

Town of Chelmsford  
Historic District Commission  
50 Billerica Rd., Room 205  
Chelmsford, MA  
Meeting Minutes: March 6, 2023  
Approved May 1, 2023

Present: Brenda Lovering, Jack Handley, Deb Taverna, Lisa Grasso. Donna Ready (arrived 7:18PM)

Not Present: Debra Belden, Janet Askenburg

**Call to Order**

Chair Lovering called the meeting to order at 7:01PM.

**Public Input**

No one came forward at this time.

**New Business**

**Santander Bank- Signs**

There have been no updates received since the previous meeting. An application that was received today was for the last meeting.

Santander will be returning to discuss potential changes to their proposal.

**61 Central Square-Signs, discussion with owners**

Owners were not present. They are still welcome to come to a future meeting.

**Neon lighted signs**

The neon sign at the dentist's office on Chelmsford St. has been removed. There is still one neon sign in the sandwich shop.

**Brook walk behind Odd Fellows-Evan Belansky**

Mr. Belansky provided concept plans for the entire walk. The part by Grist Mill Condominiums has been completed.

This is for a second segment of the brook walk located by the Oddfellows building. Private developers are being encouraged to participate in the construction of the walk. The Oddfellows new owner has been asked to provide an easement for the walk. The Town has purchased the remaining parking lot.

The new proposal is to create a meandering gravel pathway trail between the existing edge of pavement to the brook. Invasive plant species will be removed, and replanted with a riverfront habitat seed mix.

In the corner of the parking lot (4 parking spaces) will be a pocket park. The design is still being developed. It may have a bench and brick pavers. There will not be any structures or gazebo.

The Center Village Master Plan Committee is supportive of this proposal, and funding of \$47,250.00 would be provided through the Community Preservation Committee, pending Town Meeting approval. The easement has been accepted by the Conservation Commission, and permitting is in process.

The proposal entails horizontal construction, no structures, and limited visibility from right of ways. There are a number of trees to be protected, and a number of invasive trees that will be removed. The Tree Committee is working with the Community Development Department to create a plan. Landscaping would not be manicured, but more open and wild. River birch trees will remain.

Ms. Taverna doesn't think the park is part of the district. The pocket park is 18-20 feet deep, and about 40 feet long. Existing pavement would be removed. There would be about 70 parking spaces in the rest of the parking lot.

Mr. Belansky is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work.

**Motion:** by Ms. Taverna to support the proposal to create a pathway and pocket park behind the Oddfellows Building, as presented . Seconded by Mr. Handley. **Motion carries, unanimous, 5-0.**

Mr. Belansky asked if there were any concerns for his department from the Commission. The Commissioners indicated they were pleased with the Oddfellows building development, and the Fiske House re-development is coming along. They are awaiting roof screening and shutter installation.

Mr. Belansky advised that the Historic Façade program is on the books, however, there have not been any applicants possibly because of the Covid pandemic. Town meeting approved \$50,000.00 in each village for façade improvements; grants can be up to \$10,000.00. Funding comes from CPC. A 10 year façade restriction is recorded on the property deed. Mr. Belansky asked if applicants could be advised of the program.

Ms. Lovering suggested putting an article in the Town Manager's newsletter.

Ms. Belden will be advised to complete the Certificate.

### **Old Business**

#### **Center Village Master Plan Implementation Committee – Update**

Mr., Handley reported that the last meeting was cancelled.

## **Massachusetts Historical Commission – Certified Local Government – Update**

Ms. Taverna stated she is still awaiting resumes.

### **Correspondence and Telephone Calls**

None received since the previous meeting.

### **Meeting Minute Approval**

#### **February 6, 2023**

There were no Minutes ready to approve this evening.

### **Meeting Schedule**

The next meeting will be held on April 3, 2023.

The owner of the Oddfellows building is finishing up some interior work before a tour would be offered.

The owner of the Fiske House will be asked to come in with an update on his work and the status on installing the shutters. The grounds look good. Mr. Handley had asked local artist Janet Moore to do a drawing of the house.

Ms. Lovering will re-email the new owner of the dental office on Chelmsford St. to remind them that the Commission only meets once a month, and not in July. She may visit the sandwich shop about their neon sign.

Mr. Handley described some proposed developments with Navigation Brewing in his space.

Druzy Rose dress shop recently opened, and appears to be doing well.

Ms. Ready reported that the Grist Mill Condo Association met with the Conservation Commission to discuss unfinished work and maintenance concerns at their property. It appears money was set aside, but was used up. The developer has not finished work he promised to do, and other needed inspections were not done. Discussions will continue.

Commissioners hope the brook work is successful. Stream crossing bridges proposed to be located by Andiamo's Restaurant were never built by the developer of that property.

The building located at 9 Acton Rd. has been demolished.

### **Adjournment**

**Motion:** by Ms. Ready to adjourn the meeting at 7:58PM. **Motion carries, unanimous, 5-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Vivian W. Merrill

Supporting documents:

-Brook Walk proposal