

## West Newbury

### Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

**Meeting date & place: 7:00 pm, November 18, 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."

#### **Historic Sites Survey**

Wrapping up the Phase2 Survey has been complicated by COVID-caused delays at the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). Ms. Conway reported that the final sign off and check are not expected until December or January. Meanwhile, the Committee would like to send letters to homeowners whose property was surveyed and to do a press release and website notice, etc.

*It was agreed that Ms. Conway will check to see if MHC agrees we can proceed. Ms. Conway will inquire with Town staff about making the copies of letter attachments, Ms. Grammer will provide addressee labels and return address labels for envelopes, and Ms. Conway and Ms. Cavanaugh will divide up the envelopes and contents to stuff envelopes, and we will ask the Town to do the mailing, charged to the Historical Commission.*

*By unanimous roll call vote, the Commission approved Ms. Conway's draft press release about the Phase 2 survey. Ms. Grammer will use information from the press release to update the website and will invite Commission review and comments on the revisions. Then Ms. Grammer will ask for a Town email blast and share the press release on social media.*

Ms. Conway shared a draft application to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) for the Phase 3 Survey. She noted that the timing is complicated by the MHC delay on Phase 2. Mr. Janes said that the due date for applications in January 2, 2021. It was noted that this might be raised at the CPC meeting scheduled for November 19 at 7:30 pm. Mr. Janes is a member of the CPC and will inquire about a placeholder for the next survey. Ms. Grammer said that she hoped to speak at the meeting to provide suggestions about making the process clearer for applicants and about coordination between the CPC and committees getting grants.

Ms. Grammer noted that with development in Town, beautiful and significant historic landscapes are disappearing. Form H of the Historic Sites Survey covers landscapes and a Survey of the Common Pasture in West Newbury, Newburyport, and Newbury has been done. *By unanimous roll*

*call vote, the Commission approved the Phase 3 application. It also expressed support for including landscapes in the Survey. Ms. Conway will ask MHC about this.*

### **Website**

Ms. Grammer asked if there was anything that should be changed about, or added to the website. She noted that when the year ends, the 2020 monthly stories will need to go on a new subpage to make way for 2021 stories. She asked whether the Commission would like to include on the website older MACRIS sites surveys for West Newbury properties that have not been included in the current Phase 1 & 2 surveys. Ms. Conway noted that we are required to post the current surveys on our website and it would be good to include the older ones. Ms. Grammer will alert the Commission when changes are made so that they can make comments and revisions. *By unanimous roll call vote, the Commission approved posting of older MACRIS surveys on the website.*

### **Cemeteries**

The Commission discussed the Almshouse Cemetery, which Mr. Janes, Ms. Cavanaugh, and Ms. Grammer visited earlier in the month. Ms. Grammer's research found evidence for twelve named persons buried there, but likely there are many more.

*By unanimous roll call vote, the Commission determined to seek to have a sign posted identifying the Almshouse Cemetery and to pursue having the Town clean it up and maintain it. Ms. Cavanaugh will contact Jack Alden to see if he could make the sign. The Committee will also contact representatives of the Mill Pond and Open Space Committees about this.*

### **Monthly stories**

*By unanimous roll call vote, the Commission approved the draft story for December about Marietta Poor. Monthly stories in 2021 will focus on places, starting with the Almshouse/ Town Farm in January.*

### **Book of stories**

*No updates.*

### **Other business**

12/7/2020 meeting between Committee chairs and Selectmen re: priorities. *By unanimous roll call vote, the Commission identified its top two priorities as continuing the Historic Sites Survey and obtaining signage and clean up for the Almshouse Cemetery.*

### **Minutes**

*By unanimous roll call vote, the Commission approved the minutes of October 13, 2020.*

### **Adjournment**

The Commission adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

### **Meeting Documents**

--Draft Phase 3 Historic Sites Survey CPC application  
--Draft press release re: Phase 2 Historic Sites Survey  
--the draft Monthly Minute Tale of Our Town about Marietta Poor  
--spreadsheets with information about 1) people in the Almshouse & people likely buried there 2)  
statistics about the Almshouse in WN Annual Reports  
--this link to an example of a Historic Sites Survey about landscape  
[https://www.wnewbury.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf1436/f/uploads/common\\_pasture\\_historic\\_sites\\_survey.pdf](https://www.wnewbury.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf1436/f/uploads/common_pasture_historic_sites_survey.pdf)  
--Historic Sites Survey Form H about landscape

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa Grammer

DRAFT