

Historical Commission Meeting

Minutes for December 9, 2019, 6:30 PM

Approved February 10, 2020 meeting

Town Hall

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

Guest: Don Wakoluk (tree warden)

Mary Lou recording the meeting.

Old Business

Update on CPC 1829 Town Hall project. Janice spoke with Bob Groves. He and members of the Building Committee agreed to go forward with the foundation work. Currently soliciting bids to do the work, as they deem it is necessary

Gravestone Restoration CPC Project. Walter Tibbetts (Chair of Cemetery Commission) is finalizing the draft of the RFP. Cemetery Commission meeting Wednesday – hoping for a draft to discuss and finalize at that meeting in order to get the RFP out in December. Probably just enough cost-wise that they cannot go for verbal bids but need more formal bids. Work needs to be done in the warmer months. Money was approved by the CPC (Community Preservation Committee) several years ago, Historical Commission contributed \$1000 and Friends of the Historical Commission also contributed \$1000.

Historical Commission application review & approval for SHRAB Veterans' Grant. Grant application to SHRAB (State Historical Records Advisory Board) for Veterans gravestone and war memorial restoration. Passed the preliminary phase. Two parts to it: 1) Repaint the Veterans' memorial on the town common (3-part structure). Received one estimate of \$890. Painter will clean it of the mildew, then paint with two coats. For another \$320 he will do the outside lettering as well. Janice recommends having the lettering done at the same time. Total for this part \$1210. 2) Repair the West Cemetery gravestone monuments as needed, and cleaning. Janice estimates cost of professional services for 7 Veteran's monuments at about \$3000. Janice did research to determine that there are 7 different monuments, 8 veterans included in the 18 monuments listed in the West Cemetery's High Priority Assessment. These can be restored with this grant. Total proposed amount \$4210. Grant is a 50/50 match, so we would have to come up with half the cost from town monies or elsewhere. Janice proposes using \$883 from funds already committed several years ago from CPC for the gravestone restoration work. We can make up the remainder through volunteer work (cleaning more Veterans gravestones). At the current volunteer rate (\$32.15/hr), that would be 38 hours. Mary Lou asked if Janice had contacted the Veterans agent Al Springer? Janice said yes, and he suggested the painting of the War Memorial and helped confirm the veteran status of the 7 listed monuments. One is a veteran of the War of 1812, others Civil War. Janice read into the minutes the Letter of formal application to the Massachusetts Archive (attached). Mary Lou suggested changing the salutation to be more formal (instead of Dear People). Janice will write in next to it "MA SHRAB Veterans".

Motion was made to sign and submit the document with revision to salutation. All voted in favor and signed.

Old & New business

Update on finances. Janice located the checks for participation in the Quabbin Park Memorial Day event this year. They were direct deposited in June. The Trust originally told us they were issued in July. Eventually we discovered where they went. Total of the two checks was \$1347. This is now in the Historical Commission bank account.

Filling the empty position on the Commission. Janice should put another notice into the next Town newsletter. The copy will probably be due around the end of January.

Approval of minutes. Motion made by Henry to approve the minutes as written from October 30, 2019. Mary Lou seconded and all voted in favor.

Discussion about digitizing historical information for public use on website. Craig met with Leslie Bracebridge in the 1829 Town Hall, to see what kind of information is in the files and what might be good to research or digitize. There are many opportunities in the historical records there. Leslie has created many different file folders, some organized by family, some organized by subject. Craig said he and his sons will do some digitizing project this winter. Should contact the website committee to look into the possibility for hosting materials. Janice has instructions on how to add material to the Historical Commission webpage, so that is a possible location. Janice mentioned that the MA Historical Commission's (MHC) MACRIS (MA Cultural Resource Information System) site has a lot of information, including around 200 historical records from the Helper Report. Chris Donta could put a link to MACRIS on our website so it is easy for the public to find.

Possible Town Meeting Article. Janice handed out some reading material on Scenic Road bylaws for the Commissioners to review and consider for next meeting. These bylaws are usually used to protect trees along the roadways, but can also be used to protect stone walls in the Right-of-Ways. This might be a way to start protection for stone work, whether walls or foundations or CSLs, and not only within the road Right-of-Ways but also on other land (with owner permission). She has been researching to find a town that has created a bylaw to protect the stone features but has not been successful yet. Certain roads get designated scenic, or it could include all roads (approved at Town Meeting). The Scenic Road bylaw is usually administered by the Planning Board of a town, so the Commission would have to ask them if they would consider bringing one up for Annual Town Meeting. But she wanted the Commission to think about it first, before she talks to Planning Board.

Mary Lou – cell tower discussion. The consultants for Vertex are waiting for the permit from the MHC to do the Phase 1B archaeological investigation. Chris Lucas is the permitting specialist who is representing Vertex. Mashpee THPO (Tribal Historic Preservation Officer) Dave Weedon requested the further testing. This involves a number of test pits dug and the material from them sifted to find artifacts. Probably won't be able to dig until Spring. Janice has asked them to notify the Commission when they are planning

their work, so the Commissioners can watch if they want. Janice will let Commissioners know when she hears from the consultants.

Unanticipated business. Commission asked Mr. Wakoluk why he was attending the meeting. Was there something he wanted to discuss? He told them that he had concerns about the number of large mature trees that were removed for the recent (this past year) utility work. This included one of the oldest trees in town (near Clark's house near corner of Pratt Corner Rd). He was powerless to stop it, and felt the town needed to protect these trees, and also the stone walls, some of which also got destroyed with this work. He is interested in the Scenic Roads bylaw as well. He and Janice had not discussed this before this meeting, just a coincidence. It would cover the trees and stone walls within 25' of the centerline of the road. Commissioners will read through materials to discuss what should or could be included, and whether to proceed to talk to the Planning Board about it. Janice wondered whether we could use ground penetrating radar (LIDAR) to provide some data about location of stone walls (& CSLs?) on landscape. Chris stated that it doesn't always provide good data, but it can.

Next Meeting Date. Wednesday January 22nd at 6:30 PM.

Adjournment. Janice made the motion, seconded by Karen, to adjourn the meeting. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted by

Janice Stone, Secretary
Shutesbury Historical Commission

List of Documents used at Meeting:

1. Agenda for this meeting.
2. Historical Commission letter to SHRAB Veterans Grant.
3. Draft minutes for October 30, 2019.
4. Scenic Roads Bylaw-Sample for Town of Wayland from "A Guidebook on Designating Scenic Roads in MA" draft 2000 pgs 7-12.
5. Scenic Road Bylaw section in "Preservation through Bylaws and Ordinances" pgs 43-45.