

Chaplin Historic District Commission

Minutes

Tuesday, November 12, 2024

These unapproved Historic District Commission meeting minutes are forwarded to the Chaplin Town Clerk in a draft format. These minutes are unofficial until they have been read and approved by a majority vote of the Commission. Should edits be necessary, they will be made at the next regularly scheduled meeting, voted upon and noted in the meeting minutes.

A. Business Meeting

1. Call to order, roll call and seating of Alternates. Chairman W. Church called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Present were regular members P. Peifer, C. Smith and L. Ricklin, and Alternate W. Rose; Mr. Rose was seated for the absent regular member D. Cox. Audience attendees were Johanne Philbrick, Paul Siege, Deb Field, Ann Chuk, Michael Connor, Steve Smith, Sally Zimmerman, Peggy Church, Andy Belisle and Juan Roman.

2. Approval of September 10, 2024 minutes: Mrs. Ricklin made a motion to approve the September 10, 2024 minutes, Mrs. Smith seconded, motion carried, Ricklin, Smith, Church and Peifer aye, Rose abstained.

3. Audience for citizens: Mrs. Philbrick said there is a small group do not want the museum building moved and there is talk of creating a Historical Society. She is 100% for that idea and would like the HDC and BoS to look at the old post office as a site for a museum since it already has heat, facilities and parking.

4. New Business

a. Sidewalk between Senior Center and Garrison Field plus expansion of parking lot at the Senior Center. First Selectman Juan Roman said the Town had received approval for a \$750,000 grant for the project. He is still waiting for a final design plan and an A-2 survey to be done to determine boundaries and rights-of-way on Rte. 198 and Chaplin St. The plan to connect the Senior Center and Town Hall would also include realigning and squaring the intersection of Chaplin St. and Rte. 198. A pedestrian crosswalk set back from the intersection would be on Chaplin St. Mrs. Church and Ms. Zimmerman asked about the location of the crosswalk due to the speed of traffic coming from Rte. 198 onto Chaplin St. Mr. Roman said the DOT engineers determine the location based on conditions. Ms. Zimmerman asked if the HDC would have any input to the design. Mr. Roman said once a design is created, it will go to a Town public hearing and an HDC hearing. Mr. Rose added any road cut is under DOT purview. Mr. Belisle expressed much concern and personal experience of excessive speeding at the present intersection. He said the Connecticut Legislature passed a program to provide any town with speed monitoring and camera equipment. Mrs. Ricklin asked about the test holes in the Sr. Center parking lot. Mr. Roman said they were done to determine what the base material was under the asphalt, it was determined to be a good base which will save money on the project. Ms. Field asked if the expansion of the parking lot onto the grassy field could be done in gravel, Mr. Roman replied no because it needed to be efficiently snow plowed. He added a professional landscape plan with the intention of keeping the same sense and feeling of what now exists would be done and is included in the grant. The timeline for the project is late 2025 or early 2026. Mrs. Zimmerman offered help to apply for a Community Investment fund to renovate the old post office for small business.

b. Prospective Membership Candidates. Mr. Church said the HDC has two alternate positions and a town wide appeal had a good response. Two interested citizens bowed out so four prospective members were presented to the HDC.

Deb Field has lived on Chaplin St. for 22 years, she is a member of Inland Wetlands/ Conservation Committee and involved as a Steward with various conservation properties in the area. She said the whole area is important to her and wants to make sure the historic district is preserved in a sustainable way.

Paul Siege served as a Chaplin HDC member for two years, has lived in historic houses in the past and also served on the HDC in Windham and Old Saybrook. He has a long standing interest in antique homes and shows up for meetings.

Mike Connor was introduced to Chaplin in 1986 when he met Ann Northrop. He has a lot of experience serving on historic boards including nine years in San Antonio. He is a professional architect and a professor of architecture. He is a student of the design and history of architecture with a focus on the preservation of architecture.

Brian Kelleher was not present as he had a conflict. He has been a resident of Chaplin since 1985, and a student of history his entire life.

Mr. Church asked if there were questions about serving on the HDC. Mr. Connor asked how many requests the HDC gets for a Certificate of Appropriateness, Mr. Church replied sometimes several in a year and sometimes none. There was discussion on how to make sure residents of the district are aware of the need to bring plans for exterior changes viewable from the street to the HDC. He asks applicants to discuss plans with him before applying to make sure the plan will need a CofA. Mrs. Smith said solar installations are more common than in the past and the Commission strives to have the installations as inconspicuous as possible. Mr. Church added that the State of CT has training opportunity. Ms. Field remarked that realtors need to be made aware of HDC regulations.

5. Old Business: none

6. Correspondence: none

7. Adjournment: Mr. Rose made a motion to change the order and items on the agenda to move item 7 to item 8 Adjournment to Executive session, move item 8 to a new item 9 Alternate Candidate Recommendation to Board of Selectmen, add a new item 10 Meeting Adjournment. Mrs. Ricklin seconded, motion passed unanimously.

8. Adjournment to Executive Session to discuss alternate member recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. Mrs. Ricklin made the motion to adjourn to executive session, Mr. Peifer seconded, motion passed unanimously. The room was cleared and all present HDC members entered session at 8:00 P.M. The commission came out of executive session at 8:20 P.M.

9. Alternate Candidate Recommendation: Mr. Rose made a motion to recommend Deb Field, Mike Connor and Brian Kelleher as candidates to fill the two vacant HDC alternate positions. Mrs. Ricklin seconded, motion passed unanimously.

10. Adjournment: Mr. Church adjourned the meeting at 8:29 P.M.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Peifer- Recording clerk- HDC