

Amherst Historical Commission  
PUBLIC MEETING  
December 6, 2011  
First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall  
7:30 p.m.

**Historical Commission Attendance:** Mike Hanke (Chair), Lynda Faye, Elizabeth Sharpe, Robert Brainin, Anurag Sharma

**Others in Attendance:** Nathaniel Malloy, Staff Liaison; Little Red Schoolhouse Preservation Committee

Item 1

The planned meeting with a group of citizens interested in saving the Little Red Schoolhouse from possible future demolition, anticipated because of construction projects planned for Amherst College campus. A discussion ensued on topics such as: the history of the building (built about 75 years ago), its purpose, its uniqueness and its importance to the town. Also discussed were such options as raising monies to move the building if necessary. Estimates for moving the building ranged from \$30,000 to \$120,000.

The concerned citizens were interested in having a meeting with Amherst College and with the Town Manager John Musante. Mike Hanke mentioned that the Commission has had good experience working with the college in the past. He indicated, however, that the college has not yet made any formal request for demolition of the building. Nate mentioned that to his knowledge the college had no plans to demolish the building.

Citizens requested that the Commission send a letter to support the idea of saving the building. A motion was made by Lynda and seconded by Betty.

Motion (Lynda): It is moved that the Amherst Historical Commission write a letter of support to the Little Red Schoolhouse Preservation Committee in their pursuit to preserve the Little Red School House.

Second by Betty. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 2

A discussion of ongoing Historical Commission projects ensued. Nate handed out a spreadsheet with status and dollar balances on the various projects.

Motion (Lynda): Request \$40,000 in CPA funds to restore the Dickinson fence in the West Cemetery.

Second by Anurag and passed unanimously.

Item 3

Demolition delay application for 335 Middle Street.

Lynda requested that detailed construction documentation be kept for both the interior and the exterior.

Item 4

Town Flag. The Commission reviewed the variations of the flag and voted to recommend the design with three sheaves of wheat below an open book. The vote was unanimous.

Item 5

The Commission discussed the impacts and consequences for the planned demolition of the

waiting station on North Pleasant Street near the campus pond to make way for new utilities and a new academic classroom building. An estimated cost of \$200,000 was provided by DCAM, which, although the Commission was not involved in the process, deemed unrealistically high to move the structure. It was suggested that the Commission write letters to UMass, Preserve UMass, DCAM, and MHC to encourage earlier involvement in future projects on the UMass campus. Mike and Nate will work on that.

#### Item 6

Local Historic District Committee--Lynda explained that the study committee voted to reduce the boundaries of the proposed local historic district to conform with the boundaries of the existing Dickinson NHR District, and to bring it to the spring Town Meeting.

#### Item 7

Public Outreach--More could be done for public outreach, to educate the public about the role and function of the Historical Commission. Nate suggested that perhaps more could be done with web presence and work with the chamber of commerce - **to clarify the Commission's roles compared to the Historical Society**. It was also suggested that the Commission consider preservation awards to deserving local institutions or property owners.

#### Item 8

The Commission tabled a discussion on future NHR nominations, both for individual properties and districts.

#### Material Distributed at Meeting

Agenda

CPA project balance spreadsheet

Plans of new academic classroom building at UMass

Demolition delay application for 335 Middle Street

Little Red Schoolhouse Report, distributed by Little Red Preservation Committee

#### Next Meetings

January 10 and February 14.

#### Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10 pm