



TOWN OF WHATELY Whately, Massachusetts

Historical Commission

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MINUTES WHATELY HISTORICAL COMMISSION January 18, 2021

The Zoom meeting was called to order by Donna Wiley at 5:05 pm.

Present: Donna Wiley (Chair), Susan Baron, Judy Markland, Alan McArdle

Agenda:

1. Approval of the minutes of the December 21 meeting was postponed.
2. Marijuana Cultivation Application – Judy Markland recused herself from the discussion because of a conflict of interest. The letters and maps provided by R Levesque Associates on behalf of Whately RE Holdings LLC for 23 LaSalle Drive were reviewed by the commission. No obvious problems related to Historic Preservation were seen. An existing dwelling built in 1934 will be left largely alone. Digging in the area is relatively minimal and impacts on prehistoric or historic sites are not anticipated. Donna will write to Don Sluter, Chair of the Planning Board, and Roger Lipton, Chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals, stating that the Historical Commission has no jurisdiction in the project which adds the usual comment that the project must stop if prehistoric or historic period artifacts are found. The Commission members voted unanimously (3-0) to support this action by the Chair.
3. Scenic Roads –. In 2017, the Commission agreed to recommend adding River, Webber, Poplar Hill, and Strippe Roads to the existing list of scenic roads (Chestnut Plain including North Street, Conway and Haydenville Roads). Discussion of these recommendations was continued at this meeting now that the state has approved and provided a response to our changes to the Scenic Roads Bylaw to allow hearings to be deferred or not held under certain circumstances. Discussion centered on the role of the Commission in recommending scenic roads to the town and the role of other town entities in recommending the addition of scenic roads. In the end, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to recommend Poplar Hill, Strippe and Webber Roads as scenic roads to be voted at Town Meeting this year. This was based largely on the presence of stone walls and/or overhanging trees on these roads, as research into other towns' bylaws and review of the governing statute has reinforced the centrality of stone walls and trees to the determination. Donna will draft a letter, for review by Commission members, to the other relevant commissions (Conservation Commission and Planning Board) informing them of our action and requesting support.

4. Additional items:

- a. Susan reported on the planning for the town's 250th anniversary celebrations. Most events have been postponed to 2022 on the advice of the Board of Health. A small parade, like the one done around Christmas time, is being proposed to mark the actual day of our incorporation (April 26).
- b. Donna Wiley reported briefly on the Hidden History project. A possible lead mine apparently existed in the boundaries of the Archibald MacLeish area owned by Smith College. The possible location and significance of it and other similar industrial sites in town was discussed.

5. The meeting adjourned at 5:55 pm.

6. The next meeting will be Monday, February 15, 5:00 pm, using Zoom.