

AMHERST HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Jane Wald – Chair, Robin Fordham, Janet Marquardt, Theodore Parker

Staff Present: Brandon Toponce, Historical Commission Staff Representative

Meeting Date: February 6, 2019

Time Started: 6:00 PM

Time Ended: 8:30 PM

AGENDA ITEMS

Minutes

The commission discussed the January 9 minutes, and agreed to move them to the next meeting when Ms. Auth would be in attendance.

CPA Review, NACF – Bruce Coldham

Mr. Coldham presented his CPA proposal for \$30,000 to restore the windows on the farm house at North Amherst Community Farm (NACF). In the summer they plan to remove the wood frame windows, a few at a time, and have them restored. The window openings will be temporarily filled in while the work is being completed.

Ms. Marquardt asked if the requested amount in 2018, excluded the windows purposefully.

Mr. Coldham said that since they were originally going to request the money from the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), they did exclude this amount from last year's request. He did mention that last year's amount was not fully spent and they would like to reallocate some of these funds to this project.

Ms. Wald then asked Mr. Toponce if money that was approved for one thing can be allocated for another.

Mr. Toponce stated that generally this would require a new approval since the amount was designated for a specific project. In this case the original money was set aside for restoration work, which the remaining amount would still be going toward. However, he will look into the specifics and let Mr. Coldham and the Commission know the answer.

Ms. Wald asked about the Storm windows and what they would be manufactured out of.

Mr. Coldham stated, the storm windows would be aluminum and be permanently placed on the structure.

Ms. Marquardt told Mr. Coldham that the project was an excellent example of restoration and avoiding demolition.

Ms. Wald stated that after they review all of the CPA projects relating to historic preservation, they will draft letters of support for specific projects.

CPA Review, Emily Dickinson and Robert Frost Statues – Public Arts Commission, Ellen Keiter

Ms. Keiter stated the poetic dialogue statues of Emily Dickinson and Robert Frost located in Sweetser Park are in need of restoration. She said the art feature was constructed in the late 90's by a UMass Senior. In her research she also found a landscaping plan for the area around the statues. The Public Arts Commission would also like to restore the landscaping, using different funding. They are requesting \$800 to remove the statues, have them sandblasted and repainted. In the future the DPW will maintain the restored landscaping, and the Public Art Commission will maintain the statues.

The Commission believed it was a worthwhile project, yet questioned if it was historic and if it met the CPA criteria.

133 and 143 South East Street, Preliminary review for demolition

The commission reviewed the plans for full demolition of the properties located at 133 and 143 South East Street.

Mr. Parker believed they were not significant enough to warrant preservation

Ms. Marquardt suggested that since it was two homes next to one another, that a Public Hearing should be held.

Ms. Fordham said that it should be moved to March 6, since the application seemed incomplete.

The other commissioners agreed to move the project to March 6, and hold it as a public hearing.

Writers Walk

The commission discussed what still needs to be accomplished in relation to writing the description of each author, which they hoped to have finished by March 6. It was also requested that Mr. Toponce find out when the sign manufacturer would need the written information and a time line of completion.

Mr. Toponce suggested that since they will not be using photographs on the signs that perhaps a map could be included. This map could show all the locations and state where the home is on the map.

The Commission requested Mr. Toponce work on this with the IT Department. Ms. Marquardt asked that she also be part of this meeting.

Update on grazing goats at the West Cemetery

Ms. Auth was not at the meeting, yet prepared an update on the idea the Commission had on allowing Goats to graze at the natural area within the West Cemetery. The Commission reviewed her notes and requested Mr. Toponce ask the DPW about this idea. They also requested that Ms. Auth continue her research on the goat grazing in the West Cemetery.

Article 13, Demolition Delay Committee Updates

Mr. Parker read a statement by the Massachusetts Historical Commission that identified Demolition by Neglect as being found in a separate section and not within the Demolition Delay Section of a Bylaw. He believed that this may be something the Commission might want to consider.

Mr. Parker read over the changes to the Intent and Purpose Section of the new Bylaw and it was suggested the word "Structure" be changed to "Building."

Mr. Toponce suggested that because of the time, the definitions should be reviewed at the next meeting.

Adjournment

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, March 6, at 6:00 PM. Ms. Marquardt made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Parker seconded the motion, which passed 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.