

Chelmsford Historic District Commission
Town of Chelmsford
50 Billerica Rd. Chelmsford, Ma 01824
Meeting Minutes
May 2, 2022
Approved June 6, 2022

Members Present: Brenda Lovering, Debra Belden, Jack Handley, Lisa Grasso, Donna Ready, Deb Taverna

Members Absent: Janet Askenburg

All documents referenced in these minutes are available for review at the Community Development Office, 50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford Town Offices Building. This meeting was hand recorded via the Recording Secretary.

Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by Ms. Lovering.

Public Input

No one came forward at this time.

Scheduled Business

1 Billerica Road – Fiske House Preservation Restriction Subcommittee – Preservation Restriction Document (continued discussion)

Town Counsel Atty. Chris Alphen advised that the previous document that was signed was not notarized. He is a notary, and so the paperwork was re-signed, and notarized. He will follow up with Ms. Askenburg.

Chelmsford Garden Club b- Public Garden Wedding Venue

Ms. Lovering recused herself from this discussion, as she is a member of the Garden Club. Ms. Belden took over this part of the meeting.

Jackie Dowling from the Chelmsford Garden Club stated event equipment would include an arbor, chairs, canopy if it rains, fence pieces, shepherd's crooks for hanging. The equipment will be up for three days.

The event highlights were summarized.

Motion: by Ms. Ready to approve the items listed in the Chelmsford Garden Club's application for the purpose of having the Weddings Through the Century Event, as presented. Seconded by Ms. Grasso. Ms. Taverna abstained, all others in favor. **Motion carries, 4-0.**

Ms. Dowling announced a second item to request the installation of a Little Free Library in the Public Garden. The structure would be wooden, painted green, and placed on a wood post. The intent is primarily for garden books, but other books can be included. Ms. Dowling's husband will build it, and their goal is to install it in October, 2022. The exact location will be determined, as the preferred location

had to be changed because a tree was planted in the original spot (for Arbor Day). Anyone can swap or take a book.

Motion: by Ms. Ready to accept the installation of a permanent Little Free Library at the Public Garden on North Rd., as presented. Seconded by Ms. Grasso. Ms. Taverna abstained, all others in favor. **Motion carries, 4-0.**

Ms. Dowling explained that also in October, they want to put a time capsule in the Public Garden, and bury it where there was a tree that died.

Motion: by Ms. Ready to waive the fee for the Little Free Library application. Seconded by Ms. Grasso. Ms. Taverna abstained, all others in favor. **Motion carries, 4-0.**

Ms. Lovering resumed as Chair.

Screening Rooftop Mechanical Equipment:

-17 North Road – Retmad

Brandon Davis spoke on behalf of property owner Retmad. The application was filled out; however, he was not able to get a sample of the proposed composite boards. The roof top screening will be four foot tall capped picket style fence, and would look like a widow’s walk on the roof. Two inch pickets are preferred.

He will return next month with a sample of the product.

Central Square – Santana Barbershop – Street Furniture-Building Inspector follow-up

The Building Inspector/Commissioner sent a request to the business owner to remove the chairs. Chairs are usually gone, but sometimes reappear, and now there is a neon sign in the window. Ms. Lovering suggested a Commission member go to the business and speak with the owner. Ms. Grasso offered to meet with the business owner.

14 Chelmsford Street – Chelmsford House of Pizza – Window Signage-Building Inspector follow up

The Building Inspector/Commissioner was to visit this establishment. The neon sign is still there on the side window facing the street. The large wind banner flags were out over the weekend, and those are not allowed. The Building Inspector/Commissioner will be asked to go out again

10-14 Chelmsford St-Sweetser Building-Building Inspector follow-up

An e-mail sent by the Building Inspector/Commissioner to the property owner was read into the record. The owner was instructed to remove the parapet, and was advised how to contact him to appeal his order. The parapet has been removed. There was no response regarding the roof covering. It is understood that delays are caused by the owner’s health issues. Further discussion tabled until September, 2022.

Motion: by Ms. Taverna that any further action regarding rooftop mechanical equipment screening on 10-14 Chelmsford S. will be postponed until September, 2022. Seconded by Ms. Belden. **Motion carries, unanimous, 6-0.**

1 Billerica Road 41-44 Central Square – Parking Area - Update

The Town purchase of the parking lot parcel was approved at Town Meeting. The Commission anticipates that Mr. Faust will be back with comments. He will be asked to come to the next meeting-Ms. Merrill will send an email. Previously agreed to concessions were not completed.

18-20 Chelmsford Street (Sargent Property) – Exterior Changes – General Discussion (continued discussion)

No new developments-this will be kept on the agenda in anticipation of more information coming from the property owner.

41-44 Central Square – Odd Fellows Project LLC – Final Elevation Plans and Temporary Signage (continued discussion)

Mr. Handley visited the site last week and noted that the steel I-beam bracing was being installed. The property owner is leaving as much historic detail as possible inside. Mr. Handley stated he was told there are already conflicts about parking between the four lots. Ms. Belden stated she is very concerned about the summer kitchen building being demolished because there is no parking. The owner is making great progress.

Review Standards of the Chelmsford Historic District Commission Document – Implementation of Revised Document (continued discussion)

Ms. Taverna forwarded Atty. Haverty’s comments to the Commission. Additional grammatical changes will be made, and a comment about screening maintenance will be added. The numbering of the pages was corrected.

Motion: by Ms. Taverna to approve the revised Review Standards of the Chelmsford Historic District Commission as amended to replace any existing Rules. Seconded by Ms. Grasso.

Motion carries, unanimous, 6-0.

Copies of the final document will be brought to the June meeting for inclusion in the Commission’s books.

New Business

Ms. Lovering advised the State Register of Historic Places for 2021 was received in the mail, and will be added to the Commission’s archived documents. The pages about Chelmsford will be copied and given to Commission members.

Discussion: Change meeting dates for months of Annual Town Meeting

The change would only be an issue for a public hearing. A meeting could be scheduled for the second week in April. The September Town Meeting is always the second week, so there is no conflict then.

Continued Business

Center Village Master Plan Implementation Committee – Update

Mr. Handley reported that Brian Milisci has left the Committee. There is an opening for a replacement. The Committee has been discussing the brook aesthetics, and possibly lighting it up in areas with programmable lighting. The Conservation Commission is doing a site walk at 9 Acton Rd. at 6:00PM on May 3, 2022, and discussion about invasive plant cleaning by the brook in that area is anticipated to be discussed. An old wall was removed and nothing was replaced. This should be addressed with more than boulders. The brook was supposed to be cleaned out as part of the Grist Mill project, and it was never done.

Unfinished Business

Historic District Commission - Open/Closed Signage – Update

Ms. Grasso found the suggested white signs, which were more economical than black signs. Mr. Handley offered to contribute if needed. The signs will be white with black letters.

Motion: by Ms. Ready to authorize the purchase of white Open/Closed signs for businesses in the Historic District. Seconded by Ms. Belden. **Motion carries, unanimous, 6-0.**

Ms. Grasso will coordinate the purchase with Ms. Askenburg .

Massachusetts Historical Commission – Certified Local Government – Update

Ms. Taverna requested Commission members provide to her a brief resume of their talents that they bring to the Commission.

Correspondence and Telephone Calls

A request was received to install a sign at 59-61 Central Square. A proposed rendering was provided. Ms. Taverna will send an application for the sign to Sign-a-Rama, and will direct them to appear at the June meeting.

Meeting Minute Approval

Motion: by Ms. Ready to approve the Meeting Minutes of March 7, 2022, as amended. Seconded by Ms. Belden. **Motion carries, unanimous, 6-0.**

Meeting Schedule

The next meeting will be on June 6, 2022. There will not be a July meeting.

Adjournment

Motion: by Ms. Ready to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 PM, Seconded by Ms. Grasso. **Motion carries, unanimous, 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,
Vivian W. Merrill

Supporting documents:

- Draft Historic Preservation for Fiske House
- Review Standards of the Historic District Commission document
- Draft Minutes
- Sample signage