

West Newbury

Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

Meeting date & place: 7:30 pm, July 8, 2020 Via Remote Participation--GoToMeeting

Members Present Remotely: Chairman Bob Janes; Jennifer Conway; Dot Cavanaugh; Elisa Grammer via GoToMeeting.

At the outset, Chairman Janes read the following statement: "Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the West Newbury Historical Commission will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible."

Training Field Sign

The brown Essex County Heritage sign identifying the Training Field as a state Historic District having fallen apart, the Commission discussed options for its replacement. Ms. Grammer had been in contact with a staffer at Essex Heritage, who said that they would pay for half the cost and responded, "The most recent sign I've worked on that is the comparable size came in at around \$800. But this included the designing of it as it was new and before we did the designing in-house. So with that in mind, the Historical Commission would be paying around \$400. But I would get an exact estimate before you are on the hook and committed to a sign in case there is any issue with funds."

The Commission also discussed funding for its share of the cost. Chairman Janes noted that we need to seek Community Preservation funding soon in anticipation of Fall Town Meeting.

By unanimous roll call vote, the Commission decided to replace the Training Field sign with the Essex Heritage sign substantially identical to the one that fell apart, and seek Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding for the Town's share of this cost. Ms. Grammer will contact Essex Heritage, Department of Public Works (DPW) Director Wayne Amaral, and, out of an abundance of caution, the Planning Board. Ms. Grammer offered to prepare and circulate a draft of an application for CPA funding for Fall Town Meeting.

Julian Steele Historic Marker

The Commission discussed the uncertainty of holding any large indoor gathering celebrating Julian Steele in view of the coronavirus emergency. Ms. Grammer reported that she has been in contact with the Steele's daughter Emilie, who agrees with the idea of putting the marker up with social media, newspaper, and other virtual fanfare—and holding a celebration in honor of Mr. Steele once the emergency better resolves.

By unanimous roll call vote, the Commission voted to erect the Steele sign in the near future, with virtual fanfare and a celebration to be held at a later time. The Commission also noted that the sign could be unbolted if warranted by maintenance on Town Hall. Ms. Grammer will coordinate with the Garden Club about the location of the sign and will notify DPW Director Amaral of the Commission decision.

Historic Sites Survey Update

Ms. Conway said that the consultant's work on the Historic Sites Survey should be complete in a week or so. Once that is done, Ms. Conway will write up a summary and work on the grant wrap up, which involves a good deal of paperwork including copies of all the cleared checks paid to the consultant. There will also be major printing of the survey. The Commission discussed the documentation Dot Cavanaugh provided concerning structures in town that had been moved and discussed some clarifying points about this phase of the Survey.

Because all work on the current grant needs to be completed before another grant can be sought for the next phase of the Survey, the Commission decided to wait until Annual Town Meeting in the spring to seek CPA funding for another grant.

Other Business

Ms. Grammer said that the Minute History for August will be about Samuel Morse Felton, who was born in West Newbury and who as a railroad executive worked with Alan Pinkerton to save Abraham Lincoln from assassination during his trip to his first inauguration. She said she will provide a draft shortly.

Minutes

By unanimous roll call vote the Commission approved the minutes of April 30, 2020.

Adjournment

The Commission adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Meeting Documents

None.

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa Grammer