CHHDC Meeting (approved)

Oct 24, 2023

Present: Duane Wetherby, Tamara Golden, Phil Turner, Evelyn and Paul Beliveau

Absent: Joanne Hipp, Trish Patrick (Selectboard representative)

Meeting called to order at 7:08 pm

**Minutes** of the last meeting reviewed. Duane moved to accept the minutes; Phil seconded; all in favor.

**Treasurer Report:** Duane came to us with RSA and Phil will go the town treasurer and ensure that the 3,000 appropriated for the heritage commission in 2023 is deposited into the account. Balance assumed to $3,054 and change.

**Old Business:**

**Design Guidelines:**

Phil has had discussions with Lyssa – sent alternatives of neighborhood districts vs. historic districts. Evelyn read them through – neighborhood is a little less strict and the town gives more suggestions, but they are very similar, at least how she interpreted. Neighborhood way seemed to be a little less work for us and more work for the town. Historic District would be same work for town and more work for us. Phil is reluctant to go down another alley unless there is a big advantage and there doesn’t seem to be currently. May just be a distraction. Evelyn suggested we ask Lyssa why she suggested it; Phil said it seemed friendlier to the commission was what Lyssa said. Phil doesn’t feel like ordinance is overbearing – would rather keep current direction.

Phil did talk to Liz about getting a grant and it’s a chicken and egg problem. We can’t get a grant until we have an ordinance passed. He talked to Patty and she said that it’s ok to do ordinance first, and then do design guidelines. She likened to the zoning – passed by town, but then Planning Board asks questions and accepts or rejects the site plan. The design guidelines would be an internal document that would not be taken to a vote.

Tamara mentioned that the last time residents were leary of not knowing the specific design guidelines.

Phil said we could finesse the wording of the ordinance without the design guidelines. Assure the community that CHHDC will publicize the proposed guidelines and get feedback, and everything will be at discretion of the commission. The ordinance will be suggestive, not compulsory, which should help alleviate fears about it. We also need to help the property owners understand that the design guidelines are needed in order to take advantage of tax benefits when doing restoration/upgrades to their properties.

December 6th is deadline for ordinance to Selectboard.

Tamara will finish the draft she started this summer. Will send to the commission members by Nov 3. We can take it to planning board on Nov 7th and give them copies and ask for feedback. Give Patti a heads up that we’ll be bringing copies of the ordinance draft #1.

Phol said we will need ordinance passed before we are able to request grant money for help with design guidelines, etc.

Paul brought up language about needing a certificate of approval in order for a homeowner to get a building permit. Wondering how that works with us being advisory vs. compulsory. We don’t fully understand who enforces. Look for “kinder’ language denoting more of an advisory nature.

Phil will check with Lyssa about some towns that might be similar to Charlestown whose ordinances we could look at.

**Benches around town:** Nothing can be done now until spring, so we’ll continue looking for options with a project start in the spring.

**Cannon painting** – next spring as well – one guy Duane had was way behind because of the rainy weather this year. Evelyn suggested booking him for the spring; Duane will talk with him.

**New Business:**

**Budget:** Discussion about paying for help with design guidelines. Paul suggested to ask for the money to do the design guidelines - if the town wants it, they may approve it. Evelyn made point that most grants are matching. Suggested ask for 10,000 for design guidelines. The $3000 from this year would cover the work on benches and cannon for which we are still waiting on workers to be available.

Next Meeting: **November 28 at 7pm.** As usual, there will be no regular December meeting due to the holidays.

Phil moved to adjourn the meeting; Evelyn seconded; meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tamara Golden

Secretary