

Northfield Historical Commission

Northfield Massachusetts

Sept. 1, 2020, ZOOM

Minutes

**Call to order:** Bee Jacque 1:07 pm

**Present:** Bee Jacque, Stacy Bond, Don Campbell, Joe Graveline, Lis McLoughlin, Mary Mayshark-Stavely, Joan Stoia, Mary King.

**Citizen input:** none

**Minutes:** August 11, 2020 accepted unanimously, **M:** McLoughlin **S:** Campbell

**Mail:** none

**Announcements**

Select board and Planning Board met, with FRCOG present, on Mitigation and Hazard Plan. It tries to plan for climate change. Discussion among NHC members ensued including railroad disaster threats since nuclear waste is being transported; does the M&H plan deal with that? Does the Fire Department have a plan? **ACTION:** Jacque will share the nuclear material transport issue with FRCOG.

McLoughlin mentioned that the Montague Reporter is offering a stipend for a young reporter who would write three articles on a current local environmental issue. Contact info shared in email.

**Unanticipated business:** keys to the locked cabinet at Town Hall holding Commission materials total 4. Joe needs one, Joan wants and needs one, and the other 2 will be held by Bee and available to Commissioners as the need arises.

**NHC initiatives**

Our mandate is to identify, preserve, educate about and protect local historic features and to insure compatibility of future development efforts. We discussed NHC initiatives and what our priorities might be. Center Cemetery, getting Main Street onto MA Historic Register, surveying historic homes and neighborhoods, alternate signage, sensitivity maps, Abijah Prince, 88 Main Street and its 3 significant historic events (Timothy Swan and sacred harp music, the beginning of the youth hostel movement, and the Renaissance Community in Northfield), Dartmouth Highway and the inventor of the combustible engine each received specific mention. The signs at Alderbrook Trail which are stated from the indigenous population point of view are a great example of alternate signage possibilities.

There was consensus on the importance of outreach, education, and encouragement of townspeople to value our historic properties and cultural resources. Discussion also identified challenges facing Northfield and the NHC. Chief among these are the lack of accurate information about Town and Commission resources, and potential apathy toward complex projects; for example, First Light's relicensing requires the Town to be aware of their use of the Connecticut River for the next 40 years. We would like to see NHC be on the "punch list" of boards, committees and departments for development initiatives. Bee mentioned that it would be helpful to have Town Hall move the manual building

inspection checklist to a system where any group that needs to review a project would be notified automatically. In addition, NHC's small and static annual budget limits our efforts to educate, to support, and to reach out to the community. Initial ideas included asking for funds to support programs and speakers and to get NHC's own Esri contract for GIS mapping.

**ACTION:** build relationships with other towns' Historical Commissions and with Northfield boards and commissions, initially the Conservation Commission and the Zoning Board.

**ACTION:** seek more funding from FinCom with a well-thought-out, 1-page presentation that includes cost ceilings for each monetary goal.

Chair Emerita ideas: tabled.

### **Committee & Project Updates**

**2021 Artists and Authors Festival:** McLoughlin said that Sherri Mitchell, Native American lawyer and author of *Sacred Instructions*, will be keynote speaker on February 27, 2021, at 11:00. NHC is sponsoring Mitchell. We need to effectively publicize our funding of this program.

**2023 Northfield 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:** no activity

**Battlefield Grant Advisory Committee:** no action on status of 2021 grant application.

**Community Preservation Committee:** no activity.

**Schell Bridge:** MassDOT will present a prerecorded webinar on the 25% design on Sept. 17.

**Stewardship Advisory Committee:** nothing to report. **ACTION:** Jacque will contact JoAnne McGee about the Calvin Swan Homestead.

### **Continuing NHC Business**

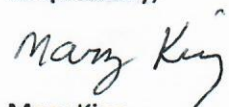
**2020 Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article follow-up:** Andrea Llamas, Town Administrator, will get back to Bee on the next steps.

**Dam relicensing, Sensitivity maps:** Graveline said that FERC and its oversight of First Light as it seeks a new contract will have huge effects on the Connecticut River's impact on Northfield's historical and cultural resources, which are located on both sides of the river.

**Schedule next meeting:** Sept. 29, 1:00, Zoom

**Adjournment:** 2:45 pm. **M:** Graveline **S:** Mayshark-Stavely

Respectfully,

  
Mary King