

Shutesbury Historical Commission Meeting

Minutes for January 27, 2021, 6:00 PM

Approved 2/24/21

Zoom Remote Access Meeting

Members Present: Greg Caulton (GC), Mary Lou Conca (MC), Karen Czerwonka (KC), Miriam DeFant (MD), Henry Geddes (HG), Janice Stone (JS).

Members absent: John Walter has resigned as of 1/22/21.

Henry Geddes hosted the meeting.

DeFant (MD) stated the primary focus for this meeting should be preparing for the Historical Commission response to the Planning Board. She recommended other topics, such as signs or digitizing records be discussed next time.

New Business

Geddes (HG) told the group he has been in touch with the State Attorney General's (AG) office about recording Historical Commission meetings. He was told it is not a state requirement, as long as there is a written record of the meeting. The Historical Commission can choose to not record their meeting, if they desire.

HG then displayed the agenda on the screen, and read it aloud for anyone who is not using a computer with a large enough screen. This meeting is still being recorded, audio & visual.

Approve minutes for 12/28/20 and 1/13/21.

HG made a motion to approve the minutes of 12/28/20. Mary Lou Conca (MC) seconded. All voted in favor (HG, MD, GC (Greg Caulton), JS (Janice Stone), MC, & KC (Karen Czerwonka).

HG made a motion to approve the minutes of 9/10/20. GC seconded. Voting yes: HG, JS.

Abstaining from voting MC & KC. GC & MD did not vote as they were not members then.

Minutes for 1/13/21. JS asked if the minutes should actually state the Commission went into Executive Session, and whether they were coming back to open meeting. The Commission had planned to go back into public meeting, but the Zoom would not let them back in. The Executive Session minutes have not been done yet. HG made a motion to approve the minutes. MC seconded. All voted yes (HG, MD, GC, JS, MC, KC)

Review contracts.

There are two contracts being worked on. One with the THPO (Tribal Historic Preservation Officer) for Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah); the other with Dr. Lisa McLaughlin, Ph.D. from Northfield. HG stated that it has been a slow process trying to get the contracts approved through Town Hall. There was discussion about how best to expedite the contracting process. MD suggested that engaging with the Selectboard might be helpful. HG asked the Commission to wait a few days before contacting the Selectboard, as he reaches out to the Town Administrator and Town Counsel. HG will keep the Commission informed on progress. Contract with Lisa McLaughlin (LM). MD stated that LM has been working on our behalf already without a contract. LM has raised questions about how best to handle information about

stone structures in town collected by various researchers and in her possession. She feels strongly that only Tribes can possess this information, not the Town and not herself. She wants to have a process in which if the town wants some of this data (for instance, the Planning Board), she would ask the THPOs or other local tribes if they approve. The THPO for the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) has requested that no specific geo-coordinates be made public, only photos without georeferencing. MD mentioned that she has heard back from Bettina Washington from the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) and they are interested in being involved in this project. It is important that the Planning Board be informed that a federally-recognized Tribe wants to be involved, and that we encourage the Board to involve them. As part of her contract, LM is proposing to assist with creation of a Powerpoint presentation for the Planning Board and general public specific to the solar sites, including a heat map (larger bubbles mean higher density or number of structures.)

MD also discussed the plan to create a “Primer” for the Planning Board, Town, developer and public as an educational document. It will contain background on Ceremonial Stone Landscapes (CSLs), appendices with more detailed info, and recommendations for these projects. The Commission can only *encourage* the Planning Board to listen to the Tribes and protect the stone groupings. The Primer will include strong recommendations. JS suggested that the Recommendations be easy to find in the Primer. GC asked if the Primer information will be published by the Historical Commission. MD: the Commission could put it on our website. HG reaffirmed how invaluable LM has been to the Commission already, reviewing material, supplying information, and helping us make contact with the tribes. MC suggested the Primer include information on the history of and what the THPOs are. The Planning Board may not know. MD agreed, as people may be hesitant to support something if they don’t really know about it. She is trying to keep this document readable for the general public. HG said it will also be multi-dimensional, to address the Planning Board, public, town etc. MD gave the example of the history of the town she drafted for the new Open Space Plan underway. The HC could put it on the Historical Commission website in its entirety. JS suggested MD send the writeup around to the Commissioners again, and they could vote next time to have it displayed on the Historical Commission website.

Review of language for Town newsletter. MC stated that she would put something into the next town newsletter to get people interested in the project. Just a couple sentences, and the nice graphic which GC created as a possible sign. Commission asked to review the sentences before approving the submission. JS suggested MC and GC plan on making a sign for Annual Town Meeting to generate interest, support and suggestions.

New Business. MC told the Commission about her latest photos of doors, which are in the new edition of Uniquely Quabbin. The Commission asked if these were doors with historical interest, as the last ones were. Not this time. Commission agreed that they should not officially support putting these door photos into the town newsletter, since they did not have relevance to the Historical Commission. MC mentioned making a poster of doors of Shutesbury, to be sold to raise money for the Shutesbury Council on Aging.

MC also asked if the Commission was going to send a thank you to John Walter for his service on the Commission. HG suggested that members could do that individually if they wished. The Commission had not sent any group thanks to previous Commissioners who left, such as Jim

Schilling-Cachet, Chris Donta, Kristin Van Patten, or Craig Pepin, all of whom had served on the Commission longer.

Next Meeting date. Agenda will include updates on contracts, but it would be good to have had some discussion with the THPO first, and the contract language worked out more. The Commission could just schedule its monthly meeting for February, and if the contract work is ready or the solar projects come in, another meeting can be scheduled earlier. Commission agreed on **Wednesday February 24th at 6PM** for the next Historical Commission meeting.

Adjournment. GC made the motion, seconded by HG to adjourn the meeting. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted by

Janice Stone, Temporary Secretary
Shutesbury Historical Commission