

Medfield Historical Commission

April 5, 2021 Meeting

Location: Virtual Zoom Meeting

Members present: co-chair David Temple; Maria Baler; Peter Fletcher; co-chair Seth Meehan; Kirstin Poler

Members absent: Joe Opiela; Doug Whitla

Others present and participating: Teresa James, Paul McKechnie; Sarah Lemke; Jim Brand; Jamie Sullivan; Blake McDermott; Sarah Raposa, Town Planner; Chris McCue Potts; Robert Aigler; Michael Perloff; Robert Kennedy; Liz and Alan Blair; Shawn Farrell; Victoria Lia; Tara; Daniella Golden; Saverio Maviglia; Tim Hughes; Greg Lorusso

Joint meeting of the Conservation Commission, Historical Commission, and Planning Board

At approximately 7:33pm, Teresa James called the Planning Board meeting to order, David Temple called the Historical Commission meeting to order and Robert Aigler called the Conservation Commission meeting to order. Teresa James read the following notice:

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Planning Board, Historical Commission, and Conservation Commission is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. A reminder that persons who would like to listen to or view this meeting while in progress may do so by following the instructions on the agenda and meeting notice. This meeting is being recorded.

Scenic Roads

Ms. Raposa gave a presentation on proposed scenic ways and answered participant questions.

At 7:52 PM, Liz & Alan Blair asked: "Mustn't we go to the town to add or remove a tree in a public way now? How does making a public way a scenic way change that?" Ms. Raposa responded.

At 7:54 PM, Victoria Lia, who lives on 55 Elm Street asked: "I have had Eversource come on to my property to cut down some of our Pine trees without permission. The reasoning was that they wanted to clear the foliage around the electrical wires. Would they now have to get permission from the planning board to do such work if our street becomes a scenic way?" Ms. Raposa responded.

At 7:58 PM, Greg Lorusso wrote: "Hi, this is Greg Lorusso and I live on Plain Street. So just to clarify this does not affect or hinder any work on trees or rock walls 'on' my property." Ms. Raposa responded

David Temple asked who to reach out to about removing nuisance trees. Ms. Raposa responded.

At 8:03 PM, Shawn Farrell, who lives on 53 Millbrook Road wrote: "What is the setback (in feet) from the edge of the roadway that determines if a tree is considered to be 'in the public way'? Is it measured in terms of the base of the tree or the top area?" Ms. Raposa responded.

At 8:06 PM Liz & Alan Blair asked: “If a road is made a scenic way does that preclude changes such as adding sidewalks, streetlights, re-alignment of the way?” Ms. Raposa responded.

At 8:06 PM Rob and Joan Marquart, who live on Nebo Street asked: “What is the purpose of designating a road this way?” Ms. Raposa responded.

Mary McCarthy asked if there is any jurisdiction over private property when it comes to trees on Scenic Ways. Ms. Raposa responded.

At 8:08 PM, Liz & Alan Blair asked: “What does ‘Recommendation for National Register District’ mean? Who recommended it?” Ms. Raposa, David Temple, Christine McCue Potts responded.

At 8:10 PM, Laura Eselius wrote: “This is Laura Eselius, 105 Elm - this sounds like a good idea. Just curious why it's been so long since the last time we considered proposing additional scenic roads - what prompted this at this time?” Ms. Raposa and Christine McCue Potts responded.

At 8:13 PM, Tracy Foley commented: “It appears Pine Street and North Street have preserved much of their character by having a scenic designation. I live on Elm street and think it would be great to preserve stone walls, bridges and waterways.” Ms. Raposa responded.

At 8:20 PM, Sarah Herd, who lives on Nebo Street commented: “I think scenic roads should have posted 25 mph speed limits to enjoy all of the beauty instead of going 60 past my house!” Ms. Raposa responded.

At 8:21 PM, Laura Eselius wrote: “Laura Eselius, again - also curious if the scenic road designation might enable extra measures to help address emerging environmental concerns (e.g., how trees along Hartford in the wetland area are no longer thriving as they have in the past).” Ms. Raposa deferred to members of the Conservation Commission and Mary McCarthy and Robert Kennedy responded.

At 8:27 PM, an anonymous attendee asked: “How will being designated a scenic road affect our ability to tie into public utilities such as gas and sewer?” Ms. Raposa responded. Sarah Lemke added to the answer.

At 8:43 PM, Greg Lorusso asked: “If this is approved, when does it take effect?” Ms. Raposa responded.

At 8:43 PM, Shawn Farrell commented: “Fine with designation as Scenic Way for Millbrook Road. However, I’m concerned about a yes vote if this includes designation of the road as National Register District status (as stated in the flyer) which could be a precursor to Local Historic District status, which is obviously much more restrictive.” Ms. Raposa responded.

Boards Discussion

Sarah Lemke made a motion to recommend approval of the articles designating Elm Street, Plain Street, Farm Street, Nebo Street, and Millbrook Road as scenic ways. Seconded by Paul McKechnie. Seth Meehan = yes; Jim Brand = yes; Sarah Lemke = yes; Teresa James = yes. The Vote: 4-0.

David Temple made a motion for the Historical Commission to support the article to make Elm Street, Plain Street, Farm Street, Nebo Street, and Millbrook Road scenic ways. Seconded by Peter Fletcher. Maria Baler = yes; Peter Fletcher = yes; Kirsten Poler = yes; David Temple = yes; Seth Meehan = yes. The Vote: 5-0.

Michael Perloff made a motion for the Conservation Commission to adjourn the Conservation Commission meeting. Seconded by Mary McCarthy. Michael Perloff = yes; Mary McCarthy = yes; Kirsten Poler = yes; Robert Aigler = yes. The Vote = 4-0.

27 Pine Street

Following updates and other administrative matters for the Planning Board until 9:20 pm, the Historical Commission members discussed a question submitted by Scott Allison of the Building Commissioner's office. In September 2019, the Commission did not impose a delay on the request to demolish the property at 27 Pine Street. The owner had yet to demolish anything on site and contacted Allison regarding demolishing only the garage on site. Before issuing a demolition permit, Allison wanted clarification if the September 2019 vote by the Historical Commission covered the garage. Per the Commission's discussion of those members then serving on the Commission (Temple, Baler, and Meehan), Temple would advise Allison that the original release did cover the garage as well.

Adjournment

At 9:45pm, the Commission voted to adjourn.