

Shutesbury Historical Commission
Minutes – 8/30/23
(approved 10/25/23)
Virtual Meeting

Meeting start: 7:04 p.m.

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

Others Present: Stephen Dallmus (Building Committee), Mary Lou Conca

Approve 6/28/23 minutes:

Edits incorporated. Geddes moved to approve the 6/28/23 minutes as edited. Pangallo seconded. Geddes: aye. DeFant: aye. Fernandez: abstains. Stone: aye. Pangallo: aye. Czerwonka: abstains due to absence. So moved.

Guideboard Restoration Update

DeFant advises moving forward with proposal from the Williamstown Art Conservation Center (WACC). Funding can include the CPA grant, donation from Friends of the SHC, and the donation account that the Commission oversees that has donations from the Schmidt Foundation. WACC advises building a protective structure, such as a pavilion or gazebo over the guideboard. The SHC can design such a structure and possibly build it with volunteers. Conca suggests Bob Groves. Pangallo: an additional CPC grant could be used for it because it is part of preserving the guideboard from injury. DeFant suggests coming up with a design, getting a cost estimate, and putting together a CPA application. The CPC DoE due date is December 4, the application is due Feb 5. DeFant suggests setting up a meeting with the Select Board so that work can begin with WACCC. SHC agrees the structure should be moved before winter.

Fernandez expressed interest in researching how to design and build a pavilion cover for the Guideboard. He knows some retired carpenters in Town who might be willing to assist. DeFant has researched building plans and can share them. Pavilion/gazebo could be made of wood or acquired as kit. Many have a colonial-period design look that would be in keeping with other buildings on the Common. Need to factor in maintenance costs for any new structures.

West School House Updates:

SHC volunteers cleaned out the building; found rotting exterior trim boards in the northeast corner. Dallmus has also examined the building. Screenshares photos of the damage. Damage includes fascia, soffit, door frame. The stone steppingstone that serves as an entry step has settled and is allowing more water to hit the building; it should be repositioned to slope slightly away from the building. Options include repairing damage; could put a rain gutter above the door, but it would require some maintenance due to the pine trees nearby. The front corner boards have some deep rot; won't know extent of damage until the boards have been removed. Directly above it is a wire lightning arrester that is curled toward the building and drips on it. This may be a contributing factor. The wire has been reconfigured to improve situation. DeFant: do you need the wire? Dallmus: may have been installed before trees grew up around the building; suspect it

is not needed. Would like to inspect the sill but there is no obvious trapdoor to get into the crawlspace. Bracebridge might know more about that. South end of the building would benefit from re-grading the exterior slope to create a swale to move water away from the structure. Dallmus suggest work can be done with volunteers; Building Committee is developing a group of volunteers with carpentry skills for small projects; he will get back to the SHC. Do not have a cost estimate. Stone: structure is listed on the MHC inventory; needs to review the work. DeFant: will need approval from the Select Board, unless the building has been given to the SHC; need an assessment; DeFant will reach out to Bob Groves about it.

Fernandez has set mouse traps and is monitoring.

Future Projects and Goals:

Pangallo: Lake Wyola farmhouse is in need of a custodian with the state. Is SHC interested? DeFant: a proposal was raised in 2017, costs were very high. Pangallo: state has done some work on it since then. Pangallo: beautiful property; could be a community space. DeFant: would need a funding source for work; CPC would not be appropriate because it requires so much funding. Fernandez asked if MHC could fund it? DeFant they have grants available. Maintenance would be considerable. Pangallo will research funding.

Stone Wall Survey: SHC has discussed developing a GIS map of stone walls in Shutesbury. Eva Gibavic from Leverett HC has done this. SHC will invite her to come and speak. Stone: attended a conference where a Town used school students to assist. GIS maps are online interactive maps. DeFant mentioned that there is another Town resident with expertise in GIS mapping who might be helpful. She will reach out to him.

Membership:

SHC sent out a town-wide notice; looking for consistent participation; goal is to find new members with some helpful technical skills; appears they do not need to be local residents; SHC also has Associate Commissioners. DeFant: someone wrote to the SCC; should have a process; SCC has a procedure of requiring prospective members to come to a few meetings, write a letter of interest, and come to speak with the board before getting recommended to the SB for appointment; should be someone who comes to a few meetings to show a commitment to be involved, not only if they are appointed. Geddes has written up a policy for reviewing applicants. Agree that come to two meetings at a minimum. SHC agrees on general process.

Geddes wondered about asking Czerwonka if she might wish to step down to being an Associate Commissioner due to her not being able to attend so many meetings and not having internet access. Geddes asked Czerwonka about her thoughts.

Technical difficulties ensued and Czerwonka left meeting at 8:04 p.m.

DeFant suggests Geddes speak directly with Czerwonka. DeFant notes that the issue about attendance becomes a problem when the SHC is unable to make quorum. Because it is a 7-member board, it needs 4 Commissioners to hold a meeting. This has been a problem in past years where couldn't meet or couldn't approve minutes without quorum. DeFant: SHC has been willing to make accommodations for members who lack internet access, but it had also stated in

past that the individual Commissioners had to take some responsibility and initiative for attending meetings and making arrangements to get documents delivered or picked up at Town Hall. There have been plans agreed upon to assist Czerwonka by delivering documents to her in advance.

Conca left meeting and sent an email to the Commission during meeting, expressing interest in being reappointed to the SHC. No action taken.

Friends of the SHC: Stone and Susan Millinger are involved. SHC members can join. Friends can do fund-raising. Membership costs \$10 a year. There is an attachment form. Community event on 10/10/23 and Friends is going to set up a table. Friends can take donations to support the Commission. DeFant intends to join.

Geddes moved to approve adjourn. Fernandez seconded. Geddes: aye. DeFant: aye. Fernandez: aye. Stone: aye. Pangallo: aye. So moved.

Next meeting: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 at 7 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Documents Used:

**Agenda
WACC Proposal
Buildings Committee Assessment of West School House
Email from Mary Lou Conca**

Respectfully submitted by Miriam DeFant, Secretary, 10/24/23