



Town of Stowe- Historic Preservation Commission

Meeting Minutes – May 20, 2026

A meeting of the Stowe Historic Preservation Commission (SHPC) was held on Wednesday May 20, 2026, at approximately 5:15 pm. Participation was in person at the Akeley Memorial Building, online or telephone via Zoom.

Members Present: McKee Macdonald (Chair), George Bambara, Cindy McKechnie, and Shapleigh Smith

Staff Present: Kyle Hansen – Deputy Zoning Administrator

The meeting was called to order by McKee Macdonald (chair) at 5:17 pm.

Adjustments to the Agenda:

Kyle Hansen, staff, requested that the printed agenda be adjusted to include the following additional items:

1. An informal discussion regarding replacing the covered walkway/porch lighting at the Stowe Public Library, to be presented by Chris Jolly on behalf of the Town of Stowe; and
2. An additional formal application involving the property located at 406 Maple Street.

The Commission agreed to the adjustment and to review the application after the three (3) Town of Stowe projects

Project #: 7837

Owner: The Community Church

Tax Parcel #: 7A-051.000

Location: 137 Main Street

Project: Replace Lighting on Steeple and Clock Face and Add Lighting to the Spire

Zoning: VC10/SHOD

Chris Jolly, Public Works Staff, presented this application on behalf of the Town of Stowe. Doug Viehmann and Charlie Burnham attended the meeting via Zoom to support the presentation and answer questions.

This application involves a portion of the belltower renovation project and includes the replacement of exterior lights on the Church clock faces. The lights are currently too close together and do not operate in a manner which uniformly illuminate the clock faces.

The proposed lighting adds four (4) wider downcast lights to shine and direct light onto the four (4) clocks across their entire widths, which will wash over the clock in a more uniform manner. Additionally, the applicant proposes to add four (4) new corner-mounted spotlights to illuminate the church spire – these will be angled in a manner to only illuminate the spire from below. Four (4) replacement corner-mounted lights are also being proposed to replace existing lights pointed upwards towards the bell tower. These are floodlights, meant to cast additional light on the clock and belltower.

McKee Macdonald asked if the lights would be set on a timer. Charlie Burnham replied that the light system currently uses a photoelectric cell, which is not proposed to change. This system turns off

the existing lights in the morning and turns them back on at night.

Cindy McKechnie asked for clarification about the style and color of the lights. C. Burnham explained that the proposed lights all have recorded CCT ratings of 4000k as presented in the application, to emit more of a white light than a yellow or blue. The steeple lights are spotlights to illuminate the steeple, the bell tower lights are floodlights to point upwards and illuminate the entire bell tower, and the clock lights are wide bar lights pointing down to wash over the clock faces to provide even lighting. Currently, each light on the steeple has a different color temperature. This proposal will modify the lighting plan so that each light will emit the same color. The downcast light will have a louver shield on the side facing Main Street, and the light fixtures will all be white.

George Bambara asked how many hours each night the entire system will be illuminated. C. Burnham re-iterated that the system will be lit from dusk to dawn based on the existing photoelectric cell and the current light timer system.

C. McKechnie asked C. Jolly about the ongoing Town of Stowe clock project. He responded that the Town is working on obtaining and installing a single mechanical clock to replace the current timekeeping system. The current bell is electronic and is on its own system, hence why it is accurate while the clock is inaccurate. The bell tower and clock will not change as a part of this application.

Shapleigh Smith motioned to approve the project as presented. Cindy McKechnie seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. This project is classified as a minor.

Project #: 7836
Owner: Town of Stowe
Tax Parcel: 07-042.000
Location: 258 Weeks Hill Road
Project: Parker Barn Repairs
Zoning: RR2

Chris Jolly, Staff, presented this application on behalf of the Town of Stowe. The subject building proposed to be repaired is the “Parker Barn” on the Mayo Farm property. The foundation is collapsing on the southwest corner and needs to be repaired to preserve the structural integrity of the building. Additionally, the cupola needs structural work as well. Siding and roofing will be replaced in-kind if deemed necessary. The front doors will be relocated to the outside of the door frame using existing hardware, to prevent water from infiltrating the door, causing additional damage to the floor and structure. All exterior materials which are planned to be replaced during the renovation project will be replaced entirely in-kind, and materials will be painted to match the existing colors. There are no proposals to change the use or design of the barn.

McKee Macdonald asked if there are plans to replace the roofing with roof shingles, and if the barn historically had a shingle roof. C. Jolly answered that the barn had a cedar shingle roof but there are no plans under consideration to replace the roof with shingles at this time. M. Macdonald requested that the applicant consider exploring this option, but to include cut sheets of the materials they plan to use on the roof project, either way.

M. Macdonald noted that the plans provided do not show dimensions or significant drawn up-close

or otherwise scalable detail of the roof, doors, cupola, or siding. He requested that the applicant return with dimensional elevation plans of the barn in case the renovation project requires partial demolition and reconstruction. C. Jolly stated that the cupola should not need to be removed, and there are no plans to demolish any part of the barn.

George Bambara explained that the plans will be useful for documentation purposes in case the barn collapses in the future and needs to be rebuilt. These plans will show both existing and proposed conditions and will be used as reference in the future.

Shapleigh Smith asked if the applicant is proposing to replace any windows. C. Jolly responded that there are plans to replace siding, if necessary, but not windows. S. Smith stated that if the roof is to be painted, not replaced with shingles, that the Applicant should consider painting it a dark bronze color. He also suggested providing additional up-close photographs of the current conditions as well as dimensional drawings as M. Macdonald requested.

M. Macdonald asked for clarification regarding the process of securing the foundation, and asked the Applicant to provide information regarding the measurements of all boards existing and proposed, and to document the width of the clapboard and the distance between them, if they are to be replaced in the renovation project.

George Bambara asked when the Applicant would like to start work on the project. C. Jolly stated that the work should start as soon as possible, likely in the summer of 2026.

Cindy McKechnie asked if there are any plans or considerations made to fully restore the barn. C. Jolly stated that due to financial budgetary constraints, the best option forward is to shore up the foundation, relocate the door to the outside of the door frame, and replace siding and repair the roof and cupola as necessary. The building may be suitable for storage in the future, but not human occupation or prolonged use.

The Commission determined that this application should be tabled for the time being, so that the Applicant can return with additional plans as noted above. This application will be included in an upcoming HPC meeting when the Applicant has plans and is ready to present to the Commission.

Informal Discussion: Stowe Public Library Covered Porch Lights

C. Jolly explained that the existing outdoor lights hanging from the ceiling of the library's covered porch are failing and need to be replaced. The existing lights are not historic and are poorly made. The Town is considering replacing them with downcast LED lights mounted on the ceiling.

G. Bambara asked if the lights will be flush with the ceiling. C. Jolly responded in the affirmative.

C. McKechnie stated that when the Applicant is ready to present an application to the HPC, that they provide cut sheets with lighting color temperature, lumens, and other information on a manufacturer spec sheet. M. Macdonald agreed with this request.

The Applicant will return to the HPC at a later date with a formal application, lighting plans, and manufacturer cut sheets to complement the application.

Project #: 7841

Owner: Julie Rubenstein and Archibald McKinley

Tax Parcel #: 7A-077.000

Location: 406 Maple Street

Project: Converting Portion of Covered Porch to Enclosed Mudroom

Zoning: VR-20 / SHOD

Kim Brown presented on behalf of the property owner. The plans presented to the HPC involve a renovation project, including converting a nine (9') foot by eleven (11') foot portion of covered porch into an enclosed mudroom. The exterior design of this room will closely resemble the existing covered porch and blend into the existing design of the house exterior walls. The design will include the same painted shingles as the lower half of the covered porch, and the same color, size, shape, and pattern of clapboard siding, as shown on the elevation drawings, as the rest of the exterior walls on the dwelling. The Applicant proposes to replace two (2) non-matching columns with new columns so that all five (5) remaining columns supporting the covered porch roof will be the same size, design, color, and material. The steps and entry to the covered porch will be slightly reduced in width and shifted closer to the road, but the design, color, and materials will replicate what exists currently. This will allow more room for the mudroom addition to be built.

The door will be a two vertical, nine light design door, as the applicant would like to use a door with increased soundproofing due to heavy traffic along Route 100. This door will likely be painted light blue to match a door on the rear of the dwelling. The new windows will be two (2) tilt and wash double hungs.

C. McKechnie asked for clarification about the existing windows on the dwelling. K. Brown replied that none of the windows have simulated divided light, so the double hungs proposed will match the design of the windows elsewhere on the dwelling, minus them being a different size. Most windows are 32" x 60", but these are proposed to be 32" x 48" due to the constraints of the new wall under a lower existing roofline. The porch is slightly sagging, and the renovation project will fix this issue, but the applicant proposes to keep the roofline of the covered porch the same as it currently is, as a constant slope instead of raising the height for the mudroom portion.

M. Macdonald asked if there were plans to demolish and rebuild the porch. K. Brown explained that the existing roof will need to be propped up and stabilized during the project but will not be torn down or removed and replaced. The roofline as proposed will have a 2/12 slope, as exists currently. There will be new decking and siding included in the project as well.

K. Brown further mentioned that there are three (3) outdoor lights proposed, one (1) by the new mudroom entry, and two (2) at the rear of the barn where a patio exists. He included these lights and existing lights in the application materials as a part of the lumens per developed square foot calculation as required by section 4.8(8) of the Zoning Regulations.

C. McKechnie asked if the dwelling is currently occupied and how many bedrooms are included. K. Brown replied that the building is currently occupied and there are two (2) bedrooms. The barn is currently unfinished and not included as dwelling space at this time. C. McKechnie continued that the windows presented appear to be too short and look distorted compared to the other windows on the dwelling. She suggested that the applicant redesign this wall, either with narrower windows, or a three (3) window design, to keep the proportions of the windows similar to elsewhere on the

dwelling. M. Macdonald mentioned that the Applicant may consider a single window as opposed to the two presented.

G. Bambara asked if the clapboard wall of the proposed mudroom would be set back from the lower shingle covered wall. K. Brown replied that yes, the mudroom will be slightly set back from the existing porch wall and tucked into the existing porch, for additional insulation and to preserve the design and shape of the existing covered porch.

The commission determined that the Applicant should provide Planning and Zoning staff with revised elevation plans showing a single (1) window, a two (2) window with narrower windows, and a three (3) window design. The HPC will then review these three (3) plans once they are presented, and will make a determination on which design they recommend. Window cut sheets shall be included with the elevation drawings in order for a permit to be issued. K. Brown agreed to these terms and hopes to provide plans in advance of the June 3rd HPC meeting.

Other Business:

Informal Discussion – Unpermitted Development

M. Macdonald brought to K. Hansen’s attention that the work at 51 South Main Street is still ongoing, and asked if there are any updates to share. K. Hansen explained that the owner has been issued a zoning violation, but there is no further information to share at this time. M. Macdonald furthered that this project has spilled over into additional unpermitted renovations on 65 South Main Street, which Planning & Zoning should look into.

M. Macdonald also mentioned that there is unpermitted fencing located at 147 School Street and requested that Planning & Zoning staff reach out to the owner to apply for a permit.

K. Hansen read aloud an email from Sam Scofield, who was unable to attend the meeting. S. Scofield is concerned about the collapsed porch at Ricketson Farm. He inquired about the stewardship of the property, who is responsible for fixing the porch, and if the town has any jurisdiction in requiring the property to be repaired or restored. K. Hansen stated that Planning & Zoning staff will look into the matter, as well as recent Vermont Land Use Review Board ruling on denying the Woodstock Inn a permit to demolish two historic buildings which were neglected, rather than repairing them over time.

C. McKechnie requested that the Planning Commission consider requiring certain landscaping to require permits or HPC review in a future zoning regulation update. S. Smith suggested that the Planning Commission consider an ordinance requiring landowners to maintain historic buildings rather than allowing them to rot to a point where demolition is the only viable option.

Review Meeting Minutes:

No changes or edits were made to the prior meeting minutes.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Kyle Hansen, Deputy Zoning Administrator