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**Suffield Historic District Commission Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting: January 5, 2026; 7:30 P.M.
Town Hall Upper Level Meeting Room**

Chairman Schwemmer called The Historic District Commission meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, January 5, 2026.

Attendees: Commissioner

John Schwemmer, Scott MacClintic, Beth Tracey, and Crystal Quandt (Alternate)

Attendees Absent: Commissioner

Doug Mayne, Bill Moryto and Aysha Moore-Manwaring (Alternate)

Designation of Voting Members

Chairman Schwemmer noted that the designated voting members this evening would be himself, Commissioner MacClintic, Commissioner Tracey and Commissioner Quandt.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Tracey MOTIONED and Commissioner MacClintic seconded to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2025 Regular Meeting as presented. Vote: 4-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

None.

Applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness

- a. 1289 Hill Street – Electrical Service Underground Installation

Chairman Schwemmer noted that there had been some cross communication with the town on this particular certificate and after speaking with the Building Department, it was determined that the homeowner did not need to come before the Historic District Commission for this work. No action taken.

- b. 451 S. Main Street – Mini Split Installation

Homeowner Gary James appeared before the commission to request approval to install mini-split units at his residence located at 451 S. Main Street. Mr. James explained that the purpose of the installation is to upgrade the home's heating and air-conditioning system to improve energy efficiency.

Mr. James noted that an exterior heat pump would be required and proposed locating it on the north side of the house, where all connections would be housed. He provided photographs of the proposed

locations for commission review. One wall-mounted unit would be installed on the interior of the first-floor bedroom. A second unit would be located at the rear of the house and would not be visible from the road.

The commission asked about potential screening options. Mr. James indicated that he did not currently have screening planned, noting that existing trees would fill in the area as spring arrives. The commission reviewed the photographs and discussed possible screening solutions, including a picket fence taller than the proposed equipment. Based on information provided by Mr. James, the equipment height would be approximately 42 inches. A ten-foot picket fence is currently located near the corner of the house. The commission noted that in the photographs there was a visible generator and asked whether it had been installed prior to the homeowner purchasing the home. None of the commissioners could recall this generator coming before the commission for approval. The homeowner noted that his wife has a medical condition and the generator was installed during the time he has owned the home, however, his contractor had been in charge of handling permits and approvals and he could not be sure if it had been presented to the Historic District Commission.

Additional discussion included the routing of duct lining along the side of the house and whether it would be painted to blend with the exterior. Alternative line-routing options, including running lines inside the home, were discussed; however, Mr. James explained that contractors he consulted did not recommend cutting through interior walls.

Commissioner MacClintic MOTIONED and Commissioner Tracey seconded to approve the application with the additional stipulations of the fence screening coming off the northwest corner of the house extending north high enough to cover the equipment and the duct lines to be painted to match the siding. Chairman Schwemmer noted that the fence screening should extend from the northeast corner of the property, rather than the northwest corner as stated in the motion. Commissioner MacClintic agreed with this observation and further noted that, pursuant to state regulations, the commission has no authority over paint or color, as such matters fall outside the commission's purview. Optional wording and interpretations of the applicable state regulations were discussed among the commission members.

The commission also reviewed more detailed language regarding fencing height. Commissioner MacClintic suggested revising the motion to remove any reference to matching paint color and to specify that the fence screening be consistent with the existing picket fence in style, but constructed at an appropriate height to fully screen the equipment. Chairman Schwemmer then requested that the motion be restated.

Commissioner MacClintic MOTIONED and Commissioner Tracey motioned to amend the original MOTION to state read as follows: To approve the application as submitted with the addition of a picket fence from the northeast corner of the house consistent with the existing picket fence at a height high enough to screen the additional equipment. Vote: 4-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

c. 1231 Spruce Street – Front Door and Storm Door Replacement

The homeowners, Laura and Eugene Fournier, appeared before the commission to discuss their request to replace the front door and storm door at their residence. They provided photographs of the existing door, along with photographs and specifications of the proposed replacement doors to be purchased

through Home Depot. The commission reviewed the submitted materials and asked questions, which the homeowners addressed accordingly.

Commissioner MacClintic MOTIONED and Commissioner Quandt seconded to approve the application as submitted. Vote: 4-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

a. 987 Hill Street – Window Replacement

Homeowner Alex Moody attended the commission meeting last month, at which time the commission requested additional information for further review. Mr. Moody subsequently provided the requested materials, including photographs, measurements, and a sample window. He proposes to retain the existing 12-over-8 grid pattern.

During the discussion, window grid patterns, grid placement, and potential price increases associated with grid placement were reviewed. The homeowner indicated a preference for grids located between the glass; however, the commission expressed interest in exterior grid placement in order to better preserve the historic appearance of the home. Although the house is set back a considerable distance from the road, exterior grids were determined to more closely match the overall character and feel of the property. Discussion ensued among commission members and the homeowner, with opinions shared regarding the most appropriate approach to reflect the home's historic character.

Commissioner Tracey MOTIONED and Commissioner MacClintic seconded to approve the application as submitted with the addition of exterior lights at a minimum on the front facing side of the house.

Chairman Schwemmer requested that clarification be made that the "lights" are actually the windows and therefore the wording should be "exterior muntins."

Commissioner Tracey MOTIONED and Commissioner MacClintic seconded to accept the friendly amendment to change the wording of the original motion to reflect "muntins" instead of "light." Vote: 4-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

b. N. Main Street – Bandstand Replacement

Robin Zatony, Social Services Chairperson, local real estate agent, and town resident, appeared before the commission with a further updated plan for the replacement of the bandstand on the Town Green. This appearance followed a request made at the December 1, 2025 Historic District Commission meeting, at which time the commission asked that she return with construction drawings containing more specific details to better understand the proposed bandstand's construction. At that meeting, the commission also recommended a simpler, more streamlined design, noting concerns that the original proposal was overly busy.

Ms. Zatony presented updated drawings and explained the reasons for revisions to the original plans presented in the fall of 2025, including concerns regarding potential legal exposure for both the town and herself. She walked the commission through the latest version of the structure, highlighting changes

made since the December 2025 meeting, and presented a more streamlined design. Ms. Zatory requested feedback from the commission and approval to move forward with the process.

The commission reviewed the updated materials, asked detailed questions, offered opinions, and suggested potential improvements. Members agreed that the revised plan was significantly more appealing, proportionately appropriate, and provided clarity in areas that had previously been lacking. Discussion focused on the cupola, potential railings, the foundation, possible steps, ceiling lighting, commemorative plaque concepts, exterior lighting, and the inclusion of a solid back wall to accommodate electrical needs.

Ms. Zatory emphasized the urgency of moving forward and asked whether the commission felt comfortable providing feedback that she was proceeding in the right direction, with the understanding that additional discussion would occur prior to final approval. The commission indicated that it was appropriate for her to move forward at this time and expressed interest in reviewing further drawings at a future meeting.

Historic District Commission Handbook Grant

Commissioner Tracey reported that there was no new information at this time. She has not had a chance to connect with Chad Kuzontkoski, Economic Development Specialist, to determine whether he has made progress in establishing communication with the state. Chairman Schwemmer noted he may have a contact who can assist. He will reach out and report back to the commission at a future meeting.

New Business

None.

Adjournment

Commissioner MacClintic MOTIONED and Commissioner Tracey seconded to adjourn at 8:34 p.m. Vote: 4-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen O. Lambert
Recording Secretary