

Montague Historical Commission
Executive Summary/Minutes of meeting on April 29 ,2024

Montague Town Hall
1 avenue A
Turners Falls, MA

Meeting held on line via Zoom 11 AM-12:30

Commissioners present

David Brule, vice-chair
Chris Clawson
Ed Gregory
Janel Nockleby, Chair
Chris Sawyer-Lauçanno
Jen Viencek

Also attending

Suzanne Lo Manto
Kate Martineau
Maureen Pollock

Proceedings:

1. Updates concerning the Montague Comprehensive Plan
 - a. MP shares comments re progress and FRCOG involvement.
 - b. MCP will not be overly detailed/specific, more like statement of general goals.
 - c. Chapters include transportation, housing, economic development, historical preservation plus cultural environment +arts.
 - d. CS-L: a Community Preservation Plan is needed; should be addressed by the town.
 - e. MP: it's possible to have a speaker address that Plan; Greenfield did an excellent job. FRCOG conducted a poll of Montague residents, the results can be shared.
 - f. JN: suggests getting a timeline and plan for coordination purposes; need to have in mind any pre-application, application steps to be taken, etc
2. MP: Montague City Village planning
 - a. Study of re-use of Farren property, now empty/open space.
 - b. Strategies for re-use can be found on-line.
 - c. Planning Dept and Selectmen recommend forming a working group; a role for Historical Commission?
 - d. Will likely need rezoning: currently multi-family residences not allowed.

3. Millers Falls Doug Smith mural project
 - a. MHC has voted unanimously to contribute \$500 to the project to assist in reproducing the mural to be placed on MF library exterior wall.
 - b. Kate M: plan is to recreate the mural on a durable aluminum plaque. The MF Improvement Association has \$400; in addition the MHC and Riverculture will provide funds. A Block Party is planned to celebrate new mural in late summer.
 - c. EG has a photo of original mural that could be used by the artist to replicate the deteriorating mural on Newton St; DB has original 1910 photo from which the mural was designed.
 - d. JN: how to transfer MHC funds to project? SLM suggests transfer to Riverculture.
4. Montague Center "Blacksmith Shop". Site visit with CS-L and Tris Metcalfe will be rescheduled.
5. FERC re-licensing: Chair and Vice-Chair will work on confidential documents and submit MHC comments to FERC by May 22.
 - a. Steve Ellis will assist with filing using town website
 - b. Plan: comments will be submitted separately by JN, then MHC will file to intervene as part of Montague application
 - c. Given status of "privileged material" JN and DB seek authorization by MHC to develop comments and then do the filing.
 - d. Motion made and passes with CC, CS-L, JV, DB, JN voting yes, EG votes nay.
6. ZBA and rezoning request for 73 Fifth St.
 - a. Proposal is to demolish part of building originally designed to house factory workers; now located within the TF Historic District
 - b. Proponent would rebuild a number of housing units in back of the property.
 - c. ZBA needs to rule on proposal.
 - d. How will the Demolition Delay By-law impact the project?
 - e. If the Building Inspector receives a demolition request, he may determine if the building needs to be demolished. Dependingly, after which the MHC may wish to invoke the DD By-Law and hold a public hearing.
 - f. JN will attend ZBA public hearing on May 1 and report back.

Adjourned at 12:30

Submitted by D. Brule, Vice-chair