

Minutes from July 9, 2020 Meeting of the Ashley Falls Historic District Commission

In attendance: Priscilla Rueger, Richard Cherneff, Lou Levine, Nick Greene – Commission members; Pat Levine, Trisha Frey, Lisa Gustin - members of the public. Regrets were received from Sandra Preston.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm at 261 East Main Street, Ashley Falls

1. The minutes of June 18 had not been distributed. They will be brought to the next meeting for approval.
2. Lou reported the resignation of Bob Pasqualina from the Commission and as Chair. There was acknowledgement of his long and valuable service on the Commission, and of his having stepped forward to assume the role of Chair after the hiatus in that position. It was moved by Nick Green and seconded by Richard Chernoff that a letter be sent to Bob either by the Commission or the Select Board thanking him for his service. Passed unanimously.
3. The Commission took up the applications for appropriateness and non-applicability submitted by Lori Hummel regarding the work on 1299 Rannapo Rd., following the public hearing about that work held earlier that day. It was moved by Nick Green and seconded by Pricilla Reuger that certificates be issued as per the application dated June 15 and detailed in the explanatory memo of June 21 regarding window replacement and introduction of new windows, residing, and changing of the paint color. It was agreed that the window mullions would be white, while the frames would be the color of the siding. The air conditioning condenser on the right side of the house (as viewed from the road) is to be masked with shrubbery, and the maintenance of such shrubbery is to be an ongoing requirement as long as the condenser is present. Passed unanimously.
4. Lou reported on discussions with the town administrator regarding the documents received from Timothy Martin dated April 22 and labelled "Preliminary Application" regarding Lot 3 at 1144 Ashley Falls Road. The town consulted town counsel on the status of the "Preliminary Application." Counsel provided a letter, attached, suggesting that the Commission meet with Mr. Martin for a preliminary discussion of his project at a time that is mutually agreeable to both parties. Moved by Nick and seconded by Pricilla Reuger that the town's counsel inform Mr. Martin of our interest in meeting with him. Passed unanimously. [See item 5 for an addition to the letter.]
5. Apropos of the proposed meeting, the chair noted that he had spoken to the town administrator about the ambiguity regarding how permitting should proceed on large projects; should it begin with the AFHDC, the building inspector, other bodies that need to issue permits such as the Board of Health or the Conservation Commission? Richard expressed the opinion that it should begin with the Commission. Lou suggested that a document be developed in conjunction with the

other entities laying out how this should happen, and that such a document would be of benefit to those wishing to undertake a project.

6. Lou reported on the application for a Certificate of Nonapplicability received from Timothy Martin dated April 22 asking that Lot 1 & 2 at 1144 Ashley Falls Road be removed from the Historic District. Lou had asked the town administrator to confirm with town counsel that it was not within the authority of the AFHDC to do so, and the letter from town counsel confirmed this. It was moved by Nick Green and seconded by Pricilla Reuger that we ask town counsel to add this item to the letter authorized in item 3 above. Passed unanimously.
7. Lou introduced a discussion brought forward from the meeting of June 18, 2020 about developing a list of the documents needed to accompany an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction in the Ashley Falls Historic District. Richard had pointed out in an email to Lou that this list seemed excessive to begin a discussion with an applicant, and suggested that we need a way to meet with clients early in process. Commission members agreed, but noted that we were focusing here on what would be needed to begin the official application process which would initiate the 60 day review period. Nick Green noted that this item relates directly to upcoming items 7 and 8. It was moved by Nick Green and seconded by Pricilla Reuger that the attached list of documents required for an application be accepted. Approved unanimously.

Richard Chernoff left the meeting.

8. It was noted that the existing application form for a certificate was outdated and needed replacing. It was moved by Nick Green and seconded by Pricilla Reuger that the revised application form distributed as part of the cancelled July 1 meeting, attached, be approved and posted on the Commission web page. Approved unanimously.
9. There was discussion of the need to develop design guidelines for the Historic District to provide the commission with a framework for reviewing projects and determining the appropriateness to the character of the district, and to assist in the decision-making process. The existence of design guidelines will also greatly assist applicants in knowing what are the parameters within which projects can be developed. It was moved by Pricilla Reuger and seconded by Nick Green that a subcommittee or subcommittees be formed to develop design guidelines. Approved unanimously.
10. It was moved by Nick Green and seconded by Pricilla Reuger that the chair be empowered to contact people who are making changes to their properties but have not applied for a certificate. Approved unanimously.
11. The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 6:45pm.