

Approved 7-12-23

Winchendon Historic Commission

Minutes
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, June 21, 2023
Via Remote Participation

Members Present: Jay McCrohon, Peg Corbosiero, Guy Corbosiero, Mary Harrington, Gerry Harrington

Members Absent: Lois Abare

Others Present: Jenelle Sroczyński, Recording Secretary, Ben Ewing, Resident, Brenda Blodgett, Resident

Meeting called to order: 4:00 p.m.

Announcements: Peg Corbosiero announced that there is an initiative by Amy Scott, member of the Winchendon History and Cultural Center, to clean some of the headstones at the Old Centre Cemetery, on Sunday, June 25, 2023. People are encouraged to participate.

Member Comments: Ms. M. Harrington noted Mr. McCrohon's name was misspelled in the minutes and needed to be changed. She also wanted to add that she prefers no additional plantings happen on the Common until the electrical lines are buried. Ms. Sroczyński will make the changes. Ms. M. Harrington also wanted to publically thank Mr. & Mrs. Corbosiero for all of their hard work and dedication to the Commission over the years. Ms. G. Harrington also extended her gratitude and hopes Mr. Corbosiero will remain accessible as he is a wealth of information.

Public Comments: Ms. Blodgett introduced herself. She is a resident of Winchendon and was raised here, attended the schools and loves her town. Her family are long term residents as well. She is interested in becoming a member of the Commission. Mr. Ewing introduced himself as well. He is a former insurance executive who recently retired and purchased the David Brown Farm on Otter River Road. He has a passion for historic buildings and restoration. He is looking to become more involved in the town, and to school himself on the rules and regulations of historic preservation. He is also looking to up his social game in town and feels like this would be a perfect fit. Ms. Sroczyński explained letters of interest need to be sent to the Town Manager's office, and new members need to be appointed. Ms. M. Harrington explained people can help the Commission without being a member. The greatest asset to the Commission right now is the Demolition by Delay By-law. This helped

tremendously with the Cumberland Farms project. Ms. Harrington is also looking forward to re-introducing the Community Preservation Act at an upcoming town meeting. It was put to vote in the spring of 2023, but was not passed. Chairwoman Harrington would also like to set goals in accordance with Mass General Laws, the Town's By-laws, and Mass Preservation. Mr. McCrohon stated agricultural perspective aids in preservation. Ms. G. Harrington is looking forward to taking a more proactive approach.

Minutes:

Motion to approve minutes of the May 10, 2023 regular meeting with corrections made, P. Corbosiero/G. Harrington, 5-0 aye by roll call vote @ 4:14 pm.

Updates:

Chairman Corbosiero explained the end of the fiscal year is upon us. The following account information was provided. Mr. Corbosiero feels the budget was approved for the same amounts for next fiscal year.

General Fund Account Balance \$300

Cumberland Farms Account Balance \$10,000

Militia Field Account Balance \$31,859.71

The Militia Field account was established in 1987. This account can't go below \$ 20,000 per town meeting vote. It can be used to maintain the field. Mr. McCrohon will check on the parameters of perpetual maintenance.

Reorganization of Commission: Mr. Corbosiero is stepping down as Chairman. A new chair need to be appointed. *Motion to nominate Mary Harrington for Chairwoman P. Corbosiero/G. Harrington 4 Aye 1 Nay by roll call vote @ 4:19pm. Motion to nominate Gerry Harrington as Vice-Chair P. Corbosiero/G. Corbosiero 5-0 Aye by roll call vote @ 4:21pm.* The Commission decided to hold off on filling the Secretary position at this time. Mary Harrington stated that President Lincoln filled his cabinet with adversaries to insure everyone had a voice. She looks forward to the Commission having a voice as a whole to preserve historic properties. Mr. Corbosiero announced he will be staying on as a member, he did not want to be Chairman again.

Old Business:

54 Mechanic Street: No update was provided.

Master Plan Update: This is the list of items the Commission is reviewing: This is an ongoing process.

1. Reexamine Winchendon's Reconnaissance Report-the report is being reviewed.
2. Be proactive about preserving historic structures- Ms. G. Harrington is learning her way around MACRIS. She has discovered 486 listings in town and 100 different areas. It is quite an undertaking. She will continue work on list and report back to Commission in June.
3. Implement preservation restrictions on historic properties to protect historic structures from being demolished or excessively altered-This item is being reviewed.
4. Find a way to prevent "demolition by neglect"- By-laws will need to be reviewed. Ms. M. Harrington will look into this item.
5. Encourage Commission members to seek out training in modern preservation tools. This could be in person or on line- The Commission would like to see an increase in the annual budget for trainings like these.

Brownfield Grants: No update was provided.

Electrical Lines on Old Centre Common: No update was provided.

Wildlife Habitat Replacement on Militia Field: Mr. McCrohon has a proposal for plantings. He is hoping to apply for a Robinson-Broadhurst Grant this year. Ms. G. Harrington suggested the grant Mr. MacDougall wrote may have some information that could aid in this project. New Plantings on Old Centre Common: This is an ongoing item. Mr. McCrohon will continue this action item. Ms. M. Harrington would like to hold off on new plantings until the lines are buried.

Historic District Signs: Ms. G. Harrington is continuing her work. She would like to keep the signs consistent with the ones on the Common. She liked the Town of Ashburnham's signs and feels this is a good example. Ms. M. Harrington would like to see speed limit signs as well. Ms. M. Harrington proposed a sub-committee for the Old Centre items. Mr. McCrohon opposed and would like to see the items dropped from the agenda.

Historic Commission Communication: This is an ongoing issue. It was discussed having individual email accounts on the Town's web page so contact can be made directly to members. Mr. O'Neil or Ms. Daigle would have to set these up for the Commission.

Next scheduled meeting-Scheduled for July 12, 2023 at 4pm. The Commission may start to meet in person.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn G. Harrington/M. Harrington 3-0 Approved by roll call vote @ 5:15 pm.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
Jenelle Sroczyński
Board Secretary

Minutes Approved By:
