

Shutesbury Historical Commission
Minutes – 3/01/23
(approved 4/26/23)
Virtual Meeting

Meeting start: 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Henry Geddes (Chair), Miriam DeFant, Janice Stone, Karen Czerwonka, Bert Fernandez, Greg Caulton

Commissioners Absent: Matteo Pangallo

Others Present: Susan Millinger (Friends of SHC), Leslie Bracebridge (Associate Commissioner)

Approve minutes:

5/25/22: Bracebridge expressed concern about her statements at the meeting about Veronica Moulton's placement of a stone on the Town Common about an Indigenous Tribe with a tie to Shutesbury. Wants a clarification that she was simply reporting what she knew about this stone and that she is not an authority on Indigenous history. DeFant edited to reflect recommendation.

Geddes moved to approve the 5/25/22 minutes as edited. Czerwonka seconded. Geddes: aye. Caulton: aye. DeFant: abstain. Fernandez: abstain. Stone: aye. Czerwonka: aye. So moved.

8/10/22: No edits. **Geddes moved to approve 8/10/22 minutes as written. Stone seconded. Caulton: aye. DeFant: aye. Fernandez: abstain. Stone: aye. Czerwonka: aye. So moved.**

1/25/23: No edits. **Geddes moved to approve the 1/25/23 minutes as written. Fernandez: seconded. Roll Call: Czerwonka: aye. DeFant: aye. Geddes: aye. Fernandez: aye. Stone: aye. Caulton: abstain. So moved.**

Guideboard Restoration Project:

Peter Hamm submitted a proposal to replicate the Guideboard; Bob Groves has expressed interest in the project but has not submitted a proposal. DeFant would like SHC to approve a draft Scope of Work so that bids can be obtained. DeFant continuing to research potential vendors based on suggestions from Preservation Massachusetts, has already communicated with about 20 different specialists; suggests not looking at vendors that are too far from the region due to added travel expenses. Information gathered thus far is all preliminary as no Scope of Work has been approved. A preservation specialist from Connecticut, Bill Gould, suggested restoration may cost in the range of \$30,000. The SHC currently has the \$10,000 of CPA funds plus about \$17,000 in the donation account. Other state grants are not feasible because the grant cycle does not align with the CPA grant terms which requiring beginning work by 7/1/23. Work must be completed within 3 years. DeFant: this project may require two different kinds of specialists, someone who works with rehabilitating wood structures and objects and a decorative painter who can recreate the lettering in an authentic manner. SHC reviewed draft Scope. CPC regulations for restoration of historical structures references the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation; there is no hard rule for how much of the original structure must be preserved as it is understood that failing structures require replacement of materials; standards require that you preserve as much as is feasible; a fabricated metal roof would extend the life of the structure; current structure is flawed; there is no drip edge and too many unsealed seams;

currently lead flashing with cedar shingles on hip roof. DeFant: cedar shingles are not original and are not holding up well to weather; what kind of material would be more weather-resistant? Historical photos show either asphalt shingles or the current lead/cedar shingles. Freedom Gray is a matte gray sheet material (zinc-plated copper) that resembles lead. Revisions incorporated into the draft. More research needed to find vendors who are able to respond to the Scope. DeFant does not believe original expectations regarding costs are realistic. Bracebridge: structure has been repaired and restored many times by volunteers who were not experts; feels we are struggling with a structure that has little original material left; maybe no one would care if we did it without all of this attention to detail as long as it looked somewhat antique. DeFant: goal would be to repaint structure while recreating its current appearance with all imperfections, not the original lettering that now hidden beneath layers of paint; have to be consistent with the CPA standards. Edits considered for Scope. Goal is to complete work by summer of 2024. Millinger: is it possible to find a decorative painter at Historic Deerfield or Old Sturbridge? DeFant will inquire. **Geddes moved to approve Guideboard Restoration Scope of Work as amended. Stone seconded. Roll Call: Czerwonka: aye; DeFant: aye; Geddes: aye; Stone: aye; Fernandez: aye; Caulton: aye. So moved.** Bracebridge thanked DeFant for work on project. SHC is happy to see project proceeding.

SHC Annual Meeting and Membership Discussion: Must elect officers and review goals. Current projects include the cemetery restoration project, the Guideboard, Indigenous Cultural Properties; West Schoolhouse maintenance.

Signage on Town Common: Stone: SHC had discussed signage on Town Common. DeFant: would need SB approval. Caulton agrees to get material together. DeFant: suggested developing signage based on original Land Deeds as an interpretive tool because the deeds include the signatures of historic Indigenous leaders who had a relationship to this land; they are known historic entities who made a statement in the signing of the deeds; could have photographs of the deeds as a visual; problem when talking about Indigenous history is that it gets talked about in a vague way as if Indigenous peoples are anonymous, unknowable, gone. The idea of sharing names of actual individuals who were historical figures is powerful, tells a different, more human and more real story; something that perhaps most residents don't know about. Stone: some were women? DeFant: some male signatories were identified by reference to their mothers because their mothers were leaders. DeFant: Lisa Brooks, a local historian, has published two excellent books about Indigenous history in this region, *Our Beloved Kin* and *The Common Pot*. *The Common Pot* includes a detailed discussion of some of these deeds and the signatories, including the political context of the signing of them in the early 18th century; there is a lot of information in the written record about these individuals, particularly regarding the 1735 land deed. The book explains the tie to the stone that was put on the Town Common, the 1735 Deerfield "Peace Conference." Caulton: could make QR codes on a signage with links to more info. DeFant: Brooks has links to interactive GIS maps online (ourbelovedkin.com).

DeFant suggested mapping stone walls: DeFant had suggested a Scenic Roads Bylaw, but Planning Board was not interested.

Stone suggested surveying South Brook Conservation Area stone features.

Shutesbury Cemetery: project is underway through the Shutesbury Cemetery Commission.

Establishment of Historic Districts: Town Center has been inventoried and is eligible for an application for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), which would also place it on the State Register of Historic Places. Twenty years ago, residents in the district did not want the Town to proceed because of concerns about restrictions it might place on properties. The NRHP listing, however, does not restrict land use in any way. Protections or restrictions would come from the local level if a bylaw was passed establishing historic districts, but NRHP listing does not limit what a landowner can do. Bracebridge: submitting an application to NRHP is a big project.

Historical Collection Inventorying and Digitization: Geddes, Czerwonka, Caulton, Stone, DeFant interested in working on it.

West School House Maintenance: structure needs regular cleaning in warm weather; sweeping, dusting, can bring water from home; hasn't been done in years; wipe down the cast iron desks; children's artwork from 1970s; last done in 2017; need a work party; table setting a date for next meeting.

Fundraising: Would Friends of SHC be interested in fundraising for the Guideboard? Millinger and Bracebridge unsure. DeFant: SHC can't fundraise; Guideboard is a fun project that residents might be willing to chip in on. Millinger will speak with the Friends of the SHC about it; Commissioners can also join Friends. Friends of SHC is a private charitable organization. The SHC cannot fundraise as a municipal board. Friends will invite Commissioners when they have their next meeting.

Membership: Caulton plans to resign but is interested in remaining involved; plan to resign. Will need a replacement member. Fernandez: Glenn Stockton may be interested. We should put a post on the Town email list to seek new members.

Election of Officers: Geddes and DeFant are willing to continue in their roles. **Stone: Move to elect Geddes as Chair of the SHC. Czerwonka seconded. Roll Call: Caulton: aye. Czerwonka: aye. DeFant: aye. Geddes: aye. Fernandez: aye. Stone: aye. So moved.**

Stone: Move to elect DeFant as Secretary of the SHC. Czerwonka seconded. Roll Call: Caulton: aye. Czerwonka: aye. DeFant: abstain. Geddes: aye. Fernandez: aye. Stone: aye. So moved.

Geddes moved to adjourn. Czerwonka seconded. Roll Call: Czerwonka: aye. DeFant: aye. Geddes: aye. Fernandez: aye. Caulton: aye. Stone: aye.

Meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Next meeting: Wed; March 29, 2023 at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Miriam DeFant, Secretary, 4/23/23

Documents Used:

Agenda

Draft minutes for 5/25/22, 8/10/22, and 1/25/23

Draft Scope of Work for Guideboard Restoration

Guideboard Replication Proposal-Peter Hamm, xxx

Draft language for interpretive signage

Our Beloved Kin and *The Common Pot*, by Lisa Brooks