

Town of Sheffield Historical Commission Meeting

September 3, 2013

Present: Dennis Sears, Chair; Patricia Elsbach, Michael King, Catherine Miller, Kathy Orlando, Jeffrey Waingrow

Others: Trudy Weaver Miller

The meeting was called to order at 5:31pm.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to accept the minutes of the meeting of July 30, 2013 as presented (6-0-0).

The chair reported that the Town Administrator had not forwarded a copy of the July 30, 2013 draft by-law to Town Counsel, pending a decision by the Selectboard on access to legal counsel by Town boards and commissions. The Chair indicated that he had talked with Nicole Catroli(who works for Margaret Hurley, and assistant AG) in the Attorney General's office regarding the proposed Demolition Delay By-Law. The AG's office does not provide legal opinions or do any research until the by-law is adopted by the Town. However, Ms. Catroli in a telephone conversation made extensive observations.

Kathy Orlando arrived at 5:55 pm.

The Commissioners charged with interviewing other communities regarding their process for the adoption or not of a demolition delay by-law reported as follows:

North Adams (Sears): North Adams is a city and under the governance of a mayor and city council. The by-law is a city ordinance and did not require the vote of members of the community. It was endorsed by the mayor and others and was passed very easily. It has required extensive public education in order to bring the community to a level of understanding.

Huntington (King): The Town Administrator of Huntington, a town of 2,000 residents reported that the by-law was voted down initially; extensive education was done and it passed on the second vote which included one structure in town as the historic district.

Hatfield (Elsbach) The co-chair of the Historic Commission reported that the Selectboard and Planning Board were not supportive initially. Extensive public education, a promise to focus on the future and not specific buildings along with a one (1) year delay on demolition resulted in the by-law being passed 70-65.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to withdraw the July 30, 2013 draft of the Demolition Delay By-Law from the Town Administrator's office (6-0-0). The Chair will talk with the Town Administrator and explain the reason and indicate that it will likely save the Town money.

The Commission moved to address the comments to the proposed by-law made by the AG's office. It was agreed that the Commission would modify those areas that did not require input from others and yellow line those that need the advice of legal counsel. That was completed and the Chair agreed to provide Commission members with a draft dated September 3, 2013.

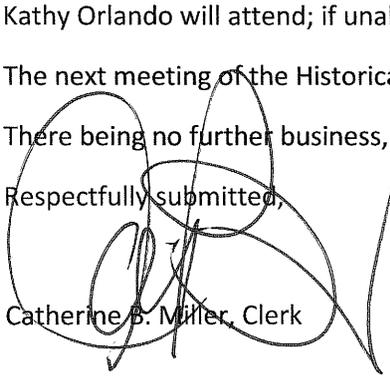
Catherine Miller left the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

The Commission on Americans with Disabilities will meet on September 21. That body has requested that a representative from each Town board and commission send a representative to that meeting. Kathy Orlando will attend; if unable, Jeff Waingrow will attend; if unable, Pat Elsbach will attend.

The next meeting of the Historical Commission will be on Monday, October 7 at 5:30 pm.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Catherine B. Miller, Clerk