

Amherst Historical Commission
MEETING
Tuesday, April 27, 2010
First Floor Meeting 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. Guest: Lynda Faye.

Mr. Wald convened the meeting at 7:20 p.m.; there were no announcements. Minutes for the meeting of April 1 were not yet available.

Mr. Tucker reported that Community Preservation Act Committee would be moving to Town Meeting with all projects from the final short list of Historical Commission requests, as well as requests in other areas.

He also reported that the Civil War tablets being are cleaned at the Ruxton storage facility, except for one small tablet, which MCC took to their site.

Mr. Hanke said he is creeping forward on sign designs and will drop them off on Monday. Mr. Wald noted that the Town and Chamber of Commerce are also interested in developing way-finding signs and some funding is now available to move on that project. He suggested that the Historical Commission designs might help to influence other projects.

The Local Historic District Study Committee met recently. Mr. Tucker received a call from Jim Brassord about the local district plans, possible "encroachment" on Amherst College properties, and potential effects on the college's ability to do what it might want with its properties. Mr. Malloy reported that the committee hopes to be able to bring a proposal to Town Meeting this time next year. Ms. Sharpe suggested that the Commission look for examples of other jurisdictions where public entities or colleges have structures included in local districts

Mr. Malloy report on his conversations with the Town's GIS manager about getting inventory online and cited Andover as a good example of a local information site

Mr. Tucker has had a conversation with Martha Lyon about landscape work in West Cemetery. Mr. Malloy has been talking about the ironwork with three firms in New England that do that sort of work. He is also talking with Martha Lyon about possibly doing specifications for the ironwork. Ms. Lyon is also helping to craft the public process for the African-American Section.

Mr. Tucker has talked with the DPW about not mowing, and sent a map to them labeling area(s) "do not mow." The DPW is addressing issue with adjacent property owners about diverting runoff into cemetery and creating erosion problems.

Mr. Wald mentioned that ATG wanted to rake and they also were told to leave the site alone. Mr. Wald commented on plantings, noting that some volunteer help would be fine, but that the Commission may need to spend some of the available funds to do some focused plantings.

Comments on security issues about fences led to the recurring question about lighting. The DPW was waiting for power to be run in from Pleasant Street; that is now in place, but Mr. Tucker says DPW is not rushing to do the work. The Commission asked him to add lighting for signs to request.

Mr. Greenbaum commented on Kendrick Park and his surprise that nothing on the site is on Town Meeting warrant. Mr. Tucker reviewed work in process on the design of the park, and said various boards and committees that will have roles in planning are hoping to select designers by sometime in the summer.

Mr. Malloy will send out information on the new DPW hearing process. Mr. Wald and Mr. Tucker commented briefly on how this will affect Historical Commission participation in projects "in the public way."

The Historical Commission reaffirmed the current list of candidates for NHR nominations.

Due to the lack of state funding, no applications for Preservation Grants are currently being prepared.

Although there is no new activity on UMass buildings Mr. Tucker reported that Joe Larson and PUMA have been corresponding with the Massachusetts Historical Commission and PUMA has sent addenda to the inventory report on UMass.

Mr. Greenbaum's term on the Commission is ending and he will not seek another term. Mr. Wald needs to step down, probably by the start of the new fiscal year. The Commission urgently needs to recruit some new members, as it is already short one seat.

Mr. Tucker commented on the Town Meeting articles related to CPA projects and some zoning bylaw amendments that have historical content.

Next Meetings - May 11, June 1

The meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Gai Carpenter, Clerk