CHHDC Meeting (unapproved)

Sept 26, 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. Phil moved to accept the minutes, Duane seconded, all in favor.

**Treasurer Report:** Phil reported that there is $54 and change in the Municipal Savings Account. He commented that as treasurer he really has little role as things are set up and controlled by the town. Need to check RSAs to see if budgeted money should go into savings account of the commission or is just lost if not spent. As it stands, unless we can show that we have legal rights to control it, we can only submit check requests up to the $3,000 budgeted for the year. Money will not carry over to the next year to fund larger projects.

Duane found a check request from the past with an account # on it; Phil will check on that account.

**Old Business:**

**Design Guidelines:** Phil shared his discussions with Lyssa Papazain (Historic Preservation Consultant). The fee to have design standards done would be around $10,000. There is potential grant money; perhaps Liz could work on that (she is a grant writer). Paul suggested that if it’s what the town wants, then we should request money for the budget now for 2024. Phil said he can follow up with Liz unless someone else wants to.

Lyssa Papazain would partner with an architectural firm; they can do drawings/illustrations with their software. They would create a proposal for design guidelines. There would be two - one for North Charlestown and one for Charleston. Phil shared design guidelines for Bellows Falls, which is a very different community, but just as an example. There was discussion about design guidelines as advisory vs. compulsory, the amount of money and what other options there might be. If it’s not compulsory, do we need the detail that would be provided by a preservation historian and architects? Perhaps we can create more general design guidelines; Paul presented an example he cut and pasted together quickly from the Fitzwilliam DG example. Evelyn also brought up that there might be a requirement by the town to get multiple bids on the work if we went with professional design.

Paul questioned if we all honestly have the time to get all the work done in 2.5 months before the end of the year. More likely a process to be actively working on now but not expect to be ready for town voting until 2025. The process is involved and there are still many questions to figure out. Duane suggested going to the planning board soon to provide an update as well.

**Benches around town:** Duane’s contacts are not currently available for any work on the benches. The one by South Parish was donated to them, so would not be in our control to refinish. Discussion determined that the benches are in solid shape and the needs are just cosmetic at this point, so it should be fine to wait until next year. The benches would have to be removed, refinished and replaced, so it’s not a simple job that likely needs to start in the early summer. Will continue to investigate options for someone who can do the work and plan for next year.

There was no new business to discuss.

Next Meeting: **October 24 at 7pm.**

Phil moved to adjourn the meeting, Duane seconded; meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tamara Golden

Secretary