

Montague Historical Commission
Minutes/summary of MHC meeting of 24 April, 2023

Meeting held in person and on-line

Commissioners present:

David Brule
Chris Clawson
Ed Gregory
Suzanne LoManto
Janel Nockleby
Chris Sawyer-Lauçanno

Member of the public: Colleen Deskavitch

Proceedings:

1. Convened at 11:02. Minutes voted unanimously, with one abstention: Chris S-L, due to absence at the last meeting. Ed Gregory not yet able to access the link.
2. TF-Gill Bridge: Ed Gregory is working with the Gill Historical Commission to address the request of GHC and MHC to correct the wording on the plaque on the bridge which should be phrased correctly, i.e. "The Turners Falls-Gill Bridge" A Work In Progress.
3. a. JN updates the commissioners on the Mass Historical Commission on its historic preservation planning workshop. A 44 minute recording of the zoomcast will be available. JN remarks:
 - 1) an early start to planning in Montague will be more pro-active, less reactive
 - 2) discussions will be more effective if there is a framework
 - 3) it is recommended to watch the video and to engage the new town planner in this discussion.
 - 4) this project coincides with the developing comprehensive plan for Montague cultural resources.
 - 5) C S-L comments: this could be complex. There is a need to create Historical Districts in Lake Pleasant and Montague City. We should work with the planner, and /or find a consultant, possibly through FRCOG/Beth Gianini
- b. Canal District planning (topic moved up to accommodate Colleen Deskavitch):
 - 1) JN: consultants and workshops about the canal district have concluded.
 - 2) The final report is on the Planning Dept website
 - 3) Building#11 has the potential to be saved/preserved; question is how to maintain #11 in the short term?
 - 4) CS-L: five years ago it was viable but there has been significant deterioration. With some effort it could be preserved. Recommends

more study, windows could be covered with plywood. No facilities whatsoever.

- 5) SLM: is it really safe for DPW work? The Fire Chief should check first, maybe a drone could be used.
- 6) Colleen: is not the Farren included in the Canal district? Summarizes planning meeting last week, envisioning bus stops, housing, etc.
- 7) SLM: Farren not part of the "Canal District". However in Montague City, zoning could be mixed commercial/individual housing. An extensive plan will be paid by Trinity. Consider: bike path, offices, affordable housing, restaurants, etc. The planning board will address potential study of Montague City.
- 8) The Farren and Trinity's response will be on the Selectboard agenda.
4. Cabot Camp: as of March 28: the recreation agreement portion of FERC relicensing proposal seeking a third party to rehab the premises and maintain site, e.g. Parks and Recreation?
5. Strathmore footbridge: under agreement with the Town: it will be demolished. Question as to whether to preserve the "gate" on the TF side?
6. Shea marquee: there has been no Shea board meeting yet. SLM will keep MHC informed.
7. Topic not anticipated: CS-L and DB strongly recommend that archaeology monitoring (+ Tribal?) should take place during ground disturbance of affordable housing project scheduled for First Street.

Adjourned at 12:05. Submitted by D. Brule, Chair