

**Methuen Historic District Commission**  
**September 24, 2009 at 7:00 P.M.**  
Great Hall – Searles Building  
41 Pleasant Street  
Methuen, MA 01844

**MEETING MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order of Regular Meeting**

Chairman Dufresne called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM.

**2. Roll Call**

Raymond Dufresne, Chair	Present	Joseph Fisichelli	Absent
Joseph Bella	Present	Christine Metzemaekers	Absent
Peter Cameron	Present	Katherine Robinson, Alternate	Present
Robert Fabino	Absent	Ralph Belmonte, Alternate	Present

**Others in Attendance**

Alene Reich, Historic Planner, City of Methuen  
Paul Ramirez, Methuen East Little League  
Jim Keenan, Robert Gilman, Keith Souci; Enterprise Bank  
Arthur Ingalls, Butlers and Bars

**3. Acceptance of August 27, 2009 Minutes**

MOTION by Commissioner Bella to accept the minutes of the August 27, 2009 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Robinson. UNANIMOUS AFFIRMATIVE VOTE.

**4. New Business:**

Chairman Dufresne explained the process of the public hearing for participants.

**a. PUBLIC HEARING: Application: Certificate of Appropriateness:** Methuen East Little League, Lawrence St. Commissioners reviewed an application for the installation of new dugouts. Applicant Paul Ramirez described the current facilities- 30 years old with no cover from the elements- and provided pictures and a description of the proposed dugouts. There are six fields, which would each have 2 dugouts.

Chairman Dufresne opened the floor to questions from the commission and confirmed with the applicant that the roofs would be sloped and that the chain link would be black, to match existing on the premises. Commissioner Robinson asked if the trim would be wooden, to which the applicant replied that it would. Robinson further commented that there could be the potential for ice dams if the roofs were shingled and suggested rubber roofing as a long-lasting alternative. Dufresne agreed that rubber would be appropriate.

Chairman Dufresne opened the floor to public comment. There was none.

Dufresne opened the floor to discussion among the commissioners. Commissioner Robinson MOTIONED to accept the proposal with the stipulations that the trim be wooden and painted white and that the roofing material could be either rubber or shingle as long as the pitch of the roof was slight. Seconded by Commissioner Bella. UNANIMOUS AFFIRMATIVE VOTE.

**b. PUBLIC HEARING: Application: Certificate of Appropriateness:** Enterprise Bank, 255 Broadway. Applicant Jim Keenan explained the project, which involves installing 2 chillers for a disaster-recovery back-up unit on the drive-through canopy and installing a balustrade around the edge of the canopy for screening.

Chairman Dufresne opened the floor to questions from the commission. Commissioner Robinson asked for clarification of the plans, since the type is so small. Applicant clarified that the units are 50" in height, that they are galvanized and sitting on a platform. Robinson also commented that care must be taken in ensuring that balustrades are adequate safety protection for maintenance workers, per OSHA requirements. The applicant explained that the units are in the center of the canopy and that there should be 7-8 feet to any edge.

Chairman Dufresne opened the floor to public comment. There was none.

Dufresne opened the floor to discussion among the commissioners. Commissioner Robinson confirmed with the applicant that the balustrade would be white material to match existing trim, voiced that she had no objection. Chairman Dufresne agreed that it was a good solution. Commissioner Bella commented that the balustrade is a nice detail that adds to the building.

MOTION by Commissioner Robinson to approve application with the condition that the materials used for the balustrade are white and with the understanding that the unit would stand at an approximate height of 56" with the platform and that the balustrade would be 48" in height. Seconded by Commissioner Belmonte. UNANIMOUS AFFIRMATIVE VOTE.

**c. PUBLIC HEARING: Application: Certificate of Appropriateness:** Butlers and Bars, 17 Hampshire St. Applicant Arthur Ingalls explained the project, which involves installing a new sign. The applicant presented a sample, an aluminum sign with black gloss and gold foil enamels.

Chairman Dufresne opened the floor to questions from the commission. A commissioner asked if the gold would be applied to the sign, which it will be.

Chairman Dufresne opened the floor to public comment. There was none.

Dufresne opened the floor to discussion among the commissioners. Commissioner Robinson expressed that she loves the graphics and classy design but that the sheen is problematic, especially because of the metal material. Chairman Dufresne agreed that the sheen is problematic because there have been many cases in which gold lettering can be illegible. Commissioner Robinson appreciated that the sign is self-framing and that the 1/2" back-bend is appropriate.

MOTION by Commissioner Robinson to approve application as submitted with the stipulation that there must be a matte finish on the aluminum and a 1/2" back-bend as exists on the sample. Seconded by Commissioner Bella. UNANIMOUS AFFIRMATIVE VOTE.

## **5. Old Business**

### **a. Tour of Methuen Village**

The Commission discussed the offer from Applicant David Spada to tour the Methuen Village Assisted Living Facility. Commissioners agreed that a late-October weekend visit would be most convenient.

### **b. Bike Racks**

Reich presented an update on the topic, provided pictures of most compatible racks for historic districts. Reich had submitted a question to the Massachusetts Historical Commission discussion forum about how communities manage bike racks in the historic district and explained that, in summary, other communities have favored styles and must approve the placement of the bike racks. The Commission favored the idea of creating a one-page addendum to the Design Guideline handbook and also proposed that the Chair can approve bike rack placement.

## **6. Other business**

Chairman Dufresne informed the Commission of an approval for a Certificate of Non-Applicability for a roof replacement at 5 East St.

The Commission discussed violations, including painting in progress downtown.

Commissioner Robinson inquired about the Sign Guidelines update, suggested the formation of a sub-committee, and expressed interest in serving on said committee. Chairman Dufresne and Commissioner Bella also expressed interest. It was decided that Chairman Dufresne would serve as the chair and will call a meeting.

## **7. Announcements**

Commissioner Bella announced that there would be a walking tour and an open house held in September as part of the Essex National Heritage Commission's annual Trails and Sails event. Bella also announced an Anniversary Concert held at the Organ Hall, which would begin shortly after the walking tour ended. Bella also announced that the Historical Society would be hosting dinners in the coming weeks.

MOTION to adjourn by Commissioner Bella. Seconded by Commissioner Robinson. UNANIMOUS AFFIRMATIVE VOTE.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Alene Reich