

## SOUTHBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING

September 19, 2019 7:00 PM

Evelyn A. Petrelli Room, Southbridge Town Hall

1. **Call to order:** The Southbridge Historical Commission (SHC) met on Thursday, September 19, 2019 in the Veterans Conference Room of the Southbridge Town Hall, due to a Town Council meeting occurring simultaneously as the SHC meeting. The SHC meeting was called to order by Acting Chairman Wm. Casey Jolin at 7:15 p.m. In addition to Casey, present at the meeting were Arthur Martin, Linda Langevin-Zonia, and Amanda Richards. Guest in attendance was Richard Sullivan who was there to be vetted by the Historical Commission to join the SHC for a 3-year term. Helen Boyle and Helen Lenti were absent.
2. **Central Street Parking Lot & Kiosk/Map Discussion:** Prior to the meeting Peg Dean, the CDBG Coordinator spoke with Arthur and Amanda regarding the project, due to not being able to attend the SHC meeting that evening. She spoke with them about where the SHC wanted the kiosk & map of Southbridge to be placed and what the engineer of the Central Street Parking Lot had told Peg. She said that the kiosk could be double sided where the SHC would have control of one side and the town/recreation department would have control of the other, where upcoming events could be posted.

The engineer told Peg that the SHC should put together a written proposal/letter of what they want to see the kiosk look like and where they would like it to be located. The engineer and his team can then work with the SHC and eventually put footings in place for the kiosk. The SHC would have to speak with a general contractor first to see if and how the kiosk could be made and what it would look like, before the Central Street Parking Lot engineer does anything.

Arthur and Amanda explained all of this to the rest of the SHC members in attendance. The SHC decided to put together a letter/list of what they wanted the kiosk to look like, so it could be given to a general contractor for estimates. Members decided to speak to Bay Path about the project considering they have Metal Fabrication, Carpentry, and Graphic Design departments and the kiosk would incorporate all three. Linda offered to go and meet with the various departments at Bay Path. Other members offered to go with her. Amanda said she would put a list together of what the SHC had decided on for the kiosk, which Linda could take with her when meeting.

3. **Meeting Minutes of August 15, 2019:** The meeting minutes for the August 15, 2019 meeting were read. Linda made a motion to accept the meeting minutes with corrections. Casey seconded the motion. Four were in favor. Two absent. Motion passed.
4. **Treasurer's Report:** Due to Helen L. not attending the meeting no report was given, but SHC members believed that the new FY 2020 budget was around \$500.00.

5. **Applications from the Public:** Arthur left at 7:55 p.m. to check the SHC's mail and returned two minutes later to report there was no mail or applications from the public.
6. **Correspondence:** Amanda told the Commission that she received an email earlier that day from Christopher Skelly regarding the SHC's Demolition Delay Bylaws and wanted to know when the SHC needed them. Amanda told the Commission that she had not emailed Mr. Skelly back until she spoke with the SHC to see what the other members decided on. All members in attendance agreed that having the bylaws ready for the October meeting would be good.

Amanda, who had checked the mail earlier in the week, explained that the SHC received a copy of the 2019 Town of Southbridge Street listing book, which would be added to the SHC's collection of records/documents.

7. **Discussion on Richard Sullivan joining the Historical Commission for a 3-year term and vote to recommend to the Town Manger for appointment:** Resident Richard Sullivan introduced himself to the SHC at this time; explaining who he is and why he wanted to join the SHC. He has lived in both Rhode Island and Massachusetts and has lived in Southbridge for the past 23 years. He is a teacher and has been for 35 years, and is currently in Worcester. While he was living in Rhode Island, he worked for the Cogshell Card Museum, and is considered a folk artist. He is skilled in metal work and has worked on many projects doing restoration work, including some of the wrought iron hardware for some of the mansions in Newport, R.I. He has also worked at Old Sturbridge Village as the Blacksmith.

Richard explained that he has always liked history and was approached this past summer by a Town Councilor who thought that Richard would be a great fit on the Commission. He served on the Historic District Commission in Chepachet, R.I. in the 1980's and explained his experiences while there to the SHC members.

SHC members gave Richard an overview of what the SHC does and has been doing this past year, including discussing the various projects that have come before the Commission for approval and support for tax credits. Commission members also explained the Demolition Delay Bylaw and why the SHC was first established in the town in 1973.

Arthur then made a motion to recommend for approval Richard Sullivan to the SHC for a 3-year term. Linda seconded the motion. Four were in favor. Two absent. Motion passed.

Richard said that he was scheduled to have a meeting with the Town Manger within the next week regarding the appointment. Amanda said that she would write a

letter on behalf of the SHC to the Town Manager, stating that the SHC voted and approved to recommend Richard to the SHC.

If the Town Manager approves, his name is then brought before the EHS subcommittee to vote on and then before the Town Council, who has the last say regarding the appointment. All SHC members wished Richard luck.

8. **Discussion of SHC Mission Statement:** Arthur presented the Commission with a rough draft of the SHC's purpose/mission statement the SHC could use for to the Town's website. After much discussion, members decided to title it "Southbridge Historical Commission Bylaws" and have a brief statement before the "purpose" section, which explains what the SHC is. Arthur said that he took what was in the Town's bylaws under the Historical Commission and broke it up, allowing for people to easily view it. The following statement was what the Commission amended and decided on for the opening statement: *The Southbridge Historical Commission was established on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. It is comprised of a seven member board appointed by the town Manager and confirmation by the Town Council.*

(The blanks will be filled in with the date the SHC was established, once Arthur finds out from the Town Clerk's Office.)

Arthur said that once the Demo Delay bylaws were fixed and approved by the Town Council, those also could be added to the SHC's page. Arthur said that he would speak with Peg Dean, CDBG coordinator, who as access to the website to put the above information on the SHC's page.

9. **Review of MASS. Preservation Manual:** Amanda made a motion to postpone the Review of the Mass. Preservation Manual. Linda seconded the motion. Four were in favor. Two absent. Motion passed.
10. **Special Projects:**
- a. **Neighborhood Signs:** Amanda made a motion to postpone discussion of agenda item **10.a. Neighborhood signs.** Linda seconded the motion. Four were in favor. Two absent. Motion passed.
  - b. **Pictures of Homes on National Historic Registry:** Amanda made a motion to postpone discussion of agenda item **10.b.** Linda seconded the motion. Four were in favor. Two absent. Motion passed.
  - c. **Evelyn A. Petrelli Room Dedication:** Amanda gave the Commission an update on the progress of Evelyn's room. She explained how both Linda and she met with Joel, the maintenance custodian of the Town Hall, back in August to show him what needed to be hung up on the walls of the room. Amanda explained that at one point, Joel took them on a tour of the Town Hall and they found some interesting

things, including an old wrought iron piece that looked like a gate. Both of them asked Joel to hang it up in the room, which he did, considering it is an old artifact from the Town Hall.

Linda then explained that the dedication shouldn't take place before a Town Council meeting since the cameras used to stream the meetings, are set up at that time. Instead, the SHC should have the dedication on another evening, specifically for Evelyn's dedication. It shouldn't be before a SHC meeting, either. Members discussed possible dates. Amanda suggested that the dedication be in April of 2020, on a non SHC meeting date, since Evelyn passed in April and it would be a touching tribute. All present at the meeting agreed with the month and Linda said that the SHC could use the cards that they had made, to be the invitations. Amanda said that she could work on an insert to be placed in the cards, with Evelyn's picture. Amanda said she would try to create an insert to be placed in the cards for the invitations and present it before the Commission soon.

11. **New Business**: Commission members discussed how each board and commission is supposed to submit a yearly report to the Town Manger's office discussing what it accomplished throughout the year. Members stated that one needs to be written up on behalf of the SHC. Amanda said that she would look into it and would write one for the current year so it would be ready, once it comes to a close (June 2020).

Amanda said that she also signed a letter on behalf of the SHC, at the end of August, regarding 80 Marcy Street (Mary E. Wells School) historic tax credits, since the architect was in need of the signed letter as soon as possible. Amanda said she would provide copies of the letter at the next meeting.

12. **Commissioner's Forum**: Arthur said that he was in contact with Maureen Doyle a few days prior, who was interested in talking with the SHC regarding a piece she was writing about Carpenter's Pond. She told him that she would send them something through the mail. He was surprised it wasn't in the mail box when he checked it.

A discussion was then held in regards to whether or not the SHC should look into having its own individual email, where people who need to get in contact with the SHC, can use, which would be separate from the current secretary's email and could be controlled by another member or any member of the SHC. Arthur suggested that maybe the email could be monitored by all members on the SHC or by one person who would have to bring the information to SHC meetings. This would be separate from the secretary. This email would be posted to the SHC's page of the town website.

Amanda said that allowing all SHC members access to one email might cause confusion among the general public and the emails would become disorganized. Keeping track of the information would be hard to do and people might become confused as to

who is responding to their emails, especially if she, being the secretary is writing to people using another email. This would not be efficient and Amanda said that she could see it becoming a problem. She said that the SHC would also have to watch out as to not violate the Open Meeting bylaw, where too many SHC members are responding to emails, which is in violation of the bylaw.

Amanda said that people contact the SHC through the mail, by emailing her since she is the secretary, or by contacting the Town Hall (Town Manger's Office) since the SHC is under that office's jurisdiction. She stated that whatever correspondence she receives through email, she brings to the SHC meetings and it's easier for her to use her email.

Continued discussion was held on the topic, which included the discussion of why the Town Councilors have their own emails posted to the website. Amanda said that they are elected officials by the people in town and that is an aspect that goes along with the job. The members on the SHC are appointed by the Town Manger, so email addresses of SHC members wouldn't be appropriate to post to the Town's website. Amanda then concluded the discussion stating that she would ask the Administrative Assistant to the Town Manager, Yvonne Tortis, about whether or not the SHC can have its own email and who should be in charge of it, if so. Amanda said she would let the SHC know at the next meeting what Mrs. Tortis says regarding the topic.

13. **Adjournment:** A motion was made by Amanda and seconded by Linda to adjourn the meeting. Four were in favor. Two absent. Motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm.

Submitted by:

Amanda V. Richards, Secretary