, and the dollar amount request.

Ms. Costa also agreed with concept, and the higher dollar amount. She suggested that the Commission consider and discuss interest expressed by other boards/committees regarding participation in the Historical Plan. Mr. Hagger asked how other communities are dealing with such considerations.

Ms. Warren said that based on the Commission's feedback the MHC grant request would be submitted for \$35,000. She stated that the proposed Master Plan initially indicated that historic preservation issues would be led by the Historical Commission, but may be changed to either the Select Board or Planning Board. She noted that the Massachusetts Historical Commission recognizes local historical commissions as the official agents of municipal government responsible for advising elected officials and boards, and responsible for community-wide historic preservation planning including master historic preservation plans, zoning, town owned historic buildings and sites and historical landscapes.

Ms. Warren commented that the MHC eligibility requirements for who can submit a planning grant application excludes boards of selectmen, and historic district commissions and planning boards may only apply if supported by the historical commission.

She also stated that there needs to be an educational effort to inform about what the Commission is and does.

Ms. Cebra expressed that input and participation from other Town groups was favored, and stressed the Historical Commission had a specialized focus on history and preservation aspects, and should take the lead on such related matters.

Mr. Hagger emphasized that there were two funding requests being considered; the MHC grant application and the Town CPC application. He suggested reaching out to the Planning Board before going forward with the CPC application.

In consideration of the CPC application, Ms. Warren stated that it was appropriate for the Commission to submit the CPC application and that while the Commission is the applicant, the Commission should seek the support of other boards and stakeholders in town like the Historical Society.

Mr. Greene confirmed that the Historical Commission should take the lead.

Ms. Trexler commented that certain interested groups must work together, and this action should not be regarded as a political struggle. She noted that she did not see a downside with joint efforts.

Ms. Warren agreed that mutual support is important and would be part of the process.

Mr. Hagger noted that related discussion would continue.

Master Plan – Preservation/Cultural Resources

Ms. Trexler commented that all drafts of the Master Plan were on the Town website, and public comment could be submitted via the website until December 9, 2020.

Ms. Warren asked when public comment would be included regarding Master Plan Volume 3. Ms. Trexler responded that Volume 3 reflected the action/implementation plan. Ms. Warren mentioned that principal lead would be addressed/determined in Volume 3. Ms. Trexler stated that such determination may have been finalized, or completed at the Planning Board level.

Mr. Hagger commented that the Commissioners missed an important participation opportunity/discussion. Ms. Warren stated that the Historical Commission was is being "disenfranchised." Ms. Cebra commented that she was shocked that the Commission had not been notified of such discussion/s; and therefore did not have opportunity for comment/input.

Ms. Costa confirmed that she and Ms. Trexler were community at large participants to the Master Plan Steering Committee members. She stated that such finalization was not anticipated by she nor Ms. Trexler.

Ms. Warren recommended the Commission should resume the discussion at the next meeting, in efforts to submit related comments to the Master Plan consultants and the Planning Board.

Demolition Delay Bylaw

Mr. Hagger reviewed aspects of the Sudbury Demolition Delay Bylaw. He stated former Town Manager Rodrigues and present Town Manager Hayes rejected the option of posting of a site inspection in order to speed the Bylaw process, and make a decision on the day of the site inspection. Mr. Hagger explained that both Town Managers rejected the same day determination option because it required the posting of a public hearing, where the public could access private properties being reviewed in the Demolition Delay Bylaw process.

Mr. Hagger confirmed there was very little time between the site visit, and the decision, and noted that a typical demolition delay decision averaged two to three months.

Ms. Warren affirmed that many on town boards and in town do not fully understand the Demolition Delay Bylaw process, and what the Historical Commission does. She noted that other Town boards such as ZBA, Conservation Commission, and Planning Board; have applications to review and consider, which often take many months to finalize. Ms. Warren indicated that she was concerned about setting precedent, and felt that applicants should be dealt with fairly and consistently. Ms. Warren acknowledged that she would be agreeable to the scheduling of two demolition delay meetings on the same day, but felt that productivity might be affected.

Ms. Cebra stressed that resident awareness was critical.

Ms. Trexler questioned if a site visit was always mandatory, especially if the property was included in the MACRIS (MA Cultural Resource Information System) listing. She indicated that the Sudbury Demolition Delay process could be improved upon. Mr. Hagger agreed that step 4 of the process could be improved, though additional administrative tasks would be required. Ms. Trexler noted that having an architect on the Commission would be beneficial.

Mr. Hagger stated that a site visit is worthwhile and provides information that is not on the MACRIS and that a site visit provides an opportunity to see the interior of a property.

Ms. Costa reminded the Commission that the Bylaw is currently posted on the Town website. She indicated an issue with the described Bylaw, is lack of specificity regarding some of the requirements

Ms. Costa agreed with Ms. Trexler's recommendation for standardized requirements, and supported the checklist approach for certain bylaw components. Ms. Costa recommended promoting cooperative relationships and interactions though the application of the demolition bylaw whenever possible. She stressed that supplying supplemental information, and providing adequate education regarding the demolition delay bylaw would be essential.

Ms. Warren said that a site visit is an important part of evaluating a historic property. She stated that the Demolition Delay bylaw already lists the information that an applicant must submit as part of a Demolition plan for a public hearing and currently Director of Planning guides the applicant through the bylaw process and reviews the demolition plan submission to determine if it is complete for a hearing to

be held. She noted that Framingham and other communities employ a part-time preservation planner, who handles the process.

Mr. Hagger recommended that Section 4 – Item 4 of the Bylaw process, could be elaborated upon. He queried if Town Counsel and Sudbury officials would provide further guidance. Ms. Warren suggested having a conversation with Mr. Duchesneau first.

Mr. Hagger suggested that partial demolition applications could receive a separate scheduling process. Mr. Hagger asked if any commissioner would like to help with the implementation of a shorter process when considering partial demolition projects. Mr. Hagger asked if Town Counsel might assist with enforcement of the demolition plans for which the Commission does not invoke a six month delay.

Ms. Katz had no particular comments at this time, but stated that she would review the suggestion for discussion at the next Commission meeting.

Ms. Cebra commented that the Building Inspector should be the enforcer of such plans. Ms. Costa maintained that the Commission should not be involved in litigation matters. Ms. Warren was in agreement.

Mr. Hagger stated that this topic would be included in the agenda for the next Historical Commission meeting.

Date for Next Meeting (s)

Ms. Dretler, Board of Selectmen Chair, asked about the upcoming agenda item regarding the Eversource – Transmission Line Project. Mr. Hagger responded the discussion would involve preparation for the meeting to be held with Eversource on December 9. He noted the Commissioners had follow-up questions regarding the site visit which took place several weeks ago, regarding Section 106.

Ms. Dretler asked about the upcoming discussion regarding Stone Tavern. Mr. Hagger responded that the Commission discovered some new construction on the Tavern that were not approved under the Planing Board site plan decision. It involves work being done, inside and outside at the Stone Tavern.

Mr. Hagger announced the next Historical Commission meeting would take place on November 17th at 6:30 PM. Mr. Hagger acknowledged that a meeting with Eversource would be scheduled for December 7 and December 10.

Stone Tavern Farmhouse

Mr. Hagger noted that the interior of the Stone Tavern Farmhouse had been completely gutted, and the outdoor windows, doors, and front portico had been demolished. Mr. Hagger commented that the proposed restoration had turned into a re-creation.

Ms. Warren noted that the Planning Board Site Plan Decision on the 554 Boston Post Road project included exterior elevation renderings that show how the exterior details of the tavern are to be restored and that the new construction of the tavern was different then the Site Plan elevations. She indicated that the two small windows in the gable ends were not part of the PB approved elevations but that the Commission had recommended that the windows be part of the rehabilitation and that the owner had installed them She recommended that the Commission support the owner inclusion of the small windows and recommended that the Planning Board approve this change to the elevation drawing.

Mr. Hagger asked if the Commissioners would endorse the developer's proposal to change two windows in the tavern. Ms. Warren suggested Commission representation at the November 18 Planning Board meeting.

All members agreed that the Stone Tavern Planning Board's Site Plan Decision had not been followed.

Ms. Warren commented that should the Site Plan Decision not be complied with for the Stone Tavern then she questioned creating a historic district as it would be so changed.

Eversource – Transmission Line Project

Ms. Warren updated the Commission on the hiring of the historical preservationist. She informed the Commissioners that Eversource finally permitted the historical preservation consultant - Ms. Stacy Spies, access to the railroad corridor. Ms. Warren affirmed that Ms. Spies would be presenting the Commission with her findings.

Ms. Warren stated that Eversource claimed the culverts are not in need of repair. Ms. Spies confirmed the culverts are in disrepair. Ms. Warren mentioned that Ms. Spies had been in communication with Mr. Conard.

Ms. Warren detailed that Eversource had sent considerable documentation recently. She stressed the Commission had the right to the un-redacted locational survey as part of the Commission's 106 review to understand the historical and archaeological resources are.

Ms. Warren detailed aspects of CWA Section 404 and NHPA Section 106 – Clean Water review. She stressed that resources included in Section 106, involve historical features/resources; and the Commission needed to determine if there are adverse effects on these resources.

Mr. Hagger stated the Commission could examine options that were discredited by Eversource, and stated that such comments by the Commission are critical; and dependent on the findings list to be supplied by the Historic Preservation consultant. Ms. Warren asked commissioners to consider questions they would want to ask the applicant.

Mr. Hagger asked that the Commissioners review the VHB letter dated September 30, 2020, which details the alternatives for the historic features, the two bridges, and the Section House.

Ms. Katz recommended that the Commission schedule a meeting dedicated only to the Eversource issue. Ms. Warren agreed with scheduling a special meeting. Mr. Hagger suggested meeting on December 7, December 10th and December 15. Ms. Warren suggested that Ms. Spies attend the December 7th and December 10th meetings.

Mr. Greene noted that the historical cross track should not be dug out, under any circumstance. He also recommended the retention of the track around the Station House.

Mr. Conard agreed to be of assistance to the Commission and Ms. Spies, and stated that he would try to attend future Historical Commission meetings.

Adjourn

Mr. Hagger motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Greene seconded the motion. Roll call; Greene-aye, Hagger-aye, Trexler-aye, Cebra-aye, Katz-aye, Costa-aye, Warren-aye.

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:16 PM