

Montague Historical Commission
Minutes/summary for February 2, 2026
Montague Town Hall
Meeting held online.

11AM-12 noon

Commissioners present:

David Brule, Vice-chair

Chris Clawson

Ed Gregory

Janel Nockleby, Chair

Jen Viencek

Also: Elias Bradley, Fred Grossberg, Bill Ketchem, Chris Nolan-Zeller

Proceedings:

1. Minutes from November 24, 2025 approved.
NB: Jen V to post minutes; there seems to be a problem with the Town website.
2. Strathmore Demolition discussion:
 - a. JN: question about the Mass HC role?
CN-Z proposes a letter of “non-opposition” to the demolition be sent to Mass HC. Letter should come from Montague Commission.
 - b. Will be a phased demolition; State and EPA Brownfields grants
 - c. DB questions whether the Demolition Delay Bylaw requires a vote by the Commission
 - d. BK says he could issue a demolition permit with reasons.
 - e. EG.CC. DB discuss need to vote on the Demolition Delay; DB recommends for the sake of transparency and procedure that the vote on the DDBylaw be posted for next meeting, at which point the Commission could vote to invoke or not invoke the Bylaw. Commissioners accept to vote on Feb23, next meeting.
3. Elias B asks for information on artifacts from the mills:
CC notes that the foundations of the Cutlery buildings are in good repair, built by Bernard Farren; should be filled in and preserved. Otherwise interior artifacts have been removed.
4. Resident Fred Grossberg expresses concern about plans to demolish the 1792 Redbrook Farm buildings at 82 Chestnut Hill Rd.

- a. What is the procedure for demolition?
 - b. BK: no application for a permit to demolish has been filed.
 - c. Can this building be classified as a “historically significant building”?
 - d. Commissioners suggest that since the farm building is not within the Montague Historic District, demolition delay procedure does not apply.
 - e. DB objects to that interpretation; the Commission needs to find out if a building is not within the Historic District, are there no demolition restrictions? Or, does the possible demolition delay apply to all buildings within the Town that are over a certain age?
 - f. To be investigated.
5. JN notes zoning changes near the old Farren Hospital site are being considered.
 6. DB notes that the Battlefield Advisory Board which included Historical Commissioners from Montague, Deerfield, Greenfield, Gill, Northfield, and Elnu Abenaki, Chaubunagungamaug Nipmuck, Aquinnah Wampanoag, and Narragansett Tribes has completed its work. The Advisory Board was formed in 2013 to oversee research and fieldwork on the Falls Fight and massacre of May 19, 1676. The study was completed in November 2025 and findings are available to the public on the Town website.

Submitted by D. Brule.