

## **West Newbury**

### **Historical Commission Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting date & place:** 7:00 pm, May 3, 2022, Town Offices

**Members Present:** Chairman Bob Janes; Bob Belmont; Jennifer Conway; Elisa Grammer; Associate Member Dot Cavanaugh.

#### **Proposed Revisions for Historic Markers**

Ms. Grammer reported that she had heard from Francesca Pomerantz, one of the group working to revise two historic markers concerning American Indians, that the group was still working with Haverhill Signs to develop mock up signs with the intended language.

Commission member Belmont raised the idea of a historic marker for the first fire station in Town, located where the St. Ann's parking lot is now situated. *The Commission generally expressed support for such a marker.* Steps to placing a sign include:

- Consultation with the property owner, Historical Commission, Select Board and any other potentially interested Town committee/group
- Securing funding via Historical Commission budget, Community Preservation Act, etc

#### **Historic Sites Survey Update**

Ms. Conway said that the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) is working on scheduling an on-line kick off meeting for Historic Sites Survey grant recipients around May 24-26. She has collected the members' suggestions about properties to be surveyed and has gathered the recommendations from prior surveys. She noted that the additional funding (thanks to the new need to meet MHC's suggested increase in the grant amount) will be presented at Town meeting.

#### **FY23 Historical Commission Budget & Other Town Meeting Items**

*It was agreed that Chair Janes will speak at Town meeting to present Historical Commission matters.*

#### **Town Records & Annual Town Report Digitization Update**

Ms. Grammer reported that digitization of our remaining Annual Town Report has been delayed. She will check back with the provider periodically to ensure that this is completed in time for FY 2022 reimbursement from the Town Clerk's budget.

#### **Newburyport Artichoke Dam Work and Quaker Cemetery**

Ms. Grammer noted that she submitted Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act comments on Newburyport's proposal to alter the Artichoke dam and also has received Public Records Act information from Massachusetts dam safety regulators, who have no public procedures for the permit Newburyport is seeking.

#### **Monthly Minute Histories**

Ms. Grammer recommended using the Frances Keegan Marquis story again for June, *and the Commission agreed. Mr. Janes will provide Ms. Grammer a list of women veterans possibly suitable for a Minute History story.*

## **Other Business**

Wreaths Across America—Ms. Conway said that the Daughters of the American Revolution and specifically the local chapter are supporting Wreaths Across America, which honors veterans with Christmas wreaths at grave sites. Mr. Janes expressed support for the concept and asked about specifics. For instance, in West Newbury cemeteries are not plowed in winter—how will grave be accessed? Who assumes responsibility for wreath placement and removal? *The Commission expressed overall support and Ms. Conway will pursue details and answers to such questions.*

Purple Heart Community—Mr. Janes said that he is exploring Purple Heart Community status for West Newbury. *The Commission expressed interest and support.*

Rocks Bridge Truck Damage—Mr. Janes shared a letter from West Newbury resident Chris Blatchly stating his concern that the West Newbury Historical Commission might oppose the installation of a strike bar preventing damage (and associated massive community inconvenience and costs) to Rocks Bridge from large trucks using that bridge.

*The Commission discussed this matter and generally agreed that the West Newbury Commission supports strike bars and similar measures as well as extensive signage starting on I-495 and I-95 that Rocks Bridge is not available to large trucks. Ms. Conway will provide a response to this effect to Mr. Blatchly and State Representative Mirra.*

## **Minutes**

*The Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of March 16, as amended.*

## **Adjournment**

8:17 pm

## **Next Meeting**

June 7, 2022

## **Meeting Documents**

Grammer MEPA comments

Letter questioning Historical Commission's potential opposition to Rocks Bridge protection structure

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa Grammer