

**AMHERST HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

Members Present: Jane Wald, Bob Romer, Janet Marquardt, Ted Parker, Steve Bloom
Staff Present: Brandon Toponce, Historical Commission Staff Representative
Meeting Date: April 23, 2018
Time Started: 6:02 PM
Time Ended: 8:05 PM

AGENDA ITEMS

Minutes

The Commission reviewed and approved the March 6 meeting minutes and asked staff for further clarification on the March 26 minutes.

Review of other community bylaws

Ms. Wald suggested the group go over the matrix provided by staff, going in order to ensure all the topics are covered.

Before this was to occur, the commission members had other questions and points they wanted to share with the group.

Ms. Marquardt asked if it was necessary to move the demolition delay criteria from the Zoning Bylaw to the General Bylaw, now that Town Meeting is to be dissolved.

Mr. Parker responded by stating that it was something to think about. However, any changes within the Zoning Bylaw would still need to have 2/3 vote by the new Town Counsel. He also suggested that most demolition bylaws are found within the general bylaw and not in zoning.

Mr. Bloom suggested the Commission review the Town of Newton's Bylaw. He suggested that it is the most comprehensive and used as the basis of the bylaw for Amherst.

Mr. Parker also suggested that Boston was clearly written for the general public and how it works within the community.

Ms. Marquardt added that in the Boston bylaw it states that one of the main purposes is to reduce demolition, which should also be stated up front in the Amherst bylaw as well.

Ms. Wald suggested the group return to going in order and look at the age of buildings that would be required for review.

Mr. Parker believed that one of the implications of 50 years would be all of the Echo Hill, as an example would be required to come before the Commission for alterations.

Mr. Bloom agreed that 50 years may not be the best time frame to start from and that maybe it should be 75.

Ms. Marquardt, believed that it was a good time frame and that 50 and 75 are not much different.

After discussing the different options, Ms. Wald suggested this be looked at again at a later time. She then started the discussion on the amount of time the demolition delay should be placed on a property. It was decided that it may be a good idea to keep it to 12 months, but for homes on the National Register of Historic Places, it would be 18 months. The Commission also believed that a mechanism for early adjustment should also be permitted.

Ms. Wald discussed the noticing requirements of 14 days and it was suggested that this time frame remain the same.

The group began to discuss a percentage of a building being removed that would qualify for a demolition. Mr. Bloom drew the attention of the group to the Newton Bylaw, Section 22-50(1)-(3), concerning roof material.

Ms. Marquardt believed it would not be a good idea to include roof structure as being one that did not need to go before the Commission, stating that this could have a huge impact on the historic appearance of a home.

Ms. Wald suggested that roof material be something that can be approved by Town Staff, but not a Roof structure and that this should come before the Commission for review.

The commission then reviewed the idea of an expiration date. Mr. Parker thought it was an added expense for applicants to be required to come back before the commission for a full review. Ms. Wald stated that a two year expiration date could be implemented along with the option of an extension by the commission.

Ms. Wald believed that more could be reviewed at the next meeting including the review of items they agreed upon at this meeting and address definitions. The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, May 7, at 6:00 PM.

Mr. Toponce gave an update on the sign committee and how they have chosen a design, yet they are not moving forward as of yet.

Ms. Marquardt asked Mr. Toponce to check with the group to see if they can combine their funds with the sign group, in order to have a larger project.

Mr. Toponce said he will find out if this is possible and then let the group know at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM