

**Sturbridge Historic Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, November 28, 2023  
Center Office Building**

**Present:**

Richard Volpe, Chair  
Charles Blanchard  
Barbara Search  
Wally Hersee  
Kathy Peterson  
Jean Bubon, Town Planner



**APPROVED**

R. Volpe called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

**Approval of Minutes**

October 26, 2023

B. Search stated that there were three typos within the minutes. The typos were discussed and will be corrected by J. Bubon.

**Motion: To approve minutes of October 26, 2023 as amended**

**By: C. Blanchard**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: B. Search**

**Vote: All in Favor (5-0)**

**Discuss Budget Proposal for FY25**

J. Bubon discussed the amount of funding needed for Public Notices should be higher than previous amounts due to frequency of notices, and the rise in cost. She discussed the following recommended amounts.

- Recommended an amount of \$800 for Public Notices.
- Recommended that the amount for conferences be increased to \$1000.
- Recommended that the amount for printing costs remain the same at \$500.
- Recommended that that Consultant line item be increased to \$1000.
  - R. Volpe recommended that the Consultant line item be increased to \$1500 to inventory one threatened property.
- Recommended that \$60,000 be requested of the Community Preservation Committee to continue the historic survey work.

**Motion: To accept the budget as discussed and noted above**

**By: C. Blanchard**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: K. Peterson**

**Vote: All in Favor (5-0)**

**Discuss 265 Main Street – Realtor request for information on any issues associated with selling a home in the National Register District**

J. Bubon stated that a letter was received from a realtor handling the sale of 265 Main Street, inquiring if there were any restrictions on the house that is with the Common Historic District.

- J. Bubon stated that the only restriction is Demolition Delay as with any house over 100 years old or over.
- C. Blanchard stated that no individual house in the district is protected by being within the district. Also stated that the house in question, a former schoolhouse, has had many alterations, additions, and changes over the years.
- B. Search stated that a house on Leadmine Road was on the Historic Survey, and was demolished because the contractor stated there were too many changes on the house over the years, and the historic features were gone. She then questioned whether changes made 50 years ago could now be considered historic since both state and federal historic commissions use that period.
- J. Bubon stated that the town bylaw is for houses 100 years old and greater to be considered historic. C. Blanchard agreed with this statement.
- R. Volpe asked if Demolition Delay had been updated on town website. J. Bubon stated yes, and showed it to be updated, and is now listed as under Chapter 137.
- J. Bubon suggested that a letter be sent to the realtor stating that the house is within the Historic District, and if the house was considered historic, it would fall under the town Demolition Delay bylaw.
- R. Volpe informed the commission that he had received a letter from the Federated Church stating that they would be painting the exterior of the church which is within the Common Historic District.

**Discuss the Invitation to Comment by EBI Consulting on behalf of Vertex Towers, LLC relative to a proposed telecommunications facility to be constructed at 92 Stallion Hill Road**

R. Volpe asked J. Bubon to explain what was being asked of the commission by EBI Consulting.

- J. Bubon explained that the consulting company was reaching out to the Historic Commission as mandated by the Telecommunications Act, to inquire if any known historic artifacts, or events occurred on the land designated for the new telecommunications facility.
- C. Blanchard stated that on the just outside the corner of the property there was the remains of the cistern built by the Fiskdale Mill Co., in the 19th century, as a water reservoir for emergency firefighting in the mills on Main Street.



- B. Search asked if we knew of any Native American encampments, or burial grounds on that land. C. Blanchard stated that no known encampments, or burial grounds are known on the land. B. Search suggested contacting the Mass Historical Commission to see if they have any information. K. Peterson agreed.
- R. Volpe stated that we have no issues with the land being historic.
- J. Bubon recommended replying to the consultants that to the best of our knowledge, with the exception of the cistern, there are no history associated with the property. We would suggest that they follow up with Mass Historical Commission.

**Motion: To notify EBI Consultants that the Historic Commission has no concerns, except for the existence of the cistern off property.**

**By: R. Volpe**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: W. Hersee**

**Vote: All in Favor (5-0)**

**Discuss Presentation of Historic Preservation Plan to Various Boards, Committees and Departments**

- J. Bubon state that the existing Powerpoint Presentation explaining the Historic Conservation Plan will be shortened to enable it being shown at various board meetings.
- J. Bubon recommended that the Historic Commission board members speak at various other boards, that they are members of, to inform them of the plan. C. Blanchard and W. Hersee for the Planning Board, B. Search and K. Peterson for the CPC.
- Schedules to be determined after the Holidays.
- B. Search and J. Bubon discussed CPC funds request, and deadline to apply.

**Old/New Business**

None

**Adjournment**

**Motion: To adjourn**

**By: R. Volpe**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: C. Blanchard**

**Vote: All in Favor (5-0)**

Meeting adjourned at 2:58 PM