



Town of Sudbury

Historical Commission

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Sudbury Historical Commission Joint Meeting with Historic Districts Commission

Minutes

Monday, October 28, 2024

SHC Members: Chair Chris Hagger, Vice-Chair Michael Wallace, Treasurer Chris Durall, William Andrea, Jan Costa, Margie Katz

SHDC Members: Chair Ahnu Shah, Vice-Chair Taryn Trexler, Chris Hagger, Griff Noble, Jordan Wachs, Peter Iovanella

Others Present: Planning & Zoning Coordinator Beth Perry

Mr. Shah opened the Historic Districts Commission meeting at 7:01 PM. Roll Call was taken: Trexler-present, Hagger-present, Noble-present, Shah-present.

Mr. Hagger opened the Historical Commission meeting. Roll Call was taken: Hagger-present, Costa-present, Wallace-present, Katz-present, Durall-present, Andreas-present.

Discussion of the Stewardship Mission Statement as recommended by the Sudbury Historic Preservation Plan

SHDC and SHC members discussed the Stewardship Mission Statement as recommended by the Sudbury Historic Preservation Plan. Ms. Trexler, Mr. Wallace, Ms. Katz and Mr. Wachs drafted the Mission Statement.

Mr. Hagger read from the “Stewardship Working Group” document:

“The Sudbury Master Plan called for creation of a Historic and Archeological Working Group to advance the protection, preservation, and development of historic and archeological resources and Town character (Action A.1 of the Master Plan under Historic and Cultural Identity). It is suggested that this action be launched in conjunction with the Town’s Certified Local Government designation as a means of establishing the concept of a Town-wide historic preservation program and of engaging stakeholders with respect to it.

*It is suggested that the Town’s conservation and planning entities be included, and that conservation issues and initiatives be recognized and supported through the Working Group as well, by renaming it the **Stewardship Working Group**. The purpose of the group’s expansion would be to better integrate historic and conservation interests and to demonstrate that the stewardship of historic natural resources is interrelated.*

At minimum, the Stewardship Working Group should include the Historical Commission, Historic Districts Commission, Community Preservation Committee, Sudbury Historical Society, Wayside Inn Foundation, Conservation Commission and Sudbury Valley Trustees.”

Ms. Trexler explained that she, Ms. Katz, Mr. Wallace and Mr. Wachs drafted the Working Group Mission Statement to explain the Working Group’s role as a Certified Local Government (CLG), including the overall purpose and objectives associated with the CLG.

Group Members reviewed the primary sections of the Sudbury Historic and Archeological Stewardship Group document:

Overview

“Bringing together groups who work in these areas to inform one another of their efforts, collaborate on initiatives, and integrate processes will help make preservation of these resources in Sudbury, more sustainable and effective. As recommended by the Sudbury Master Plan (2021) and the Historic Preservation Plan (2022), the Historic and Archeological Stewardship Working Group will bring together Town boards, communities, cultural groups, and local non-profit organizations working in heritage and conservation to provide high-level guidance for preservation efforts.”

Mission

“To advance the protection and preservation of Sudbury’s heritage, historic places, archeological resources, and cultural landscapes via leadership, advocacy and education by:”

- Acknowledging that the successful stewardship of historic places, conservation of natural resources, and thoughtful planning efforts are interrelated and interdependent
- Facilitating engagement, communication, and cooperation among Town entities with respect to historic preservation
- Aligning stakeholders with shared historic preservation priorities and goals
- Encouraging the ongoing preservation of Sudbury’s historic fabric, cultural landscapes, and archeological resources
- Integrating historic preservation perspectives into a variety of public and private endeavors and activities
- Fostering awareness, understanding, and support among town entities and residents about the value and benefits of historic preservation policies and protections.
- Educating the community about the vast historical and cultural resources within Sudbury and their importance to our past, present, and future

Guiding Principles

In consideration of the Mission, guiding principles included:

- Teamwork, cooperation and respect
- Advocacy
- Authenticity

- Shared Stewardship
- Collaboration
- Respect for History/Accommodating Change
- Future-Forward
- Community respect
- Environment and Sustainability
- Sharing these Resources
- Education/Informed Decisions

Mr. Shah stated that the Stewardship Working Group document was clear and concise and suggested that language mentioning historical/natural landscapes be included, in consideration that the document is inclusive with related Planning Board input regarding glacial landscapes, and the agricultural landscapes (physical landscape). Ms. Trexler agreed that adding such language to the mission statement would be beneficial. Commissioners concurred with adding the proposed language.

Ms. Costa commented that SHC consultant, Peter Benton, stressed the importance of Sudbury's agricultural history in his report titled The Historic Fabric of Sudbury.

Ms. Katz recommended adding the archeological language to the first paragraph of the "Sudbury Historic and Archeological" overview section as part of the introduction. Commissioners agreed.

Mr. Hagger mentioned inclusion of a "next steps" section within the recommendation section. He suggested that a Spring CLG meeting be mentioned in this section, in order to satisfy the CLG requirement. Mr. Shah agreed with the scheduling of a spring CLG meeting with the SHC and the SHDC. Mr. Hagger opined that after the spring CLG meeting is conducted, future meetings should include other Town boards, committees and groups. SHC and SHDC members agreed.

The Town of Sudbury Acquisition of the two MBTA owned Mass Central RR Buildings

Mr. Hagger presented information and pictures depicting the two MBTA-owned buildings; the South Sudbury Train Station and the Railroad Section House. Mr. Hagger explained the MBTA was considering the purchase of the two buildings by the Town, and possible waiver of purchase fees. He suggested that next steps be considered and mentioned that the Train Station building required restoration in the amount of \$22,000 and the Railroad Section House building would require restoration in the amount of \$12,000. Mr. Shah recommended that next steps regarding the two buildings, be included in the upcoming CLG meeting.

At approximately 7:30 PM, Mr. Shah recognized that SHDC members Jordan Wachs and Pete Iovanella joined the meeting.

The Tercentenary Markers located in Sudbury

Mr. Wallace noted the five (5) Sudbury tercentenary markers were installed in 1930 to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Founding of the Mass Bay Colony. He added that similar markers are located throughout the State and itemized the five Sudbury markers in question:

- The "Sudbury Sign" marker

- The “Sudbury Fight!” marker
- The “Goodnow Garrison House” marker
- The “Haynes Garrison House” marker
- The “Hop Brook Mill” marker (which was reportedly taken down to perform ADA compliance work, and currently stored in the basement of the William Raveis Real Estate office)

Mr. Wallace explained that the signs throughout the State have been the subject of discussion due to factual inaccuracies, racial content and the White-Anglo interpretation.

Mr. Wallace noted that in 2022, the Sudbury Interfaith Clergy Associate submitted a letter to the Sudbury DEI Commission recommending consideration about how Native Americans are portrayed via the signs. He added that other non-profit organizations in Sudbury have brought forward similar concerns, along with the Sudbury Select Board voting to remove the five signs.

Mr. Hagger detailed that the SHC brought forth a consensus position that supports removal of the five signs with several considerations:

- Legal removal related to MassDOT jurisdiction
- Preservation – markers should be preserved in consideration of historic value
- Engagement of Public History – markers should be displayed in a manner that recognizes them from a historical view

SHC and SHDC Members contemplated sign removal and recontextualization aspects:

- Markers are no longer tools for teaching public history
- Markers depict the State Seal with a Native American man with an arm holding a sword, looming over him
- Depict and describe King Phillip’s War portrayal of Native Americans as “Nipmuc Indians,” which many Native Americans view as offensive
- State-wide signage seen as Puritan and Anglo-American dominance and portrayal of the Native American in a racist framework

Resident Diane Warren, 32 Old Farm Road, recommended the CLG reach out to indigenous people representatives and to invite those representatives to future CLG meetings. She strongly recommended that the five markers be removed as soon as possible, adding such signs were discriminatory towards women, as well.

Ms. Warren recommended the markers not be displayed publicly in Sudbury, and possibly consider locating them to a closed museum of some type.

Resident and Member of the Athena Forum, Katina Fontes, 19 Dorothy Road, thanked the Commissioners for discussing the marker issue, and agreed the markers should be removed. She noted that there was no rush in placing them in a museum-type location.

The Hosmer House Historic Roof Replacement

Commissioners agreed with the elimination of the existing skylight.

Mr. Hagger stated that the Facilities Director would be present at the next SHC meeting and would address aspects of the Hosmer House roof replacement project.

Mr. Hagger recommended that the Hosmer House historic roof replacement application be presented to the CPC at their December 18th meeting, if possible, to allow the SHDC to meet with the roof designer at the scheduled SHDC meeting on December 5, 2024. Mr. Shah was in agreement.

Ms. Costa confirmed she would check with the CPC to determine if it would be possible to present the Hosmer House historic roof replacement application at the CPC meeting on December 18, 2024

Adjourn

Mr. Shaw motioned to close the SHDC meeting. Ms. Trexler seconded the motion. It was on motion 6-0; Trexler-aye, Hagger-aye, Wach-aye, Noble-aye, Iovanella-aye, Shah-aye.

At 8:58 PM, Mr. Hagger motioned to adjourn the meeting of the Sudbury Historical Commission. Ms. Costa seconded the motion. It was on motion 6-0; Wallace-aye, Katz-aye, Durall-aye, Costa-aye, Andreas-aye, Hagger-aye.