

*Amherst Historical Commission*  
**PUBLIC MEETING**  
**Wednesday, August 31, 2016**  
**First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**Members present:** Steve Bloom, Laura Lovett, Jan Marquardt, Ted Parker, Robert Romer, Jane Wald

**Staff present:** Jonathan Tucker

**Guests:** Gretchen Fox, Elissa Rubenstein, Steve Spiegel, Winifred Manning, Priscilla White, Jeff Morgan, Russ Vernon-Jones, Chris Farley

**1. Announcements**

Town Manager Paul Bockelman will join the AHC meeting around 8 pm. He has been assistant director of the Cambridge MA Historical Commission and is interested in work of AHC.

**2. Minutes**

No minutes of previous meetings distributed.

**3. Demolition Delay - Preliminary Reviews**

a. 328 Lincoln Avenue – c. 1914 garage

Due to staff shifting in Town Hall, this application was delayed in being forwarded to AHC. There is not enough time remaining before expiration of 35-day window to schedule a public hearing on this request. The Commission may offer recommendations to owner in lieu of public hearing.

Owner Patrick Conroy, Quincy MA, requests permit to demolish garage at rear of property, accessed from McClure Street, due to deterioration of the structure. There appears to be no foundation for the wood-frame, c. 1914 structure, and wood rot is evident near ground level.

Commission discussion raised concerns about the disruption of historic streetscape on McClure and the condition of the garage. Five neighbors, members of the Sunset/Lincoln Neighbors Association, attended the Commission meeting and spoke against demolition.

AHC recommendation: AHC believes the structure in question has historic and contextual significance on the streetscape. In addition, it was constructed at the same time as the Eclectic style house to which it belongs and therefore represents a significant period in the development of Amherst housing and neighborhoods. In the absence of evidence of structural deterioration, the commission strongly recommends: 1) that the owner refrain from demolishing the garage; 2) in the interests of due public process and good community relations, especially with abutters, that the owner resubmit the application to allow for a public hearing; 3) that the owner and Historical Commission work together to explore options for preservation.

Wald moved, Parker seconded, voted unanimously to authorize the Commission chair to send recommendations above to the owner.

c. 165 Main Street, First Congregational Church – Removal/replacement of connector

First Congregational Church UCC requests permit to demolish a small structure (“connector”), built in 1958, joining the pre-school level to the sanctuary level of the facility. Demolition will make way for taller structure to accommodate installation of a wheelchair lift, making the sanctuary level fully accessible from the parking area south of the main building. Connector walls are painted clapboards on west and painted CMU on east; roof is white membrane. Interior stair will also be removed/replaced.

The re-built connector will use the same footprint as existing. Materials will be painted wood exterior walls, aluminum clad windows, membrane roof, and accessible painted wood door on Main Street side following design and materials of existing door, with addition of new sidelights.

Architect Chris Farley (Kuhn Riddle Architects) gave overview presentation. In response to questions, he described details of the roofline of the new connector.

Romer moved, Parker seconded, to hold a public hearing on the demolition request. The Commission voted 0-7 on the motion, deciding against holding a public hearing.

d. 1095 West Street, Hampshire College – c. 1820 Darling/Ives farmhouse and barn

Trustees of Hampshire College request permit to demolish a c. 1820 farmhouse. Located at the intersection of the ancient West Highway and the original Native American trail which became Bay Road, the house was built by the Darling family around 1820 and occupied by them until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They worked the land as a farm. It is said that much of the house burned in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was rebuilt. The house was sold to the Ives family in 1907; they, too, carried on farming into the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Commission discussion pointed to the public interest in a structure situated so close to the public way and desire for more information about the request from Hampshire College.

Parker moved, Vickery seconded, to hold a public hearing on the demolition request. The Commission voted 7-0 in favor of holding a public hearing. Time for the hearing fixed as Monday, September 12, 2016, at 7:15 pm.

e. 793 West Street, Hampshire College – c. 1960 animal research (dog kennel) structure

Trustees of Hampshire College request permit to demolish former dog kennel, citing structural failure beyond repair. No replacement structure is planned. Was used in the College’s experimental livestock program in the 1970s.

Parker moved, Wald seconded, to hold a public hearing on the demolition request. The Commission voted 0-7 on the motion, deciding against holding a public hearing. Commission refers potential waste issues to Public Health Department.

f. Relocating the UMass Horse Barn

The University of Massachusetts forwarded to AHC a copy of the Project Notification Form submitted to the Massachusetts Historical Commission for relocation of the 1894

Horse Barn at the University. UMass plans to deconstruct the barn and then reconstruct it at the new site, to restore the exterior to its original design intent, and to utilize it at the Agricultural Learning Center. Information for AHC is advisory only since the local Commission has no jurisdiction over state property.

Marquardt moved, Wald seconded, to authorize AHC chair to send a letter endorsing the barn relocation and restoration project as proposed.

#### **4. New Business**

- a. West Cemetery 1870 section headstone restorations – Update  
Not discussed.
- b. CPAC Draft Plan – Review & revision  
Commission makes the following recommendations:
  - Add “documentary resources” in the section listing eligible projects.
  - Include reference to ceding by private owners of preservation restrictions if awarded CPA funds.
  - Add “documentation” to section defining eligible projects of study – i.e. “Eligible Projects of Study and Documentation”.
  - Alter treatment of the community historic profile. Either edit it down and return to the main body of the document, OR, in the main text, clearly direct readers to the appendix.
  - Place the list of districts/properties in the main body of document.
- c. Other items not anticipated
  - Proposed date for presentation by Jones Library committee and Save Our Library committee is September 27, to be confirmed.
  - Amherst Cinema requests letter of support to the Massachusetts Historical Commission so that it can recommend release of Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Funds for rooftop solar array. Matter referred to next AHC meeting.

#### **5. Old Business**

- a. Thompson Memorial sign – Update  
Commission reviewed updated graphics of interpretive sign. Romer reported that dedication ceremony may take place in November at the earliest. Christopher Thompson’s 89-year-old great-granddaughter, Edith Harris, plans to attend.
- b. Writers Walk signs – Update  
Marquardt presented sign design, two sample signs, and “private residence” sign and outlined next step to send letters about installation to current property owners.
- c. Amherst Preservation Plan – Draft Preservation Actions Review  
Not discussed.

#### **6. Next Meetings**

**September 12, 2016, at 7 pm.** Demolition Delay Public Hearing at 7:15 pm.

**September 27, 2016, for Library presentation**

#### **7. Adjournment at 8:55 p.m.**