

**TOWN OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Calhoun-Ives, Sunny Ridge and Washington Green Historic Districts**

Minutes – January 28, 2019 – Regular Meeting

Members Present: Jane Boyer, Tom Hollinger, Phyllis Mills
Members Absent: Susan Averill, Sally Woodroofe
Alternates Present: Bill Fairbairn, Dimitri Rimsky, Louise Van Tartwijk
Clerk: Joan DeLuca
Others: Michel Williams of The Gunnery, Stephen Bartkus of the Gunn Museum

Mr. Hollinger called the regular meeting to order at 7:04 p.m., and seated Mr. Rimsky for Ms. Averill and Ms. Van Tartwijk for Ms. Woodroofe.

Request for Information by The Gunnery

Mr. Williams introduced himself as the Director of Safety & Security and the Project Manager of the Arts & Community Center currently being constructed at The Gunnery in Washington. He was seeking guidance about future signage. There are several areas of concern which have arisen since construction at the new center began, specifically relating to increased traffic, traffic pattern confusion, and difficulty the school has encountered properly directing vehicles to its athletic facilities.

There was a discussion regarding the school's current entrances, parking, and existing signage. Some future options were suggested, such as potential sites for signs that might alleviate confusion, whether the town or its residents might be amenable to making certain roads one way, as well as specific locations that are potentially unsafe. The Historic District Commission's main concern is the size and aesthetic of any future signs that are installed within the Washington Green District, as signs are considered structures and fall under the commission's purview. They also noted that Route 47 is a state road and that the Connecticut Department of Transportation must ultimately weight in on any future signs placed thereon.

It was made clear that The Gunnery would like to do what it can to not only eliminate confusion for its visitors and families, but to avoid excessive traffic on the Green if possible. Commissioners reciprocated by stating that it is in the town's best interest to do what it can to help the school make ingress and egress as smooth as possible, since the school is a welcomed asset to the Green.

Unfinished Business

The Gunn Memorial Library – Mr. Hollinger read a letter from the Executive Director of the library, requesting an extension of its Certificate of Appropriateness, as they need more time to find an aesthetically pleasing solution to the propane hatch cover. Mr. Stephen Bartkus offered photographs of some options that were considered, but rejected by the Library due to the lack of appeal. Members noted that the hatch is not presently visible from the street, which is the ultimate hope of the commission. Members agreed that an extension was acceptable.

A motion to extend the Certificate of Appropriateness for the Gunn Memorial Library to work on the hatch of their propane tank. This extension will expire on January 28, 2020, with the stipulation that the Library come back to the Commission with aesthetically pleasing options within that time. By Mr. Hollinger, seconded by Ms. Mills, passed 5-0.

11 Ives Road Silo – Mr. Hollinger notified members that the Historic District Commission Clerk received an email from Attorney Robert Fisher regarding funds currently being held in escrow, pending the acceptable construction of a replacement silo at 11 Ives Road. Those members who viewed the new silo were pleased with the resulting structure.

A motion was made to formally acknowledge that the silo constructed at 11 Ives Road meets the requirements set by the Historic District Commission and that funds currently held in escrow may be released by the attorney responsible for holding those funds. By Mr. Rimski, seconded by Ms. Boyer, passed 5-0.

Delay of Demolition Ordinance – Due to a lack of response by the town attorney, Mr. Fairbairn suggested that this matter might be better addressed in a more informal manner. After a brief discussion about the Commission's duty to advise town officials when the situation was warranted, members agreed that a more casual meeting might indeed be the correct tack. Mr. Hollinger agreed to set up a meeting with the Town Selectmen, suggesting that they also invite Mr. DiBella to attend. The hope is that Mr. Hollinger and Mr. Fairbairn will be able to persuade town leaders to see the benefit of including such an ordinance in Washington.

A motion was made by Mr. Hollinger to discuss other business not on the agenda, with specific reference to the recent ZBA meeting regarding the Washington Club's desire to install a platform tennis court. Seconded by Mr. Rimski, passed 5-0.

Other Business

Mr. Hollinger advised members to read the minutes of the most recent Zoning Board of Appeals meeting, as an item previously brought before the Historic District Commission was still being considered. He felt that members should be aware of the current status of the matter, in the event that further action on the commission's part is required.

Regarding the Village District Act, Mr. Hollinger has not made any headway in determining whether New Preston business owners would be interested in learning more the benefits of pursuing this aim. Ms. Van Tartwijk suggested a couple of other names of people who might be more open to discussion.

Ms. Van Tartwijk then raised the idea of creating a new historic district by Judea Cemetery. The justification for this area is not only to preserve and protect the cemetery itself, which holds significant historical value, but that several of the homes situated nearby are also of great historic interest to the town. Mr. Hollinger reminded members that it is not up to the commission to make such decisions, but noted that if residents in the area agreed that a study committee should be formed to determine whether a new district should be created, the commission would be open to doing so.

Consideration of Minutes

Members reviewed the minutes from the December 17, 2018 meeting and made no corrections.

A motion to accept the minutes as written for the December 17, 2018 meeting of the Washington Historic District Commission was called by Ms. Boyer, seconded by Ms. Mills and passed 5-0

With all matters concluded, a motion was made by Mr. Hollinger to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Boyer and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan DeLuca

Joan DeLuca, Historic District Commission Clerk
January 30, 2019
(revised 1/31/19)