

**Amherst Historical Commission
MEETING
Tuesday, January 10, 2017
Town Room, Town Hall
7:00 p.m.**

Members present: Steve Bloom, Laura Lovett, Janet Marquardt, Ted Parker, Bob Romer, Meg Vickery (chair), Jane Wald

Staff present: Jonathan Tucker, Planning Department

Guests present: Carl Weber (Hampshire College), Ed Wilfert, James Wald (Select Board liaison), Mollye Lockwood, Pat Holland

Meeting called to order 7:10 p.m.

1. Minutes of October 26, 2016; Nov. 22, 2016; December 5, 2016

Ms. Lovett moved, Mr. Bloom seconded, voted 5-0-1 to approve minutes of October 26, 2016 meeting.

Ms. Marquardt moved, Ms. Lovett seconded, voted 5-0-1 to approve minutes of November 22, 2016 meeting.

Ms. Lovett moved, Mr. Romer seconded, voted 6-0-0 to approve minutes of December 5, 2016 meeting.

2. Demolition Delay Public Hearing

1095 West Street, Hampshire College (hearing continued from Sept. 12, Oct. 26, Nov. 22, Dec. 5, 2016)

Carl Weber, Interim Director of Facilities, reported on the current status of Hampshire College's application for waiver of demolition delay of the Ives house and barn. The College has determined that it wants to save the barn, if possible, and fully document the farm house before it is dismantled. The College will look for alternative uses for the barn and will shore up the building to prevent further structural deterioration before an alternative use is found. Concerning the farmhouse, Mr. Weber is reaching out to the Hampshire College community as well as faculty at other colleges to seek mutually beneficial curriculum linkages that would create an academic project out of the documentation process. He is also gathering ideas from faculty and students about use of the land for the bike path and suitable landscaping and signage. Mr. Weber will pull the Ives barn out of the demolition delay waiver application and will have more information on the other topics to report in the spring.

Ms. Wald moved, Ms. Marquardt seconded, voted 6-0-0 to continue the public hearing to March 28, 2017, at 7:05 p.m.

3. Comprehensive Permit – Advisory Demolition Review

134 Montague Road, W.D. Cows/Beacon Communities – Demolition of former stable/storage shed

The Historical Commission is asked to provide an advisory recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals under Chapter 40B, which enables local Zoning Boards of Appeals to approve affordable housing developments under flexible rules, including waiver of demolition delay, if at least 20-25% of the units qualify as affordable housing.

Mollye Lockwood, VP of Real Estate and Community Development, W.D. Cows, presented information about the stable's history, current use and condition. Built sometime between

1950 and 1959, the structure initially functioned as stables, then in the 1960s transitioned to various kinds of storage. Discussion focused on structural condition (poor), abatement concerns (asbestos is present in roofing materials), and historic integrity (framing is salvaged timber from no common source).

M. Parker moved, Ms. Marquardt seconded, to hold a demolition delay public hearing concerning this property. Voted 0-6-0 against the motion.

4. Amending the Regulations

Mr. Parker plans to bring to the Historical Commission meeting in February draft language for an amendment to the Town's General By-Laws, which would remove review of demolition requests from the Zoning By-Law to the General By-Laws.

5. New Business

a. FY18 Community Preservation Act Historic Preservation Proposals

Ms. Lovett, the Commission's representative to the Community Preservation Act Committee, observes that there are many more applications for CPA funds this year and that funds allocated for historic preservation purposes will be very competitive.

1) Review and Prioritization of Projects

Current projects under consideration are:

North Common Restoration/Improvement	\$180,000
West Cemetery 1870 Headstone Restoration	\$50,000
Jones Library Historic Structures Report	\$35,000
Jewish Community of Amherst Steeple	\$200,000
North Amherst Farmhouse/Barn Historic Assessment	\$10,000

Four new applications for CPA funds have been submitted:

Jones Library: Assessment of collections	\$129,000
Jones Library: Conservation of picture frames	\$3,000
Amherst Historical Society: Archaeological survey	\$19,993
Amherst Historical Society: Textiles/Costumes Survey	\$4,500

Subtotal of all projects \$631,493

After considerable discussion, Commission members agreed to endorse the following priorities:

1. North Common Restoration/Improvement	\$180,000
2. West Cemetery 1870 Headstone Restoration	\$50,000
3. Jewish Community of Amherst Steeple	\$200,000
4. Amherst Historical Society: Textiles/Costumes Survey	\$4,500
5. North Amherst Farmhouse/Barn Historic Assessment	\$10,000
6. Jones Library: Conservation of picture frames	\$3,000

Subtotal of recommended projects \$448,500

b. Jones Library Historic Structures Report

Mr. Tucker reported that Professor Max Page, University of Massachusetts, has offered to supply internship assistance for research necessary for the Jones Library Historic

Structure report. Professional services required would fall to a level that could be covered by the Historical Commission's due diligence funds. The consensus of Commission members was to use due diligence funds and UMass internships to execute the HSR and to withdraw this project from a CPA funding request.

c. Other Items Not Anticipated

1) North Common Design Process

Discussion of the Historical Commission's role in the design process for the North Common. Commission members can make recommendations of designers. At the Commission's next meeting, the design process will be an agenda item. It was proposed that the Commission hold a meeting on Tuesday, January 31, dedicated to this project and the Lincoln Local Historic District.

2) Historic Preservation Restrictions:

In response to questions from Commission members, Mr. Tucker clarified the chain of events leading to the Jones Library failure to file deed restriction.

Mr. Parker expressed concern about using public money for religious institutions, which don't pay taxes. In discussion it was noted that mandated requirements concerning maintaining public access is not connected to the nature of the organization receiving funds. Settled law that funds can go to religious organizations.

6. Old Business

a. Nolumbeka Project – Members' reports

Mr. Parker and Ms. Wald reported on an initial meeting in Western Massachusetts of the Nolumbeka Project whose organizers propose to involve local historical commissions in support for preservation of ceremonial landscapes. The goal is to add a layer of regulatory review at the local level requiring archaeological survey prior to development of land.

b. Writers Walk signs – Update & Next Steps

The Historical Commission seeks agreement with Amherst College on the location of signs on their property: Dickinson Homestead, Garis House, Lord Jeffery Inn, Helen Hunt Jackson. Ms. Lovett and Ms. Marquardt will meet with Jim Brassord to seek partial funding from Amherst College.

Next steps include a meeting with the Select Board to make presentation and obtain permission for signs to be installed in the public way. Ms. Marquardt will finalize layouts. Mr. Tucker will prepare an RFP for production.

7. Next Meetings

Meeting on Tuesday, January 31, 7:00 p.m., for North Common Design and Lincoln Local Historic District

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 p.m.