

**Sturbridge Historic Commission
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 3, 2023
Center Office Building**

Present:

Richard Volpe, Chair
Charles Blanchard
Barbara Search
Wally Hersee
Jean Bubon, Town Planner
Jeneé Lacy, Administrative Assistant
Gretchen Pineo, PAL - Virtual
Laura Kline, PAL - Virtual
Jennifer Doherty, Mass Historic - Virtual

R. Volpe called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Approval of Minutes

April 19, 2023

Motion: To approve minutes of April 19, 2023 as written.

By: C. Blanchard

2nd: W. Hersee

Vote: 4-0

Continued review of materials for the Community Wide Historic Preservation Plan

J. Doherty stated the following:

- Plan should include detailed recommendations so Town can pull from them easily;
- Five really clear recommendations should be immediately actionable
 - Ex. Survey work, media projects, public outreach/education

J. Bubon stated that some recommendations weren't clear on how they could be implemented and need more detail.

J. Doherty suggested that a section be created that explains what historic preservation is and add the section before the recommendations.

L. Kline agreed and stated that was their intension and that they will tighten up the sections and make them less repetitive.

J. Doherty also mentioned that some properties mentioned in the plan seemed to be called out a bit negatively and asked if the Town was okay with that. The Committee discussed and J. Bubon suggested that maybe that section of the plan should be more generic, and instead of calling out specific properties or building, calling out areas with certain architectural aspects. B. Search stated that before specific properties are called attention too, there needs to be more education for historic properties owners. J. Bubon discussed that there have been questions raised about funding

for preservation. The Committee discussed CPA funding and J. Doherty stated that it could be a recommendation for funding.

L. Kline discussed a section in the plan on tax credit projects and locations in town that need help. W. Hersee stated that he doesn't think it would be negative to mention certain locations in town that could benefit from funding.

R. Volpe stated that he would like to see 4 or 5 doable actionable items recommended. J. Bubon added that goals and strategies to implement goals should be included. B. Search stated that it would be helpful see short term and long term goals, what is available and inexpensive in the short term and what can be done in the future with more funding.

B. Search asked how much it costs to get a property on the national register. J. Doherty stated that it depends on the age of the building. The Committee discussed the National Register and Mass Historic evaluations

C. Blanchard left at 9:25 AM.

L. Kline discussed the section of the plan regarding newspaper stories and oral histories, how recent resources are documented and that there isn't a lot of modern documented information about Sturbridge. Discussed the importance of oral histories and suggested the Commission could focus on collection oral histories. B. Search discussed OSV archives. The Commission discussed more recent histories of the town.

J. Doherty asked about the completion date of June 30th and if payments were up to date. J. Bubon stated everything received has been paid. L. Kline stated that Phase III and Phase IV will be invoiced soon.

Old/New Business

B. Search brought up the Oxhead Tavern, stating that she was told there are construction issues that they are trying to fix and that they are having staffing issues. J. Bubon discussed working with the owner to try to help facilitate. The Commission discussed the work that has recently been done and what the new owner is working on.

The Commission briefly discussed the Senior Center renovations.

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn

By: R. Volpe

2nd: B. Search

Vote: All in Favor (3-0)

Meeting adjourned at 9:42 AM