

AMHERST HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Members Present:	Jane Wald - Chair, Patricia J. Auth, Robin Fordham, Janet Marquardt, Theodore Parker
Staff Present:	Brandon Toponce, Historical Commission Staff Representative
Meeting Date:	November 7, 2018
Time Started:	6:00 PM
Time Ended:	8:15 PM

AGENDA ITEMS

Minutes

The Commission reviewed and approved the October 3, 2018 minutes, with corrections.

David Fichter

Mr. Fichter is the artist for the mural which was located on the south east wall of the Carriage Shops that were demolished for the construction of a new mixed use building known as One East Pleasant. He has now been commissioned to create the mural again on the new south east wall of the building. He explained how the new area to be painted would not have windows and would be slightly longer in length than the last wall. A copy of the revised drawing was shown to the Commission indicating previous holes for windows being repainted and the edge of the painting being extended as to be painted from edge of building to edge of building.

The Commission praised Mr. Fichter for his efforts in filling in the new areas.

Mr. Fichter expressed his concern over the stark line created by the edge of the wall and the windows above. He proposed an idea of painting a few areas above the line in order to make a softer ending.

Mr. Parker suggested that a sketch of the idea be presented to the Commission prior to a decision being rendered. Mr. Fichter responded that this would be his intention.

The Commission agreed a sketch of the proposed additions painted further up the wall would be a good idea.

Nomination of a Vice-Chair

Mr. Parker nominated Ms. Marquardt to be Vice-Chair, Ms. Auth seconded and the motion passed 4-0, with Ms. Marquardt abstaining.

Demolition Delay Bylaw, Article 13, Committee Update

Mr. Parker informed the Commission that the committee reviewed the Purpose and Intent section of the new Bylaw. He requested advice from the Board as to assist the committee in the direction they should proceed. He believed the existing purpose and intent was overly worded and difficult for an applicant to understand. He then gave each commissioner a draft of this section he created.

Ms. Fordham, who is also on the Bylaw Committee, stated she believed more detail was needed in the Purpose and Intent as to indicate the reasoning behind the creation of the Bylaw.

Ms. Marquardt agreed the current Bylaw was lengthy, yet perhaps some of the current information could be condensed. Ms. Wald added that the Bylaw should express the value of why it is being created and how it is meeting the public interest.

Mr. Toponce said that he would take the comments and ideas that were expressed by the group and draft a new Purpose and Intent section for the Committee to review at its next meeting.

Jones Library Clarification

Ms. Wald explained that she met with staff and went over a chronology of events Mr. Toponce researched. This chronology described the events and subsequent approval by the Historical Commission in 2016.

The Commission believed that with this finding the project would move forward with the group from UMass consisting of professors and students.

Writers Walk

Ms. Marquardt explained the history of this project and the types of monuments and signage that had been originally discussed. She also said a website had been created as seminar work by students at UMass, under the supervision Mr. Jon Olsen. At the time it was the understanding that the Town would eventually utilize this page on their own website.

Mr. Parker suggested that an App be created.

Ms. Marquardt agreed that having an App would allow the Town to change the information as they needed without recreating a sign.

Ms. Wald also agreed that an App was a good idea, yet expressed concern that an opportunity would be lost if the signs only directed a person to an App.

Ms. Marquardt then suggested that the signs could say some generic detail and direct people to the App, or website.

Mr. Toponce asked about pictures on the signs and if this could still be a feature.

Ms. Marquardt suggested that pictures no longer be on the signs since some photographs were poor printing quality and other photographs could not be found.

The Commission then requested staff find additional detail on the budget for DPW to place the signs, if the chamber would require the logo on the signs if they direct people to the chamber offices for a brochure, and technical detail on creating an app or a website.

Mr. Toponce agreed to find the answers to this information prior to the next meeting.

Proposed CPA Funding

The Commission agreed the amount for the West Cemetery of \$50,000 and CPA proposal were acceptable. They also agreed that \$15,000 would be appropriate for the Intensive Level Survey for the East Street School. Finally, it was decided to add \$10,000 for due diligence funds.

Survey and Planning Grant

The Commission believed the preliminary letter for the Survey and Planning grant was acceptable and ready to be submitted to MHC for consideration.

Ms. Wald suggested that since the due diligence amount being applied to this matching grant is for \$10,000., the total should be increased from a request of \$8,000 to \$10,000 making the total project amount of \$20,000.

West Cemetery Concern

The Commission expressed concern of behavior taking place within the West Cemetery by a gentleman who may be living there and using the headstones for exercises.

Mr. Toponce stated that he will contact the police chief to see if they are aware of this person and if any officers are driving through the cemetery as part of their rounds.

Mr. Parker suggested the Commission look into having cameras installed in areas that may be of concern. The Commission agreed this would be a good discussion at a later date.

Adjournment

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, December 5, at 6:00 PM. Ms. Wald made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Ms. Marquardt seconded the motion, which passed 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15.