

Northfield Historical Commission

Northfield Massachusetts, Oct.27, 2020 ZOOM

Minutes

**Call to order:** Bee Jacque 1:05 pm

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

**Citizen input:** none

**Minutes:** Sept. 29 2020 accepted unanimously as amended, **M:** Campbell **S:** Mayshark-Stavely.

**Mail, announcements, unanticipated business:** none or to be dealt with in later agenda item.

**NHC Topic: Northfield history "in a nutshell".** Julia Blyth, chair of the Open Space Committee asked for an update of the existing local history document. It would be posted on the town website and if done well, could be a model for other town committees and commissions. It will give a brief, accurate and accessible history of Northfield. The Commissioners worked from a document "History of the Community - Beginnings" which McLoughlin had begun revising; Mayshark-Stavely liked the revisions and suggested NHC provide more on early, precontact history of indigenous people of the area. McLoughlin further revised the document during discussion; key points were the relevant boundaries of the Pocumtucks, appropriate use of Abenaki and Sokoki, the seasonal burning of the uplands, and/or surface quartz as the reason for reported open land. Graveline pointed out that clear and accurate choice of words is essential, and McLoughlin agreed that one inaccuracy in such documentation can cause suspicion of an entire effort. **ACTION:** Graveline will look for a primary source to verify use of fire on the land.

Discussion of hunters following huge migrations of elk and caribou along the Paleo Corridor between the Hudson and Connecticut Rivers, the seasonal nature of waterflow that limited the use of waterpower for mills, the importance of the Stockade, and the ignoring of the hill people by historians took place.

**ACTIONS**

- Campbell will inform NHC of the anti-slavery sentiment on the hill
- Stoia will prepare notes about 24 Main Street, site of the Stockade
- Jacque will send out the second revision of the history 'in a Nutshell' document as revised
- NHC members will review and revise the history document

Jacques noted that due to COVID-19 the 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee does not yet have a chair and is not meeting so she is raising it at the next Selectboard meeting. It is important that the anniversary planning start soon so NHC isn't caught up in last minute projects that should have started now. Graveline said that a document with depth that is accessible will broaden folks' understanding by tempting them to learn more. Campbell mentioned the bibliography of historical materials and perhaps a one-time newsletter, and McLoughlin suggested using esri to crowdsource a historical map, a memory project like StoryCorps.

**NHC Priorities:** a new project, the memory project might be budgeted from the 350<sup>th</sup> funds. Ongoing priority, the sensitivity map is a winter project.

The draft letter to the Deerfield Select board regarding Bud Driver's assistance to NHC was reviewed and suggestions made. **ACTION:** Jacque will send revised letter to the Deerfield board, with a cc to Bud.

Graveline reviewed a matter brought before the Planning Board regarding a solar project along Pine Meadow Road which may include historically sensitive sites.

**ACTIONS:** McLoughlin to share documents on MHC Town Reconnaissance Survey Reports, a land trust information contact, and a Solar Resources for Municipalities link.

**Schedule next meeting:** Nov. 24, 1:00, ZOOM

**Adjournment:** 3:06, unanimously: **M:** Graveline      **S:** Stoia

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary King".

Mary King

Secretary