

Suffield Historic District Commission Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting: January 8, 2024; 7:30 P.M.
Town Hall Upper Level Meeting Room

Chairman Mayne called The Historic District Commission meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, January 8, 2024.

Attendees: Commissioner

Doug Mayne
John Schwemmer
Bill Moryto
Beth Tracey
Scott MacClintic
Klaire Bielonko (Alternate)
Crystal Quandt (Alternate)

Absent: Commissioner

Aysha Moore-Manwaring (Alternate)

Chairman Mayne explained to the commission that due to a problem with the timely notice of the meeting, this evening's meeting would be a roundtable discussion with no voting, call to order, designation of voting members or approval of minutes.

Public Comment

Sara Zak, Suffield Historical Society Board of Trustee Member – Ms. Zak asked that the minutes of the December 4, 2023 Regular Meeting be corrected to strike any reference to the term “Carriage House” on the King House property, as the structure being discussed has never been identified in that manner and has always been used as a stable.

Henry Miga, 310 N. Main Street – Mr. Miga asked the commission for their informal thoughts on installation of 12 solar panels on a south facing portion of his property. He is interested in the possibility of installing them, however, if the commission is generally against the idea he will not move forward with a formal application. The commission asked Mr. Miga questions, reviewed google maps identifying his property, considered the install location and discussed the matter. After discussion was completed, the commission encouraged him to move forward with his application.

Sara Zak, Suffield Historical Society Board of Trustee Member – Ms. Zak asked for guidance on finding a good example of a Certificate of Appropriateness. The commission provided information accordingly.

Applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness

a. N. Main Veterans Park, Proposed Memorial

Chairman Mayne invited Dave Gauthier, Chairman of the Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee, to address the commission. Mr. Gauthier noted that he had a member of the Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee with him this evening and asked the committee if they were fine with Mr. Hartford also providing commentary on the subject. The commission said yes, they would allow it. The group reviewed the revised documents provided by Mr. Gauthier. He explained that this version included a two-inch reduction to the base and a four-inch reduction to the top piece, which will lower the entire monument by 6 inches. In addition, Mr. Gauthier adjusted the placement of the monuments and moved them an additional foot on either side of the sidewalk. The group reviewed the information on paper, as well as on the computer. Discussion ensued among the commission members regarding the details of the monument and the placement within the park. Mr. Gauthier addressed all questions and concerns accordingly. The current sidewalk at the memorial was an additional topic of conversation. Questions arose as to whether or not there is a plan to replace it in the near future. Another concern, brought up by Ms. Tracey, related to the jagged edges illustrated on the base of the proposed diagrams. She would like to see the base as a straight edge to reflect the idea of the monument itself being “broken.” All members agreed on this point. Mr. Gauthier also agreed and planned to revisit with Rogers Memorial and have it corrected.

A straw poll was conducted and all members, with the exception of Mr. Schwemmer and Mr. Moryto, were in favor of the monument as presented with a change to the base from jagged to smooth. Mr. Schwemmer said he was a “maybe.” Mr. Moryto abstained from participating in the poll, as he is also a member of the Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee.

Chairman Mayne commented that the next meeting would be three weeks away and the vote could be done at that time. Mr. Gauthier explained that without the approval of the Historic District Commission, the project is at a standstill. The current plan is to have the installation completed in time for Veterans Day 2024. Chairman Mayne suggested holding a special meeting in expedite the vote. The commission members decided to hold a Special Meeting via Zoom on Wednesday, January 10th at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Gauthier asked if he would be required to return to the Design Review Board prior to having the Historic District Commission vote. Chairman Mayne said he did not need to take that step.

b. 656 Mapleton Avenue, Proposed Rooftop Solar

No discussion occurred.

New Business

Ms. Bielonko mentioned that a month ago she noticed that the "Entering Historic District" sign on Main Street near Mack Farm appears to be missing. Chairman Mayne said he had a spare sign for use as a replacement.

Meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen O. Lambert
Recording Secretary