

Shutesbury Historical Commission
Minutes – 3/19/2021
(approved 12/6/21)
Virtual Meeting

Meeting date/time: 9:00 a.m.

Commissioners Present: Henry Geddes (Chair), Miriam DeFant, Greg Caulton, Ezzell Floranina, Janice Stone

Commissioners Absent: Mary Lou Conca, Karen Czerwonka,

Others: NA

The meeting focused on reviewing two reports generated by DeFant with help from Geddes, Stone, Lis McLoughlin (External consultant).

Introduction to Indigenous Cultural Sites in Shutesbury. DeFant initiated discussion of the report and explained the rationale for an introductory section of the report written for a general audience regarding Indigenous cultural properties. Commissioners discussed and negotiated the length, authorship, sequencing of sections, and language. Of particular concern was whether some sections belonged in this report or in the report on the solar bylaw referenced below. Another concern was the need to maintain confidentiality regarding the location of cultural properties. Commissioners expressed strong approval of the report generally and offered feedback. DeFant brought up the significance of land deeds as part of the historical record for Indigenous lands appropriated by settlers. Commissioners agreed to share the document with local tribes for the record. They agreed to reduce the size of the digital copy of the report so it can be mailed and downloaded from the HC website. They agreed to publish hard copies as well to make it more accessible. Caulton, who did the excellent graphics, entertained questions and suggestions. Caulton moved to accept the report with minor edits and Floranina seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Historical Preservation and Solar Development position paper. DeFant noted that Shutesbury's Solar Bylaw is unique in that it includes criteria for identifying and preserving Indigenous cultural properties as a feature of a large-scale solar project review. She initiated discussion of the position paper regarding sections, analysis, language, links, and feedback from commissioners. Geddes moved to accept the summary in the introduction, seconded by Caulton, and all agreed. Commissioners continued to review and revise the remaining sections. DeFant mentioned that, despite best efforts, we did not get feedback from the Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs or from any tribal representatives. She shared it with Traditional Historical Preservation Officers (THPOs) from the Aquinah Wampanoag and the Nipmuc Nation. Commissioners revised language describing the importance of Indigenous THPOs as "indispensable" to review and legitimize archaeological findings. Another point of revision clarified that developers are responsible for making "good faith efforts" to consult and comply with the Tribes, including the option for Tribal site visits. Floranina questioned the wording of one of the Notification Standards, resulting in changes that would emphasize (to the Planning Board and developer) that archaeological review and Tribal input should occur early in the

process to avoid the need for project redesign, specifically as it involves subcontractors and Section 106 federal guidelines. Solar projects not in compliance with the bylaw, particularly Section 106, should be deemed ineligible or subject to modification by the Planning Board. Caulton submitted graphics and photographs and received unanimous approval from the rest of the Commission. DeFant mentioned Massachusetts Historical Commission's (MHC) report on historical sites in Shutesbury, specifically near Roaring Brook, as an example of spatially extensive colonial structures throughout the Town worthy of identification, highlighting the need to survey colonial as well as Indigenous relics. Conca (not in attendance) submitted suggestions via e-mail that the report be revised for a grade school level audience. Commissioners argued that this was not really possible because of the nature of the issues and because the target audience (Town boards, developers) expects and is familiar with the technical language.

Discussion concluded with ways to disseminate the report. Discussion of archaeological security policy was postponed for the next meeting.

Geddes moved to vote on the Solar Bylaw report and it was unanimously approved.

DeFant initiated discussion regarding criteria for access to historical documents in Old Town Hall. This was done in anticipation of MHC's transfer of documentation for Shutesbury. DeFant and Leslie Bracebridge will have the keys and serve as gatekeepers.

Geddes moved to adjourn. Caulton seconded. Approved by unanimous vote.

Meeting adjourned at 10:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Henry Geddes, Chair, 12/05/21