

Historic Preservation Commission of Mendon NY

July 11, 2023 Meeting

Members Present:

Diane Ham (Historian), Geoff Tesch (Chair), Lynn Buehlman, Martha Bush, Kaley Catlin, Karen Jenkins (town Board Liaison)

Members Absent: Lynn Mertz

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Tesch at 7:02 PM

Minutes:

Motion- March Minutes to be approved, by Martha Bush(1st), Lynn Buehlman (2nd)

Motion Carried

Update to EPOD Maps

- Spreadsheet of homes was delivered to Corey on June 2. EPOD Map drafts prior to that date.
- Karen reported that this has not been an agenda item for the board yet and she would put it on the agenda

Certificate of Appropriateness applications

1. Zach Lockhart. Windows appear to have been installed. They agreed to reapply for the front entry. Geoff will check in with them.

Commission Makeup

- Discussed the fact that Lynne Mertz and her husband are moving out of town and she will step down from the commission. Town code calls for 5 members of the HPC so we will need to recruit a new member or two.
- Rick Milne will be placing an ad for the village historian position.
- We discussed the benefits of having a realtor on the commission. Karen had a contact she was going to reach out to.

Communication to homeowners with local HPC designation

- Letters will be sent in the next week to homeowners including a press release about new legislation before Congress. Lynn B to get letters to the town office for printing and mailing.

Town Liaison Report - Karen Jenkins

- The splash park was completed and has been temporarily shut down because the wrong sealant was used which made the park too slippery and dangerous.

- A wonderful dedication ceremony was held for the memorial and the park with a beautiful sculpture by Mary Taylor.
- A final board vote was taken to disallow short term rentals (like AirBNB) in Mendon, unless they are owner-occupied (like a bed and breakfast).

Town Historian Report – Diane Ham

- Work is ongoing on a book about the history of Mendon Ponds Park being written by Diane Ham and a co-author.
- There used to be a dozen farms around the ponds and two old roads no longer used.

Report on the Landmark Society Preservation Conference in April, by Martha Bush

1. Best practices of other HPCs include:

- Many towns and cities use database software to keep track of all the properties in their area. Managed by the code enforcement department, this software holds not only property specs, permit history, tax history, and assessment history, but also whether the property is designated by the National Register or a local HPC. Having the list of historic properties in an easy-to-access digital format saves the code enforcement team considerable time and effort.
- Many HPCs require that one of the commissioners be a realtor.
- HPCs are trying to include an architect and representation from minority communities

2. Legislation

- HTC-GO new Historic Tax credits legislation introduced in House and Senate and expected to pass. Increases value of historic tax credits that have been degraded due to a combination of inflation, increased interest rates and adverse IRS rulings.
- National Trust for Historic Preservation has a new website with state-by-state data and resources.
<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/e78fa7dabc604f36b8307e3e1cc13d52/page/HOME/>

3. Major anniversary milestones in the next couple of years offer opportunities to raise awareness of local history and local historical landmarks.

- America's Semiquincentennial – 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence – July 4th 2026.
www.America250.org is the website and the “Field guide for local historians” sets out goals and themes of the upcoming major celebration of the last 250 years.

- Erie Canal Bicentennial – 2025
 - A package of promotional material to be available to communities along the canal.

- 4. **Other Resources for Historic Preservation**
 - William G. Pomeroy Foundation for historical markers. National organization based in Syracuse. They produce NO cost historical markers through their own fundraising. They help edit the copy to ensure that they are fully representative. We apply for markers and they create them, then we must install them.
 - Historic preservation grants – in Restore NY Communities Initiative -- Municipal grant program <https://esd.ny.gov/restore-new-york>

Please Note: No meeting in August. The next meeting will be Wed, September 6th at 7:00

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:29 PM

Respectfully submitted by Martha Bush and Geoff Tesch