

## West Newbury

### Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

**Meeting date & place:** 7:00 pm, June 13, 2023, Town Offices, 2d floor

**Members Present:** Chair Bob Janes, Elisa Grammer, Jennifer Munson, Jennifer Conway

#### Town Hall

Ms. Munson said that she has gotten the name of Town Hall's painting contractor and will be in contact to make sure that she can answer questions and otherwise make the job go smoothly. *The Commission agreed that since the Newbury Daily News does not seem inclined to use Ms. Munson's materials to write a story about the new Town Hall paint scheme, Ms. Grammer will prepare a short draft document based on Ms. Munson's work and once that is approved, the document will be posted on the Town website, sent out via Town email blast, and posted on social media.*

The Commission discussed plantings at Town Hall and the plantings on the Training Field, notably the large bushes that are overwhelming the veterans' monuments. Ms. Munson stressed that the plantings at Town Hall should be designed after the painting is completed, so that the historic design will be honored. *The Commission will invite the Historic District Commission and the Garden Club to the Commission's next meeting on July 11 to discuss the Historic District area.*

#### Training Field

*Mr. Janes will see if the question of metal detecting on the Training Field can be put on an upcoming Select Board meeting.*

#### Historic Sites Survey

Ms. Conway reported that all the Historic Survey forms for this third and final round have been submitted in draft form and the consultants have sent an invoice. This came in about a month late, so the complete wrap up—which was to have occurred next week—will also be delayed. The consultants' report and the Merrimack Valley Planning Council's map of the surveyed properties remain to be completed. *Ms. Conway will manage the next steps including completion of the final components and the grant completion paperwork/reports.*

Once the survey is complete, hard copies will be placed in Town Offices and the Library and the final survey forms will be added to the Historical Commission website. The Commission will work on having the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the consultants at a presentation to celebrate completion of the surveys and to discuss potential additional historic districts in West Newbury. As done before, the Commission will send letters to owners of surveyed properties, sharing the documents and thanking them for their role as this generation's stewards of historic structures. Ms. Munson suggested that in addition to providing resources about historic property markers, the Commission could add information about historic paint colors and contractors for historic properties.

#### Cemeteries

Ms. Grammer reported that the Conservation Commission made the requested negative determination of applicability concerning the proposed Quaker Cemetery cleanup. This will allow the Town to contract with a landscaper for the cleanup. The cleanup will, however, need to comply with a yet-to-be-developed best practices document concerning invasive plant management. *Ms. Grammer will work on getting the best practices and the landscaping contract underway.*

## **Firefighter & Schools**

*No update*

## **Historic Preservation + Affordable Housing**

*No update*

## **Monthly Minute Histories**

Ms. Grammer described her work on making the minute histories into a book and shared a draft initial section that includes recognition of native Americans here before the colonists arrived.

## **Other Business**

Ms. Munson discussed the draft paragraphs she shared with the Commission concerning indigenous peoples in the area before the colonists arrived. This would be used to revise the segment of the Town website accessed through a button link “Discover our History,” available [here](#). This is based in part on materials Tufts University developed as well as research Ms. Munson has conducted. *The Commission will review the proposed draft and address this at the next meeting.*

## **Minutes**

*The Commission approved the minutes of May 9, 2023 by unanimous vote.*

## **Adjournment**

8:18 pm

## **Meeting Documents**

Draft paragraphs for *About Our Town* webpage revisions to include indigenous people

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa Grammer