

Amherst Historical Commission  
MEETING  
Tuesday, March 9, 2010  
Second Floor Conference Room, Town Hall  
7:15 p.m.

Present: James Wald, Chair; Gai Carpenter, Clerk; Michael Hanke, Vice-Chair; Lyle Denit, Louis Greenbaum, Elizabeth Sharpe. Staff: Jonathan Tucker, Planning Director; Nathaniel Malloy, Associate Planner. Guests: Jeff Hinrichs, Jess Flavin, Meaghan Murphy, UMass journalism students.

Mr. Wald called the meeting to order at 7:17 p.m.; there were no announcements. Minutes of the meeting of February 16 were presented Mr. Hanke moved approval, seconded by Ms. Sharpe, approved unanimously.

Mr. Wald explained the purposes of CPA for the Commission's guests, and began a review of current and proposed FY11 CPA projects. Mr. Tucker reported that the CPAC Public Hearing has been continued until March 18. Mr. Greenbaum summarized the status of applications before CPAC, which total over \$900,000 at present. Mr. Tucker presented an update on the status of current projects, those recently bid, and others awaiting issuance of RFPs. He also noted that the state has funded one of its grant programs for physical preservation, leading to a discussion of whether funds might be used in conjunction with existing funding for the Town Tomb or other projects. Mr. Denit's comments on a recent conversation led to the idea that grant funds might be used for ironwork on fences and Town Tomb door. Ms. Carpenter moved to authorize the chair to write a letter of support for a grant application; Mr. Denit seconded, passed unanimously.

Mr. Hanke presented the designs for the West Cemetery signs; he still needs to complete designs for Writers' Walk and Historic District signs and hopes to have those done by next week. Mr. Tucker and Mr. Malloy reminded the commission members that they will need to approach property owners about placing signs at those sites.

Mr. Wald reported that Dolly Jolly and Denise Gagnon approached him about public plantings and suggested that they might add bulb plantings to West Cemetery. The Commission discussed possible locations for bulbs, including along either side of the fence in front of the mural. Mr. Wald has also suggested the volunteers might do some planting on the knoll. The Commission continued to discuss desirable varieties, funding, and labor for the larger landscape restoration project.

Mr. Tucker is awaiting a response from Martha Lyon regarding cost parameters for the RFP for landscape design for the African American section of the cemetery. She will likely be interested in the work, and available to assist in developing the public process for consideration of the African-American section. The public process will include invitations to local families who have ancestors in that area.

Mr. Malloy reported that the Local Historic District Study Committee is ready to move forward with the public process to consider the proposed district, an extension of the Dickinson District. Mr. Wald and Mr. Tucker further explained the proposed local historic district parameters.

Mr. Tucker reported that the RFP for NHR nominations is in preparation and will be issued in April.

Ms. Carpenter asked that staff speak with the Building Inspector about using dates of main structures as an indication of the possible age of barns or other structures when considering demolition permits since some of the assessors' records for those structures are inaccurate. Correcting that information will be part of the inventory completion and expansion project, which awaits funding.

Ms. Carpenter moved that the Historical Commission make a 2009 Preservation Award to Joe Larson and PUMA for their work to preserve UMass; seconded Mr. Greenbaum; passed unanimously.

Mr. Tucker is working on the Patterson Professional Research Park, and had previously requested Massachusetts Historical Commission information on any archaeological findings. MHC was not aware of any archeological resources on the property. So far there is no indication that there are other historical issues. He also mentioned that a possible urban renewal project is under discussion that would stretch along part of North Pleasant Street between the downtown and the UMass campus, to include a sizeable portion of student rental units.

Next meetings are scheduled for April 13 and May 11.

Ms. Sharpe moved adjournment, Mr. Hanke seconded, the meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gai Carpenter, Clerk