



Town of Sudbury

Historical Commission

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MINUTES

NOVEMBER 17, 2020

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

Others Present:

Director of Planning and Community Development Adam Duchesneau, Planning & Zoning Coordinator Beth Perry, Rick Conard, Railroad Historian – Wayland Historical Commission

Mr. Hagger opened the meeting at 6:30 PM

Chairman's Comments

Mr. Hagger commented about how to improve the Historical Commission meetings. He stressed that all members must be respectful of all member opinions, and asked that members be careful not to make comments about other Commissioners or express criticism about the Historical Commission. He suggested that if any members have such criticism, they should discuss those comments with him first. He strongly encouraged commissioners to step forward and volunteer to enact such change.

Mr. Hagger asked Commissioners to be mindful of the duration of meetings, and to keep comments as brief as possible. He encouraged all members to participate and offer their thoughts.

Eversource – Section 106

Ms. Warren provided update and stated the Historical Consultant had visited the railroad ROW site for a fourth time. Ms. Warren thanked Mr. Conard for assisting Ms. Spies with identifying various railroad features in the ROW. Ms. Warren noted that she had asked Ms. Spies to join the Commission at the December 7th and December 10th meetings.

Ms. Warren stated that she has been trying to connect with the Army Corps of Engineers. She noted that the bridges will be the focus of a Chapter 91 Waterways virtual public hearing on November 30, and encouraged Commissioners to attend the virtual hearing. She indicated that DCR license eligibility was not preferable. She asked that Commissioners review the materials sent by Eversource in order to compile questions to ask Ms. Spies and to also ask Eversource and DCR. Ms. Warren recommended that Commissioners think about the impacts of the Transmission Line project on the historical railroad resources holistically and consider the other alternatives regarding the two bridges.

Mr. Hagger asked if the report drafted by Ms. Spies would be distributed to the Commission before the December 7th meeting. Ms. Warren responded affirmatively, noting that Ms. Spies was working on it.

Ms. Trexler asked Mr. Conard about the trail section in Weston and Wayland. Mr. Conard responded that the Wayland Historical Commission was involved with the review of VHB, the engineering consultants for Eversource, and that engineer attended one of the Wayland Historical Commission meetings, regarding the historical railroad artifacts. He mentioned that VHB and Eversource had proposed the demolition of a cattle pass under the railroad which was used for agricultural purposes years ago. He stressed that via the efforts of Weston and Wayland, a total of five cattle passes (four in Weston, one in Wayland) were preserved. He noted that mileposts and whistle posts were preserved by the two Commissions during that time. Mr. Conard stressed the importance of marking the location of such artifacts on the Construction Plan, and include them in those plans.

Discussion regarding railroad intersection diamond near Union Ave. in the ROW in Sudbury took place.

Ms. Cebra inquired about saving marker artifacts with a type of orange fencing and queried if the markers were taken offsite during construction. Mr. Conard responded that the markers were not removed during construction, and the fencing was sufficient protection during construction.

Mr. Hagger asked if the steel from the railroad was saved during the trail construction in Wayland. Mr. Conard responded that a few sections (3 sections in Wayland, 3 sections in Weston) were saved. Mr. Conard suggested saving some rail and mounting them on the posts. Mr. Conard stated that the saved rail sections were some 37 feet long, and weigh 85 pounds per yard.

Ms. Cebra asked about related readings about historic rails in MA. Mr. Conard stated that his book on historic rails, The Central Mass, could be purchased at the Wayland Depot Gift Shop. Ms. Warren noted that several libraries carry The Central Mass. Mr. Hagger added that Mr. Conard has made several presentations on the rail topic.

Community Preservation Committee Accepting Proposals

Historic Preservation Plan

Mr. Hagger stated that the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) would be evaluating the Historic Preservation Plan application next week and the public hearing would take place on November 24. Mr. Hagger stated he would be presenting the application to CPC, and asked Commissioners to provide support.

Mass. Historical Commission Grant Applications

Mr. Hagger stated that the procurement grant for the survey forms had response from three contractors. He added that he, Ms. Trexler, and Mr. Duchesneau would be reviewing the three submittals on Friday. He detailed that Stacy Spies was one of the responders.

Ms. Trexler reviewed “Step 3 – Open Bidding Process and Consultant Selection” from the MHC Project Coordination Manual. She detailed that the one of the submissions was from an architectural firm in NY, one from Stacy Spies, and the third was from two local historical consultants.

Ms. Warren asked if the listing of Town properties to be surveyed had to be finalized for the contract. Mr. Hagger responded that the listing would be part of the Step 4 process. Mr. Hagger stated that the grant allows for survey of 120 properties and the property listing is 100 at this time. Ms. Trexler indicated that the listing probably had no impact on the final contract. Ms. Trexler suggested the current

listing be discussed at the December 7th meeting, depending on timing and the availability of Ms. Spies. Ms. Trexler said that she would distribute that listing to the Commissioners.

Ms. Warren asked about the number of home surveys eligible within the \$30,000 grant. Ms. Trexler confirmed that 120 surveys was detailed on the RFQ. Mr. Duchesneau stated that the priority at this time was to select the consultant, and additional property listing discussion could follow.

Mr. Hagger addressed the MA Historical Commission grant application for the community wide Historic Preservation Plan, and recognized Ms. Warren for the work she put into the application. Ms. Warren stated that she would send the application to the commissioners, adding that the Commission would be notified after December 9th and if invited to submit a full application, the Commission would submit such around the first of February. Ms. Warren confirmed that the funding request was decreased to \$32,000; for a \$16,000 match; and will inform the CPC of the reduction of the grant amount from \$35,000 to \$32,000.

Stone Tavern Farmhouse

Ms. Warren explained that Mr. Duchesneau and the Building Inspector participated in a recent site visit to the Farmhouse in regard to recent construction that did not comply with the Planning Board's Site Plan Review Decision. She added that following the site visit changes had been made to correct the previous construction to the front portico that now reflects the design in the Site Plan Decision. She also noted that the owner would be going before the Planning Board for a modification to the Decision, regarding several exterior design aspects of the farmhouse, including the two small windows at the gabled ends. She thanked the property owner for the inclusion of those two windows, and advocated that the Planning Board approve the inclusion of the two small windows.

Historical Commission Budget Update

Ms. Costa acknowledged that she distributed the previous financial reports, and provided the budget update. She noted that because the Hosmer House is not conducting events, due to COVID; there are decreased expenditures.

Ms. Costa recommended that apportionment of Hosmer House funds be considered by the end of the fiscal year – June 30, 2021.

Related discussion took place.

Demolition Delay Bylaw

Mr. Hagger summarized the demolition delay bylaw discussion from the last meeting.

Ms. Katz referred to her comments made regarding the proposed Memorandum of Agreement between The Town of Sudbury – Historical Commission and the applicant, with stated enforcement by the Building Inspector, as party in the Agreement. Commissioners discussed the language and edits to the Agreement.

Ms. Costa stated that she incorporated Commissioners comments in her presented "Sudbury Historical Commission – Understanding the Demolition Delay Bylaw Process," revised by Ms. Costa on 11/15/20. Ms. Costa noted that the document addressed: the purpose/intent of the demo delay bylaw, who administers the demo bylaw, what triggers the bylaw and information regarding partial demolition. Ms. Costa reviewed the question and answer section of the document.

Ms. Costa suggested that Commissioners review the document and if they have additional comments, should submit those comments. Ms. Warren confirmed that further comments should be submitted to Mr. Duchesneau and copied to Ms. Perry.

Mr. Hagger stated that there was one public hearing involved in the Demolition Delay Bylaw. He recommended that the next steps included getting the document on the Town website, review the document with other community groups, such as local realtors; and reaching out/educating the public with a joint presentation with the Historical Society.

Ms. Cebra suggested composing an education brochure, especially for realtors, which they could share with their clients. She noted that the State has such a brochure. As a Historical Society member, Ms. Cebra suggested having such an outreach session in March.

Commissioners favored the document drafted by Ms. Costa, and also liked the idea of a related brochure. Ms. Warren suggested that the webpage provide a link to other the demolition-related materials, as well as possible Sudbury TV programming with the joint presentation with the Historical Society.

Master Plan – Preservation/Cultural Resources

Ms. Warren stated that the Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) had 18 meetings beginning January, 2019 and after the August 27, 2020 meeting the Volume 3 draft was forwarded to the Planning Board. In the August 14th Volume 3 version, the Historical Commission was noted as the Lead Responsible Party for implementation of a historic preservation action items. She detailed that the Planning Board met on August 31, 2020 and from that meeting was generated the September 9th version of Volume 3. She explained that in that version one of the action items overlooked the Historical Preservation Plan had been changed to designate to the Select Board. She noted that the Ma Historical Commission does not recognize Boards of Selectmen as having historic preservation expertise and are not eligible to apply for a MHC grants without approval of historical commission. She further detailed that other Master Plan Volume 3 historical resources action items were assigned differently than in the previous Vol. 3 versions and were changed to be assigned to Planning and Community Development as the Lead, with the Planning Board being second.

Ms. Warren provided explanation of the Master Plan Virtual Open House survey which deals with Volume 3 of the Master Plan, and input can be submitted. She stressed there would be no public hearing after the survey/Open House period closes on December 2, 2020. She noted that such comment would be directed to the consultant and then to the Planning Board, and vote on it.

Ms. Warren emphasized that this would be the last time the Historical Commission could weight in. She indicated in formation of the proposed Master Plan volumes, and action items; there is not a clear understanding of the role of the Historical Commission and what a historic preservation is and does.

Ms. Warren shared draft wording for a letter to the Planning Board, dated November 17, 2020. She asked the Commission for feedback which she and Mr. Hagger would then incorporate into a final draft letter to be sent to the Planning Board. Ms. Cebra stated she was fine with such plan. Ms. Trexler felt that the letter was long, stated that she had mixed feelings about the letter revision plan, and did not want members of the Planning Board to feel that the Commissioners were accusing them of endorsing such changes that the Commissioners were unaware of. She stressed that simplification of the letter with focus on key points only, would be preferred. Mr. Hagger acknowledged Ms. Trexler's sentiment.

Ms. Costa had the same impression that Ms. Trexler expressed and stated that the letter should be more succinct in approach, and less wordy.

Mr. Greene agreed that the letter should be shortened and then he would be fine with the Chair and Vice-Chair finalizing the letter.

Ms. Katz commented that she did not have time to read the letter.

Ms. Warren agreed to summarize language within the letter and explained various important aspects, with focus that the Historical Commission should be designated the Lead Responsible Party for action items listed under the historic and cultural section of volume 3.

Ms. Warren felt review of the all the historic preservation related action items was important in consideration of how preservation work is carried out. Mr. Hagger agreed, and stressed that a few main points up front, might be a better approach. Ms. Warren agreed with placing the main points first.

Ms. Costa indicated that the key “ask” was that the Historical Commissions role is to take the lead, be the responsible party, in Volume 3 action items 2, 3, 4; for overseeing community-wide historic preservation plan. Ms. Warren agreed with the approach presented by Ms. Costa. The Commissioners were in agreement as well.

The Commission presented additional edits to the letter.

Approval of October 20, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Hagger commented that the October 20, 2020 meeting minutes were not ready for approval yet.

Historical Commission Meeting Schedule for 2021

Mr. Hagger presented a tentative 2021 meeting schedule, for the third Tuesday of each month. He added that the proposed schedule did not preclude the Commission for scheduling additional meetings, as necessary.

Several Commissioners indicated that they would prefer to meet on December 14th rather than December 21, 2021.

Mr. Hagger added that the meetings would begin at 6:30 PM. Ms. Warren stated she would prefer the meetings begin at 7:00 PM. Mr. Greene agreed with a starting time of 7:00 PM.

Ms. Katz indicated that she did not want meetings going beyond 10:15 PM, and was willing to start the meetings at 7:00 PM.

Ms. Trexler mentioned that 7:00 PM would be acceptable, if the meetings were in person and not ZOOM meetings.

Mr. Hagger recommended the meetings begin at 7:00 PM, and the Commission could adjust that time to 6:30 PM, if need be.

Eversource (cont.)

Mr. Hagger mentioned that the Commissioners had limited meetings to discuss Section 106, and felt one meeting might not be sufficient.

Ms. Cebra mentioned that related comments from Mr. Conard might be useful when discussing the Eversource matter. Mr. Hagger agreed, adding that Mr. Conard will be asked to attend the meeting on December 7.

Adjourn

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

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30 PM