



TOWN OF WHATELY Whately, Massachusetts

Historical Commission

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Written correspondence should be addressed to:
4 Sandy Lane, South Deerfield, MA 01373

Minutes of the October 19, 2020 Virtual Meeting, 5 pm

Meeting participants: Donna Wiley, chair, Susan Baron, Judy Markland, Alan McArdle, and Darcy Tozier

The minutes of the September 21 meeting were unanimously approved.

Site Plan Review – 13 State Road

The group discussed the proposed site plan for a print screening business at the old South School building. No changes are being made to the footprint but the applicant's plan is to replace the slate roof with asphalt shingles. It was agreed that our comment letter should encourage the applicants to seek out a slate roof specialist to do another evaluation of the roof's condition and the cost of repairing it before going ahead with the replacement. Donna will send a letter to the Planning Board similar to the one sent for the Diamond Shine site plan proposal for this property with the addition of that suggestion and names of recommended experts..

Stone Walls

Alan's friend working on the LIDAR project has confirmed that he will be producing accessible mapping images covering the entire state. There is no confirmed deadline for this. Donna has not yet connected with the UConn professor with expertise on stone walls. Information might be found on plot plans at the Registry of Deeds, but it is not clear how those could be easily searched.

The MHC planning grant cycle has been announced and the minimum request for a survey grant is \$12,500 with a 100% match required, ¼ of which may be volunteer labor. There is no likelihood that we will have enough information to submit a proposal by the deadline.

There was more discussion about the purpose for the mapping. It would be helpful for understanding old lot plans and farming layouts but would likely be of less use in administering the scenic roads bylaw.

Scenic Roads Bylaw

We had previously voted to add River, Strippe, Poplar Hill and Webber Roads to the bylaw and had agreed to look at Long Plain Road for consideration. Judy proposed adding Long Plain Road north of Christian Lane because of the scenic view to Sugarloaf, but there was concern about breaking roads into segments when making the scenic road designation. Christian Lane

was also proposed, because of its importance in town history and the many historic buildings. We will make detailed observations of both roads before the next meeting.

The Attorney General's office has approved the bylaw but noted that the provision to waive the public hearing may not be defensible in court. Lynn Sibley has asked for town counsel's opinion whether the provision is defensible. Brian has recommended that we amend the bylaw. Judy noted that the AG letter also referenced Chapter 87, section 3 which requires a public hearing for all public shade trees with a few minor exceptions, whether on scenic roads or not, complicating the issue. We will await town counsel's opinion.

250th Celebration

Susan reported that the Board of Health is increasingly convinced that large assemblies will be unlikely in June and may be problematic in September, depending on the availability of a vaccine. No specific plans have yet been made.

The next meeting will be on November 16 at 5pm on Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Markland