

West Newbury

Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

Meeting date & place: 7:00 pm, September 19, 2018, 1910 Building

Members Present: Chairman Bob Janes; Jennifer Conway; Dot Cavanaugh; Paul Knezek; Elisa Grammer; former Commission member Jeff Clewley

Historic Building Inventory

Mr. Clewley, who has worked extensively on this project with Consultant Stacy Spies and with the state, described the next steps for finalizing the Historic Building Inventory. Ms. Spies is working on responding to comments from the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) (which provided a grant to support the inventory) and has submitted a final invoice. She awaits some final information, but all parties recognize the need for timely finalization in order to release Community Preservation Committee (CPC) funds before September 30. Mr. Clewley is working on the grant Completion Report, using documentation received from Ms. Spies. Ms. Conway offered to provide Mr. Clewley additional help on this.

A priority is to wrap up payment of the final invoice. Per the suggestion of CPC Administrator Jean Nelson, whose committee will make the final payment, *the Commission voted 5-0-0 to approve Historic Properties Survey Update performed by Stacy E. Spies, as submitted in final form to the Historical Commission.*

Review of Minutes

The Commission voted 5-0-0 to approve the minutes of August 21, 2018, as amended.

Carr Post

Chairman Janes stated that he recently toured the Carr Post with Town Manager Angus Jennings. There was some thought that groups such as the Historical Commission and the Garden Club could use the space for storage and meetings. The Commission generally discussed competing proposals that would require Town funding, as well as the desirability of finding other funding for Carr Post. Ms. Grammer said that she would follow through with research on Ms. Cavanaugh's idea of obtaining grant funds if the Carr Post were used as a visitors' center.

Mr. Janes also said that he noticed a hole in the Carr Post roof as well as a broken window. The Commission views this as an urgent problem in need of remediation, particularly as fall rain and winter snows approach. The Town just paid roughly \$75K in CPC funds to completely stabilize the building, so relief should be timely pursued with the contractor doing that work. Mr. Janes indicated that he will follow up on this.

Mr. Janes also reported Mr. Jennings' suggestion of a merger of the Carr Post Committee and the Historical Commission, in light of the overlap in purpose. Mr. Janes said that Marlene Switzer and Messrs. Atwater and Bauer, who are involved in construction, serve or have served on the Carr Post Committee.

It was generally agreed that in view of the pending question of merging the committees and the absence of clear imminent work for the Carr Post Committee, the Commission will defer identifying members for the Carr Post Committee.

West Newbury Cemeteries

Mr. Janes noted that the Town's cemeteries are in dire need of maintenance and vegetative clearing. The various cemetery trustees are aging, lack successors, and starting to think about turning cemeteries over to the Town. Mr. Janes said that under state law, the Town would be obligated to undertake this responsibility. Mr. Janes also circulated state data about the Town cemeteries.

Mr. Janes stated that he is interested in learning about gravestone cleaning and Ms. Conway said that the upcoming Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) gravestone cleaning class will not take place until June 1, 2019. DAR has a day of service in the fall, she noted. Ms. Grammer noted that in the next few months the Bicentennial Committee will be publishing a book of planned events. If the Commission wants to make cemetery clearing a bicentennial event, that date should be included in the book. It was generally agreed that this could be made part of the annual Town cleanup day. Mr. Janes observed that a large unanswered question is what to do with brush once cleared: will the Town will remove and accept cleared brush from cemeteries that at least for now are private property?

Review of Proposed Town Stormwater Management Programs

Mr. Janes presented information sent from Mr. Jennings describing a proposed stormwater management project and showing a map of anticipated work. The Commission reviewed these materials and *voted 5-0-0 to reply to Mr. Jennings that the Commission knows of no impact from this project on historic properties.*

Other Business:

Ms. Grammer suggested that the Commission might think about a brief oral town report at the upcoming Fall Town Meeting to describe 1) successful completion of the first part of the Historic Building Inventory and 2) the Commission's preliminary concerns about the lack of resources to maintain Town cemeteries. Mr. Janes will look into this.

Ms. Grammer circulated a document containing 1) the section of Massachusetts General Laws containing the responsibilities of municipal historical commissions and 2) a draft webpage Historical Commission mission statement drawn from that statute. *It was generally agreed to take this up at the next Commission meeting.*

Adjournment

The Commission adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Next Meeting

October 17, 2018 at 7 p.m.

Meeting Documents

- Proposed motion from Jean Nelson
- Stormwater management proposal
- Draft mission statement
- Data from state re: cemeteries

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa Grammer