

Chaplin Historic District Commission

Minutes

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, May 3, 2022

1. Call to order: Meeting called to order at 7:00 P.M. Regular members seated were Chairman W. Church, Vice-chairman D. Cox, Secretary C. Smith, P. Peifer and J. Givens. Also present were Alternate members L. Ricklin and P. Siege. Citizen present: Ann Chuk.

2. Approval of February 1, 2022 minutes: Motion by P. Peifer to approve the February 1, 2022 minutes, J. Givens seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

3. Audience for Citizens: None

4. New Business

a. Federal Historic Preservation Grant. Mr. Church presented information on this grant. He spoke with Mary Dunne, the Local Government Grants Coordinator from the State Historic Preservation Office. As a Certified Local Government (CLG), the Chaplin Historic District Commission and Town of Chaplin are eligible to apply for a Dept. of Interior Historic Preservation Grant to complete a preservation feasibility study on the museum building. All work is to be done by a consultant who meets Interior Dept. standards and is chosen by an open bidding process; grant applications are accepted as long as there is funding available and are nonmatching grants. A lively discussion of the grant's process and significance included questions on why the HDC would administer the grant, what is the Town's involvement in the grant process, whether the members had enough information at this meeting to make a decision to go forward with the grant application and what sites in the District the feasibility grant would study? A letter (attached) was received from Sally Zimmerman and Allen Olsen on the subject and was referred to by several members. The letter advised the HDC to include the old post office building and the present library/senior center in the study. Mr. Church thought limiting the study to the museum would be a better idea as this building has been a focus of attention by the Town. The study would cover condition assessment, the feasibility of moving the museum building and possible uses and preservation plans that keep the building in its present site. Concerns were whether moving a historic building would compromise the standing of the Historic District as a CLG. Mr. Church said he has met with First Selectman Juan Roman about the museum and they both came away from the discussion with an agreement that more information was needed before proceeding further. Ms. Givens suggested Mr. Church contact Mary Dunne to get copies of successful grant applications to make the process more straightforward for the Town and the HDC. Resident Ann Chuk said she thought former First Selectman Rose wanted the museum moved to change the configuration of the Chaplin St. and Rte. 198 intersection. It was noted the process is protracted but should be undertaken as they are stewards of the Historic District and the HDC should have input on the application.

Motion by W. Church: To recommend that the Town of Chaplin apply for a Federal Historic Preservation Grant to study the feasibility of moving the Chaplin Museum to the Chaplin Library site. The proposed grant would also study the possible uses of the Museum Building at its current site. Seconded by D. Cox. Mrs. Cox said this study is nonbinding, Ms. Givens said sometimes consultants can come up with some

unusual suggestions and likes that the motion is just about the museum. Mr. Church added that this is the first step. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Correspondence: HDC received a Preservation Ct magazine which was handed out.

6. Old Business

a. In response to L. Ricklin's inquiry about the roof on the old library, W. Church noted that copper flashing and slate shingles are being installed.

b. J. Givens noted damage to a stone wall at a Historic District property on Rte. 198 and wondered if it will be repaired. W. Church said he would investigate the situation.

7. Adjournment Mr. Church adjourned the meeting at 7:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Peifer- Recording clerk- HDC

May 3, 2022

Warren Church, Chair

Chaplin Historic District Commission

Chaplin Town Hall

495 Phoenixville Road,

Chaplin, CT 06235

Re: Agenda Item 4, May 3, 2022 "Federal Historic Preservation Grant"

Dear Chairman Church,

We write today in support of the agenda item above regarding an application for available grant funds. Applying for funding will help preserve town-owned historic property in the Historic District that is now under discussion and safeguard the District's historic character and architectural integrity.

With the Ross Library now in private ownership and undergoing rehabilitation for a compatible new use, now is a good time to evaluate the feasibility, appropriateness, and impacts of proposed new uses for the remaining three town-owned properties (Chaplin Town Museum, 128 and 142 Chaplin Street); indeed, it will be critical. Changes in the fabric, context, or location of any structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places can potentially cause the building to be delisted from the NRHP and make it, and possibly the District itself, ineligible for federal, state and private funding for preservation or educational purposes.

The Town of Chaplin, however, as a Certified Local Government (CLG), is eligible for "Supplemental CLG Grants" from the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office. Among the allowable uses for those funds are Pre-Development Studies, including Feasibility Studies for "historic resources owned by a Connecticut CLG," such as the three municipally-owned properties in the Historic District. Such a study would help the Commission and the Town find the most appropriate way to reuse these properties while minimizing impact of these projects on the viability of the District or its access to funding. It would also support the Commission's mandated purpose to "preserve and protect the unique character of Chaplin village's architecture and open space as an early 19th-century rural community."

In the case of the two oldest properties, the Chaplin Town Museum and the Burdick Store (142 Chaplin Street), such a study would further the goal of preserving and revitalizing these two gateway properties. The analysis of these two properties should also include the possible impacts of their reuse on the newest property, the Library/Senior Center at 128 Chaplin Street.

We believe in the considerable value of this course of action, and respectfully urge the Commission and the Town to pursue an application for Supplemental CLG grant funding. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sally Zimmerman

Allen Olsen

46 Chaplin Street, Chaplin, CT

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cc: Suzanne Krodel, Administrative Assistant