

Deborah Flanagan – *Chair*
Daniel Byer– *Vice Chair*



Mark Bucchino
Jane Lowell
Janice Muldoon-Moors
Ruth O'Grady
Anne Dudley-Alternate
Russ Dudley - Alternate

TOWN OF MENDON HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

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mendonma.gov/historic-district-commission

Meeting Date: 9/16/2022

Meeting Location: Mendon Town Hall

Minutes Approved: 10/17/2022

Members Present: Deb, Dan, Jane, Ruth, Janice (remote)

Members Absent: Mark, Anne, Russ

Others: Lynne Roberts, Kathy Schofield, Lawney Tinio, Connie Beal

The hearing scheduled on Friday, September 16, 2022 by the Historic District Commission to consider the creation of two new historic districts was called to order at 6:02 PM by the Chair, Deborah Flanagan. In Person Participants were Deborah Flanagan, Daniel Byer, Ruth O'Grady, Jane Lowell, Lynne Roberts and Lawney Tinio. Remote Participants were Janice Muldoon-Moors, Kathleen Schofield and Constance Beal.

The two new historic districts within the Town of Mendon being proposed are the Washington Street Historic District (#4-#31 Washington Street) and the Jotham Hayward Homestead District (6 Bates Street). Discussion evolved around excluding #30 Washington Street from the proposed Historic District at the request of the owner. It is an empty lot which is land-locked and does not abut Washington Street. Lawney Tinio added that the entire parcel is wetlands and could never be built upon. Lynne Roberts, Chair of the Mendon Historical Commission, questioned whether the Massachusetts Historical Commission would approve. She referenced its disapproval of what is termed the "Swiss Cheese" approach by the MHC which results in gaps in a historic district. It was determined that since no structure was involved and #30 does not abut Washington Street, the MHC would not object. The commission asked for public comment and none was received. Dan confirmed no letters or emails were received either.

A motion was made and seconded to exclude #30 Washington Street from the proposed Historic District by Jane, it was seconded by Deb. The roll call vote of HDC members present was unanimously "aye."

Discussion began about changes in the Design Guidelines. Dan reviewed the proposed changes. He said he got 1 email from Brendan Channele on Washington st with several suggestions and would bring them up as we got to them.

In the fence section it was suggested we soften the language to not overly regulate fencing for working farms. All agree

The commission discussed HVAC. Brendan had commented on allowing exemptions for HVAC units that may not be able to be screened from public view. The commission discussed and agreed.

The commission discussed another comment on sheds.

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The commission discussed pools and play structures. After some discussion it was agreed these should be exempt. There was an issue regarding guidelines about pools (especially above ground) and play structures. It was agreed that probably both would not be situated in front of a residence. Dan stated we would need to amend the by-laws to do that.

Jane made a motion to submit an article for the November Town Meeting to amend the by-law to exempt pools and play structures, Ruth seconded, and it passed unanimously by roll call vote.

The commission discussed regulations around lighting.

The commission discussed new construction. It initially focused on new construction which should be compatible to the character of the surrounding structures. It should be consistent with the scale of the existing buildings, site layout, lot size, etc. It was emphasized during the hearing that these were guidelines and the HDC would work with those creating new construction. Total replication of historic structures is discouraged. Jane Lowell stated these guidelines are taken from the National Trust for Historic Preservation which references the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines.

The commission discussed solar facilities. All agree we don't want to unduly restrict them. They discussed several scenarios.

Constance Beal, Historical Commission member, questioned the guidelines regarding solar photovoltaic facilities and how they might be restricted. The HDC responded that it would not unduly restrict these facilities but prefer that ground mounted solar panels in a Historic District be screened.

After no further discussion, the hearing was adjourned at 7:22 PM.

The HDC received no new applications or projects. The next meeting was set for October 17, 2022 at 6 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 7:24.