

Amherst Historical Commission  
MEETING  
Tuesday, May 27, 2008  
First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall  
7:15 p.m.

**Present:** Gai Carpenter, Lyle Denit, Linda Faye, Louis Greenbaum, Michael Hanke. **Absent:** Elizabeth Sharpe, James Wald. **Staff:** Jonathan Tucker, Director of Planning

Ms. Faye called the meeting to order at 7:17 p.m. There were no announcements, and Mr. Denit quickly moved to approve the minutes of May 6. Mr. Hanke seconded the motion; Mr. Greenbaum commented on the attempt he made to save the inside of the Scott House, as reflected on page 2, paragraph 2, and requested that the following be inserted after "Scott House: "the proposed removal and or relocation of original interior woodwork of the Scott House be called vandalism." The minutes were approved as amended

Mr. Tucker reviewed FY09 CPA projects, particularly the Annual Town Meeting Article 20. The appraisal of the Hills House LLC properties is still not complete, there are two possible appraisers, and the article may be delayed awaiting appraisal.

Two RFP responses have been received for the West Cemetery headstone restoration. The bids are for the same amount, but represent two different approaches. Mr. Tucker would like further review by the Historical Commission members; Ms. Faye suggested that copies of the proposals be distributed to the members for review. Mr. Tucker said he felt that a conversation among members would be the best way to resolve issues. Ms. Faye and others said they were not readily available for the rest of the week. Mr. Tucker noted that the sense of urgency about reviewing bids comes because if a decision is not made soon, we could miss this season for work. Mr. Tucker offered some comments on what each bidder did with the RFP. After a digression on the town's Civil War plaques, Mr. Greenbaum asked whether the RFP responses are comparing apples and apples; Mr. Tucker said yes, but perhaps Macintosh and crabapple.

The Historical Commission agreed to hold a special meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 3, to discuss the RFP responses.

Mr. Tucker broached the subject of possible future ideas for funding from the Community Preservation Act. He reported a proposal to attach historic data sheets to the existing GIS data system. The Historical Commission was supportive of the suggestion. Mr. Tucker further commented on the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary committee's having abandoned the spirit frame design proposal due to lack of funding. He said that there are currently heated exchanges going on,

but there is still the possibility that the project could move forward later, and that elements of the proposal could be approached separately.

The Comprehensive Planning Committee expects that the consultants' final report could be delivered to the Planning Committee in June.

Mr. Denit reported more on the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary committee's works in progress. Merchandising is important, and banners are still a hot item. The committee is trying to get some appropriation from the town to defray expenses. A new subcommittee has been formed to focus on one week in May, probably to center on West Cemetery and staging an enactment on the site to raise public awareness. Mr. Greenbaum questioned Mr. Denit on the 250<sup>th</sup> Committee's intent in asking for a Town appropriation. Mr. Denit noted that most of the fundraising is being done through other means, but said that the \$25,000 request is thought of as the Town's contribution to its own birthday party, despite the earlier assumption was that Town would not contribute.

In an update on the UMass building situation, Mr. Tucker distributed a list of historic trees on the UMass campus, compiled as part of the effort to document what is in place before further resources are threatened.

The Commission discussed the schedule, plans, hosting, and potluck desserts for the Local Historic Districts workshop with Chris Skelly.

Mr. Tucker noted that terms for Commission members Carpenter, Denit and Wald end this June and if they wish to re-enlist, they need to contact Town Manager Shaffer with an expression of interest.

The Commission agreed to a summer schedule which includes two possible meeting dates each month, in case there should be a need to schedule demolition delay hearings.

Next Meetings –

June 2008 –

Tuesday, June 3, special meeting at 7:00 to discuss RFP responses.

Tuesday, June 10 with Chris Skelly, 6:30 – 9:00; Local Historic Districts workshop, with Pelham Historical Commission

June 23 backup

July 14 and backup on 28

August 11 and backup 25

Mr. Tucker will let the Historical Commission members know when Article 20 on the Hills lots is scheduled for Town Meeting. Mr. Hanke has a presentation on the site which he could do as a PowerPoint talk for Town Meeting. Mr. Greenbaum urged the Historical Commission members to attend that session of Town Meeting to support the article, answer questions, and show solidarity. The

Commission engaged in some protracted discussion of Article 20, the Hills House properties, the Dickinson District, and related matters.

Ms. Carpenter asked about the apparent continuing deterioration of South Cemetery. Mr. Denit commented on the Tree Warden and efforts to educate Public Works employees. Other members offered more comments on issues with the cemeteries.

Ms. Faye invited a motion to adjourn; Mr. Greenbaum moved adjournment, with a second from Mr. Denit. The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gai Carpenter  
Clerk