

Royalston Historic District Commission

Royalston, Massachusetts, 01368

Meeting Minutes

Date: September 16, 2021

Attendees: Peter Kraniak (chair), Christine Statuto, Bob Casinghino, Pierre Humblet (secretary), Joe Liebman (alt). Marie Humblet, Michael Adams, Lorraine Casingino. Pierre and Joe recused themselves on matters related to 5 on the Common.

Public Hearing

Peter opened the public hearing at 7:48 PM on Application 2021-08-2 about redoing the driveway at 5 on the Common with light gray dense aggregate.

Marie Humblet, owner of 4 on the Common, spoke first. She acknowledged that the driveway needed to be repaired and had no issue with whatever substrate might be used. She cares about the color and the material of the top layer. She remarked that most driveways near the common are "beige-ish". Some driveways are not readily noticeable from the road, either because they are far from it or because obstacles such as trees and bushes prevent oblique views. However, those at 5 and 9 on the Common are extremely visible as they are long, built on flat terrain, and in full view. This is also the case for 3 on the Common when viewed from the Athol direction. All of those are currently "beige-ish". The style of the driveway at 9 on the Common, which was built in recent years, was specifically chosen to match that of its neighbor at #5. Five driveways have been repaired in recent years (2, 9 & 23 on the common, 4 Warwick Rd, 4 S. Royalston Rd) and they all use "beige-ish" material, to match the prevalent color. The bylaw states that driveways are structures and as such their color is regulated by the HDC. To preserve the integrity of the Common, which is fragile, the repairs of the 5 on the Common driveway should preserve the current color, instead of changing to a gray that may come out darker than expected.

Peter opined that the current driveways are less noticeable than dark ones.

Lorraine pointed out that color doesn't really drive the selection of a driveway as much as material and durability. She suggested that maybe the HDC could offer Matt a solution as durable as what he wants to use but in a different color.

Michael said that it depends on the gravel pit.

Bob concurred about the fragility of the Common.

Michael thought that the common was special. It is not grand like some historic sites. Its glue is the limited color palette and materials, which drive a consistent setting.

Joe thought that it was possible to find materials to make a durable driveway that blends in. He recommended Mallet & Son in Athol.

Bob motioned to close the public hearing. Peter seconded and closed the hearing.

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Regular meeting

Peter opened the meeting at 7:55

The commission observed that it did not have a quorum to vote on the applications 2021-08-2, 3 and 4. A special meeting will be necessary. The date of Sept 30 was tentatively agreed upon.

Approval of the minutes

Pierre mentioned that he had found his notes about the meeting of August 5 and consequently made some corrections to the minutes of that meeting that had been approved on Aug 16. The commissioners read them. Bob motioned to approve the corrected minutes. Joe seconded. All voted in favor.

The members read the minutes of the August 19 meeting and made several corrections. Bob motioned to approve the minutes as amended, Christine seconded and all voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned

Bob motioned to close the meeting. Joe seconded. Approval was unanimous. Peter closed the meeting at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "P.A. Humblet". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "P.A." and the last name "Humblet" clearly distinguishable.

Pierre A. Humblet
RHDC Secretary