



APPROVED

**Historic Commission
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 7, 2022
Center Office Building**

Present:

Barbara Search
Charles Blanchard
Jean Bubon, Town Planner
Laura Kline, The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.
Gretchen Pineo, The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.
Jennifer Doherty, Massachusetts Historical Commission

Absent:

Richard Volpe

The meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. The purpose of the meeting was to review Phase 1 submittal of the Community Wide Historic Preservation Plan and to discuss next steps.

Phase 1 –

J. Doherty began by providing an overview of the comments she had submitted on August 11, 2022 to the group. In general she indicated that the plan should flow from section to section with connections to each. Photographs and maps with captions can help to provide context and engage the reader as well. There should be more discussion on the more recent history of the town including the development of Route 20 and tourism within the community. She also indicated that there should be more discussion on the structure of the Sturbridge Historical Commission including the early formation, the gap in activity and then the project that caused more to become engaged once more. More information on historic preservation efforts to date should also be provided; for instance where is the town with implementing goals of prior plans such as the Master Plan. All other questions posed in her memo of August 11th should also be addressed.

J. Bubon stated that she can provide additional information to PAL on the planning questions that were posed in J. Doherty's comments. Whenever G. Pineo wanted to reach out they could set a time to discuss these items. If there were additional materials they were lacking, should could provide that as well. She did believe most of the items noted were contained on the website with the exception of the older Master Plans. She will see if they can be scanned and sent.

C. Blanchard had also provided edits on Phase 1 as there were some corrections to be made on the various time periods and he did add additional information into the Modern Period section of the narrative. These suggested edits will be reviewed and incorporated.

Phase 2 and Next Steps

The group reviewed the Phase II tasks and timeline and spoke about different opportunities for public engagement. Stakeholder interviews will be scheduled by PAL. They will also prepare a draft survey for the group to review before finalizing. L. Kline thought perhaps the survey would be the best approach since people were getting a bit tired of ZOOM meetings. J. Bubon indicated that she would not discount a remote or hybrid meeting as a valuable tool to gather public input. Participation has been very good for these types of planning projects. She referenced a recent Recreational Trails Master Plan remote meeting that was very well attended.

Another section of the Plan will be the issues and challenges section. J. Doherty indicated that this is where Phase I & @ are really tied together. J. Doherty asked about the timing for Phase II and if the time allowed would be sufficient. L. Kline indicated that they may need to adjust the timing by a few weeks. She would review and propose a new timeframe for consideration.

J. Doherty asked where payment for the Phase I work product stood. J. Bubon indicated that she had authorized 2/3 of the invoice to be paid, but withheld the final 1/3 until after this meeting as it seemed there was much more work to be done on this Phase. L. Kline indicated that they would not be finalizing that section until the final document. J. Bubon stated if that was the case she would authorize the final portion to be processed.

The discussion concluded with L. Kline indicating they would provide a draft survey document for review within a couple of weeks. G. Pineo will reach out to J. Bubon to schedule a time to discuss the planning related questions. J. Bubon will work on getting older Master Plans scanned if possible.

Walk-Ins

Tom Sheridan stopped into the meeting seeking information on old cemeteries in town and old maps they may show various property ownership in the 1800s. He was working on a family genealogy project and was hoping to locate his great grandparents, John and Margaret Sheridan who resided in Sturbridge in 1870-1880. He was provided with several resources and exchanged contact information with members who would research their personal records for maps and other items that may be useful in the search.

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.