

Royalston Historic District Commission

Royalston, Massachusetts, 01368

Meeting Minutes

Date: September 20th, 2012

Attendees: Peter Kraniak (Chair), Celt Grant, Clarence Rabideau, Pierre Humblet (Secretary), Rick Carrier, Bob Casinghino (late). All were active voters.

Peter opened the meeting at 7:35 PM

Minutes:

The members read the minutes from the August 16 meeting. Rick made a motion to approve them as read. Clarence seconded. All voted in favor.

Old application

The commission examined Chris Dawson application 2012-08-01 for a Certificate of Appropriateness to remove the rear concrete patio at 2 on the Common and to install temporary wooden steps. The general feeling was that this would improve the look of the District. Celt moved to approve the application. Clarence seconded. All voted in favor except Pierre who recused himself.

Internal HDC matters

Correspondence:

- Peter reported that a letter was sent to the Selectboard about the funds appropriated by the 1999 Town Meeting for the Historic District boundary signs, and also about the recent incorrect appointments. Pierre reported that he had attended the BOS meeting. The board remembered that 1999 vote and will ask the Town accountants to look for the funds. If they are not found, the BOS seemed open to put the issue on the next Special Town Meeting agenda. The BOS will also rectify the recent appointment of Rick Carrier.
- The HDC has received an e-mail from the BOS asking that we nominate a representative for possible appointment to the Common Restoration Commission. Clarence showed some interest in the issue. Pierre moved that we nominate Clarence. Bob seconded. All voted in favor except Clarence who abstained.

Financial matters

Peter reported that he had settled some billing issues that occurred near the fiscal year transition.

Town hall elevator

Pierre reported that he had attended two meetings about the Town Hall elevator. It is an informal group; the decisions will be made by the BOS. Access must be provided to the first and second floors and to the stage. Currently there are two proposals on the table. Both involve constructing a new outside ramp to the front door and removing the existing ramp to the kitchen side door. The two options vary on how to reach the upper levels.

One option is to construct a lift (not an elevator) at the W end of the kitchen, with a door to the dining room near the dining room window (causing loss of table space), reaching the 2nd floor hallway where the stairs to the balcony are currently located. The stage would be served by a separate small lift in the NE corner.

The second option is to create a hallway on the East side of the selectboard office (erecting a partition) and to place a lift in the NE corner. It would serve both the second floor (with the entrance in the front of the room) and the stage.

The HDC was grateful to be involved early in the process. While they realize they have no official capacity to discuss interior details, many members regretted the impact of both solutions on the

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usable space (it is already in short supply). Various other options were discussed. Peter and some others suggested that an attractive solution would be to create an external structure containing both the escape stairs and the elevator, where the escape stairs are currently located. It would have minimal impact on the building. The members also examined the exterior plans for the front, but they were not detailed enough to make precise comments. Creating non-handicapped parking spaces in the front does not seem desirable. The handicapped parking spaces should be located on the exterior of the U, as it is now.

New business

Bob pointed out that a sign advertising solar panels has been standing in front of 5 on the Common for a few months. Non temporary signs require permission. The members thought we should talk to the owners before taking more actions.

Old business

Solar panel Guidelines.

Bob had e-mailed the last revision of the proposed guidelines for solar panels in the District.

Members continued the editing.

Celt made a motion to hold a Public Hearing on the current draft version (which will be written up by Bob and circulated for minor edits) on October 18. Bob seconded. All voted in favor. The public hearing will be posted and also advertised in the Athol Daily News and the Royalston library newsletter.

Meeting adjourned

Bob made a motion to close the meeting. Rick seconded. It was unanimously approved. Peter closed the meeting at 9:08 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,
Secretary