

Amherst Historical Commission
MEETING
Monday, October 20, 2008
First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall
7:15 p.m.

Present: Gai Carpenter, Lynda Faye, Louis Greenbaum, Michael Hanke, Elizabeth Sharpe, James Wald. **Staff:** Nathaniel Malloy, Associate Planner. **Absent:** Lyle Denit, Jonathan Tucker, Director of Planning: **Guest:** Libby Klekowski, Amherst Woman's Club

Mr. Wald called the meeting to order at 7:28 p.m. and noted that Mr. Tucker would not be attending the evening's meeting.

Minutes of the meeting of October 6 were amended to correct the spelling of Mr. Mulcahy's surname and Ms. Faye's first; Ms. Faye moved approval, Mr. Greenbaum seconded, and the vote to approve was unanimous.

Mr. Wald invited Ms. Klekowski to comment on the Historic Preservation Restriction draft for the Amherst Woman's Club. She expressed concern about imposing a perpetual restriction when the grant is only for the painting of an auxiliary structure. Suggested rewording from the Woman's Club would limit the restriction to ten years. Ms. Klekowski noted that Mrs. Hills' will restricts the facility's use and requires ongoing maintenance of the property. A lengthy conversation ensued about the restriction and the Amherst Woman's Club's board's concerns about the perpetuity provision. Ms. Klekowski departed, and the Commission continued its discussion of the issues, which included the protection of property, the duration of restriction(s), obligations imposed on owners, clarity of the Commission's communication with the Amherst Woman's Club when discussing their original request, the need for clear guidelines and instructions, and the need to talk with Town Counsel about the proposed language and interpretation of state CPA requirements. Ms. Faye moved to table the discussion until some of the questions could be answered by consulting others; Ms. Carpenter seconded the motion. Discussion resumed on the general issues until the motion was called and passed unanimously.

The Commission reviewed FY09-10 historic preservation projects as described in the Amherst Preservation Plan action agenda, examining ongoing commitments versus new initiatives. Ms. Faye, Mr. Greenbaum and Ms. Sharpe commented on the planned cemetery surveys and preservation plans. Mr. Greenbaum noted the contemporary costs of engineering studies in conjunction with the town tombs projects. The action item for survey(s) of the town's Commons led to a discussion of whether the next step(s) should be more surveys, or further work in some particular areas, *e.g.*, East Village Common. The inventory of historic properties in Amherst is also incomplete, and it is possible that a Massachusetts Historical Commission grant could support the several components of that

project. Letters of intent to apply for MHC funding are due by December 15. There was some consensus among Commission members that the next phases of work should skip the North and South Cemeteries NHR nominations in favor of concentrating on completing other projects.

Mr. Wald argued for more attention to West Cemetery since the original program for restoration included a number of projects that have not yet been initiated. Mr. Wald has talked with Jim Mulcahy, and ATI might be willing to take some responsibility for West Cemetery landscape restoration for a decade. Mr. Wald also asked that members of the Commission study a workform he distributed to assist in prioritizing projects, and that they complete the forms in preparation for the next discussion.

Mr. Wald and Ms. Faye have discussed possible priorities within the action plan, and listed the four they found most compelling:

- West Cemetery - complete the cemetery preservation plan

- Local Historic Districts - creation and expansion

- Plaque Program (historic markers)

- Fund for Homeowners - possibly as a joint project with housing and green space

Ms. Faye and Mr. Malloy conversed briefly about grant applications and possible priorities for funding.

Next Meeting - November 3, 2008

Mr. Hanke moved adjournment, Ms. Sharpe seconded, and Commission departure was achieved at 10:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gai Carpenter
Clerk