

WARREN VOLUNTARY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMITTEE

Minutes of August 24, 2010 Meeting

Warren Town Hall, 2nd Floor

7:00 pm

www.wvhdc.org

Attendees: BG (Ret.) Richard J. Valente, Edward Theberge, Janet O'Brien, Chris Fuller, Patricia Read, Eileen Collins and John DaSilva; Russell Goyette, an owner of Trafford's Restaurant, 285 Water St., and Scott Lial, member of the Warren Zoning Board

Absent: No absentees

Location: Planning Board Conference Room, Warren Town Hall

1- Call to Order

Chairman Richard J. Valente called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

2- Review of Applicants

a. None

b. Trafford's Restaurant, 285 Water St.

Russell Goyette, an owner of Trafford's Restaurant, appeared before the committee to seek guidance for design/construction of a

sign for the restaurant, specifically concerning size, materials and any historical restrictions.

Gen. Valente told him signs were typically a Zoning Board issue but that the WVHDC could render an advisory opinion.

Mr. Goyette explained that the planned sign was free standing and that currently the “initial rendering” does not follow code as far as size.” The proposed sign would be situated near the building, not on the street.

The committee discussed preferred materials, maximum height (8 ft.) and the fact that it must be landscaped, and lighting. Mr. Lial explained that under the Town’s zoning ordinance the square footage of the sign can be no more than 15 feet.

Gen. Valente said that while the committee could comment upon appearance, the sign must first of all meet zoning requirements.

Gen. Valente and Mr. Theberge said the sign should fit in historically and be in keeping with the waterfront atmosphere. Mr. Theberge said a traditional design is preferred, unlike the rendering which is contemporary. It was suggested that Mr. Goyette look at signage that already exists in the neighborhood.

c. Communication among Boards

Mr. Lial told the WVHDC that he was concerned about the poor level of communication among boards and would like to see it improved. He also said it is important that applicant owners/developers/contractors be directed first to the WVHDC for a recommendation before “we see the final product on the main drag.”

Mr. Lial said one problem he sees is that contractors dislike being referred from one board to another as this causes costly delays.

Ms. Read said the WVHDC has often called special meetings to accommodate them.

Mr. DaSilva said under the previous Building Official, applicants were guided to the WVHDC, but not now. Mr. Lial said a lot of people don't know about the WVHDC and the tax credits.

Mr. Theberge said the role of the Warren Volunteer Historic District Committee can better be communicated by all Town Hall staff to those individuals interested in repairing/restoring their historic properties.

Mr. Fuller said that he believed there is confusion as to the WVHDC's role – namely to approve tax credits for restorations and to provide historical design reviews. He said, " We serve multiple functions."

Suggestions were made to improve public awareness and cooperation between Boards:

(1) Write to Town Manager

(2) Ask the Warren Times Gazette to write an article

3 - Review of Minutes

a. June 22, 2010 Regular Meeting

Mr. Theberge made a motion to accept the minutes as amended at the last meeting. Mr. Fuller seconded. The motion passed.

b. July 27, 2010 Regular Meeting

Mr. DaSilva made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Theberge. The motion passed

4- Old Business

a. Financial Report

Current payments are stipends to the secretary and Web site maintenance. The WVHDC is currently \$1,200 under budget, said Mr. DaSilva. Gen. Valente made a motion to accept the financial report as submitted, seconded by Ms. Collins. The motion passed.

b. Status Report

The only update to the status report was the addition of work approved for Mary Healey Jamiel; open projects total \$96,555. Mr. DaSilva asked that letters be sent to those whose projects approved in 2009 remain open.

Gen. Valente made a motion to accept the status report, seconded by Mr. Theberge. The morion passed.

c. Liaison

The issue of a liaison from the Town Council was discussed. Mr. DaSilva made a motion to write a letter to the Town Manager with a copy to Council President Frerichs explaining how having a liaison has worked in the past; second by Mr. Theberge. Motion passed. Gen. Valente will write the letter.

5- New Business

a. The committee discussed a letter from the Zoning Board to the developer of the 285 Water Street restaurant to determine if the WVHDC's recommendations had been communicated to the property owner/developer. Committee members said that greater oversight is needed. Ms. Collins said that boards that oversee historic buildings or buildings in historic areas in other communities require a materials list. She said the WVHDC should do the same. "We must be stricter," she said.

It was also agreed that the committee must require detailed plans from

developers/contractors when they appear before the WVHDC.

Gen Valente said

that enforcement is also an issue.

The committee discussed drafting a letter to the Planning Board saying that some

of the WVHDC's recommendations were not being followed.

6- Adjournment

Mr. Theberge made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. DaSilva, and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.