

WARREN VOLUNTARY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMITTEE

Minutes of December 16, 2008 Meeting

Warren Town Hall, 2nd Floor

7:00 pm

www.wvhdc.org

Attendees: BG (Ret.) Richard J. Valente, Edward J. Theberge, John DaSilva, Chris Fuller, Patricia Read and Eileen Collins, Janet O'Brien

Location: Council Chambers, Warren Town Hall

Ed Theberge Presiding:

1. Meeting called to order at 7:07 p.m.

2. New/Review Applicants

a. Harriet Lapointe

15 Hope Street

Final Review

Ms. Lapointe presented her receipts, cancelled checks and “after” photographs for two applications

which included a new roof and carpentry work such as returns, eyebrows and soffets.

Committee members complimented Ms. Lapointe on the repairs. Ms. Lapointe said dur-

ing the process she “learned a lot.”

Mr. Fuller made a motion to approve historic tax credits for the two proposals the cost of which totaled \$17,855.00 – \$12,500 for roof replacement and \$2,500 for carpentry

Ms. Collins seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Review of Minutes

Ms. Read made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 25, 2008 meeting, with two amendments. The amendments were the addition of Mr. DaSilva's question to Julie Blount regarding her as yet unfinished project and the recusal of Mr. Fuller during a discussion of the 279 Water Street project. Mr. DaSilva seconded the motion to accept the minutes as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Old Business

a. Financial Report

Mr. DaSilva reported that with \$1,625 committed, the WVHDC was \$875 under budget for the current fiscal year. Ms. Collins made a motion to accept the Financial Report, seconded by Ms. Read. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Status Report

Mr. DaSilva presented the updated Status Report. He said at this time open applications totaled \$139,310. He asked that letters be sent out to those with open projects giving them until March 1, 2009 to respond as to their status. The secretary was asked to send letters to property owners whose applications date back to 2006 asking them to respond in writing.

c. Winsor application

Mark Winsor and Lisa Mediano appeared before the board after submitting a letter at the

November, 2008 meeting questioning the committee's denial of their application for tax credits

which was submitted in November, 2007, discussed by the committee at the

December, 2007 meeting and denied at the January, 2008 meeting.

Mr. Theberge presented a recap of the couple's application process and what ensued at

subsequent meetings, including the denial. He also read pertinent passages from the WVHDC's

Rules & Regulations.

Mr. DaSilva recused himself from the discussion as an abutter.

Mr. Winsor and Ms. Mediano stated in the letter and then in person that their application

should have been approved and they were denied “due process.” Ms. Mediano said she was unaware that work begun prior to approval at a meeting was grounds for a denial. She said the couple believed work could be started when the application was submitted. She said they were also unaware that if time was at issue they could request a special meeting. She also said that when she obtained the application form at Town Hall there was no one there to answer questions. “It was all new to us,” she said. “It was a little complicated, confusing.” She added that work begun in November, 2007 did not include improvements for which they were seeking historic tax credits.

On a motion from Mr. Fuller, seconded by Ms. Collins, the committee unanimously voted to consider the letter submitted at the November, 2008 meeting as a request for reconsideration.

During the discussion that followed, Mr. Theberge answered some of the couple’s questions.

“Let me clarify one thing. Submitting an application doesn’t constitute approval.”

Mr. Theberge said he had heard no new evidence.

Mr. Fuller made a motion to review and reconsider the application. The motion was seconded by Ms. Collins and passed. Mr. Theberge voted no.

However Mr. Fuller later questioned how the committee could treat the application as a new application with renovations completed. Ms. Read suggested an opinion from the Town Solicitor.

Mr. Theberge said, "This can't be treated as a new application. The issue is the timing of the work.

If we deny it there is the appeals process."

Mr. Fuller made a motion to deny the request for reconsideration. The motion was seconded by Ms. Collins.

Mr. Winsor and Ms. Mediano said they will appeal the decision to the WVHD Board of Appeals.

d. 279 Water Street

Mr. Theberge said he had received a letter to attend the upcoming Planning Board Meeting during which new plans for property at 279 Water Street would be discussed. Planning Board Chairman Andre Asselin, who was present, said he would like to bring a recommendation from the WVHDC to the meeting the following Monday.

Mr. Theberge said the policy was for the Planning Board to hear the

application first.

“The ordinance says we participate at the meeting then bring information back to the board for discussion and then we make a recommendation,” he said.

e. 2009 Meetings Schedule

On a motion from Ms. Collins, seconded by Mr. Fuller the proposed 2009 WVHDC Meeting Schedule was approved.

7. Adjournment

On a motion by Ms. Read, seconded by Ms. Collins, and unanimously approved the meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.