

Historical Commission Meeting

Minutes for October 30, 2019, 6:30 PM

Approved at December 9, 2019 meeting.

Town Hall

Members Present: Karen Czerwonka, Mary Lou Conca, Henry Geddes, Craig Pepin, Janice Stone.

Members Absent: Chris Donta

Guest: Joan Hanson, Leslie Bracebridge, Julie Taylor (6:45 pm by phone)

Friends of the Shutesbury Historical Commission Annual Meeting

J. Hanson and L. Bracebridge opened the Annual Meeting of the Friends. J. Hanson gave the financial report. An Annual report was approved to be sent to the state. L. Bracebridge made a motion to approve the same slate of officers as last year and present. That consists of Joan Hanson, President; Leslie Bracebridge, Secretary; Karen Tarlow, Treasurer; and Julie Taylor, Director. J. Hanson seconded the motion and both voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:44 PM. Commission discussed the dues to become a member of the Friends of the Historical Commission, which are \$5 for an individual, \$10 for a family, and \$25 for a patron. Julie Taylor was able to connect to the meeting by phone as the Annual Meeting was finishing up and stayed on for the rest of the Historical Commission meeting.

Old Business

Update on CPC 1829 Town Hall project. Janice told the Commission the Building Committee was meeting tonight, and were to discuss how to continue with this project.

Gravestone Restoration CPC Project. The Cemetery Commission met last week. They are drafting an RFP for the gravestone restoration work. The plan is to get the contracting done this winter and the work to be done next Spring to Fall.

Old & New business

Discussion of possible grant opportunities. Janice suggested that the Historical Commission be the applicant for a SHRAB (State Historical Records Advisory Board) grant for the preservation of Veterans History. It would be a collaborative project with the Cemetery Commission and Veterans Agent Al Springer. Janice has spoken with both of those groups, and put together a draft first round Letter of Intent application with an estimate of cost to paint the War Memorial on the town common and repair/restore 5 Veteran gravestones/monuments at the West Cemetery. It is a 50% match grant, and she proposes the town's share comes from the CPA funds for repair/restoration of up to 18 top priority gravestones/monuments, 5 of which are Veterans. The Letter of Intent for the first round of approval is due November 6th. She showed the Commission a draft proposal and costs. She estimated \$2500 for the gravestone/monument work, and \$900 for two coats of paint (painting to be done by volunteers). She also included cleaning of 10 more Veteran gravestones by trained volunteers using proper conservation techniques. Volunteer labor can be used as a match as well. If we got the grant, it would help fund more of the gravestone repair work, since the present CPA award is likely not enough to do all 18 and

the volunteer training workshop. Commission discussed the painting of the war memorial, and wanted the painting to be done by a professional. Janice will revise that cost. Craig made a motion to approve submitting this Letter of Intent for this work. Karen seconded, and all voted in favor.

MA Historical Commission 2020 Round for Surveying and Planning Grants. The Commission discussed this briefly. Too much to take on this year, but should be thinking now of possible grant proposals for next year. Possible subjects for a survey might include the West schoolhouse, or Lake Wyola Gatehouse, or the Bennett House at Lake Wyola. This grant money could be used to hire someone to write up a survey on a property. Commissioners should look at National Register for ideas.

Filling the empty position on the Commission. Janice should put another notice into the next Town newsletter. That will probably be coming out around the end of January.

Bills & finances. Craig mentioned that he had received a check for reimbursement of his cost for enlarging 3 historical postcards for Celebrate Shutesbury, but it had no dollar amount on it. It was suggested he contact the town treasurer Ryan Mailloux. Janice told the Commissioners that she has not received the checks from the Schmidt Trust (for participation in the Memorial Day event at Quabbin Park). She will check with the treasurer and accountant.

Approval of minutes. Motion made by Henry to approve the minutes as written from September 25, 2019. Mary Lou seconded and all voted in favor.

Discussion about digitizing historical information for public use on website. Craig expressed an interest in doing something on this. The Commission had a brief discussion on what that might be. Suggestions included the 1735 Proprietors' Records (at Greenfield Registry), or the 1761 Municipal Records. The Historical Commission has been given private family genealogies, letters and photos. Craig and Leslie will meet to look over the Historical Commission files for ideas. What about something of broad interest such as anything about Daniel Shays (was a resident of town at one point)? What would primary sources be? Tax records, vital records. Janice noted interest in a note in the Corbin records that states the first public deed in town may have been an "Indian deed". Could we hire someone to look into that? Or maybe we could try finding it ourselves first. Mary Lou mentioned that Rolf Cachat-Schilling has a great slideshow of Native American markings in Shutesbury. Henry mentioned that John Shershin is researching the presence of African-Americans in Shutesbury; supposedly quite a few here after emancipation. Check federal census?

Mary Lou – cell tower discussion. Mary Lou wanted to discuss the Historical Commission vote on the cell tower, stating she was not able to vote against it then since she was not a voting member at that time, but would like a revote now. She is concerned about the possible negative health effects from the tower's microwave transmissions. Janice explained that the Historical Commission was asked to only comment on *whether or not there were potential effects on historic properties*, and that the Commission checked various records and did not find anything about the site. The project had already been approved by

the Planning Board by the time the Historical Commission was asked for those comments. It is part of the federal permitting process, which is still going on now with the federally-designated THPOs (Tribal Historic Preservation Officers).

Unanticipated business

Janice suggested Historical Commissioners consider joining Friends of Quabbin. They have interesting talks and hikes. All Boards and Departments Meeting November 12th, 7-9PM. All members are invited to attend. Janice suggested that each Commissioner decide on a topic of interest and start collecting information for the Historical Commission files. It can include current events or places, documented now for the future. She was thinking of finding what photos she could of the Quabbin Park memorial services and Shutesbury representation, for one thing. Another example is the work Mary Lou was doing on doors of Shutesbury.

Adjournment. Craig made the motion, seconded by Mary Lou, to adjourn the meeting. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted by

Janice Stone, Secretary
Shutesbury Historical Commission