

AMHERST HISTORICAL COMMISSION
April 27, 2016

Present: Parker, Romer, Vickery, Wald, Tucker (staff)
Absent: Lovett, Bloom

Minutes

March 14, 2016: Romer moved, Vickery seconded, unanimous vote to approve.

April 4, 2016: Parker moved, Romer seconded, unanimous vote to approve.

Demolition Delay – Preliminary Reviews

1. 47 Gray Street. Owners intend to replace flat roof with slightly pitched roof. Commission recommended to owners that they look at example of similar architecture of a house on Lincoln Avenue for evidence relevant to their own structure. Commission voted unanimously that a demolition delay hearing was not necessary.
2. 50 McClellan Street. Intend to demolish 40-year-old addition (same as original floor plan for rear ell) and replace with slightly larger addition. Mattie Hall Anderson, a founder of Zion Chapel, once occupied house. Commission voted unanimously that a demolition delay hearing was not necessary.

New Business

1. 2016 Annual Town Meeting – Preparations
Romer will speak to Thompson memorial funding request.
Parker will be prepared to speak to due diligence funding request for \$10,000 for Historical Commission to spend on investigation/research into properties that may be subject to demolition delay, or that may hold historic resources. Specific examples of success in use of previously allocated due diligence funds are available.
2. Reconstruction of Dickinson Homestead Conservatory
Parker moved, Vickery seconded, voted with one abstention (Wald) to endorse project and to authorize chair to write a letter of support to MHC.
3. Potential Community Preservation Act Project
West Cemetery 1870 section headstone restorations.
Wald moved, Parker seconded, unanimous vote to authorize staff to seek cost estimates for restoration of headstones in 1870 section.
4. Preservation Workshop – staff communicated with MHC staff Chris Skelly and PVPC staff Elizabeth Rairigh about making a presentation to Town Boards and Committees about the nature and legalities of historic preservation. Commission and staff want to make session accessible to wider audience and will look into inviting historical commissions in neighboring towns as well as other PVPC clients/members.

5. The Larches -- staff looking for help in writing up a description, especially architectural description, to complete MHC Form B. Parker agreed to do so after looking more closely at house.
6. BID is proposing a four-month pilot project this summer to install a restroom trailer at the end of Lessey Street next to Sweetser Park. Merchants have had difficulty recently with non-patrons using their facilities. Proposed location is in lighted area with access to electricity. The trailer will be screened by plantings. Maintenance will be shared by BID and Town. Hours of operation will be 7 am to 9 pm. Vickery moved, Parker seconded, unanimous vote to recommend implementation of the pilot project in summer 2016.

Old Business

1. Pioneer Valley Planning Commission may agree to evaluate the Hallock Street and North Pleasant Street houses currently under demolition delay. Town staff discussed the possibility of returning the old Vestry portion to North Congregational Church property with Church officials and the property owner.
2. PVPC Inventory Project
Should be completed soon.
3. Amherst Preservation Plan:
Highlights of new items include interpretive signs in West Cemetery; historic awards program. The Preservation Plan will be moved higher up on agenda for future meeting. The goal will be to finalize an updated plan with priorities and an action plan.
4. Discussion of nominations for preservation award. Last award given was to Amherst College. Commission members should begin to collect ideas for nominations in 2016.

Next meeting: Tuesday, May 24, 2016, 7 pm

Parker moved, Vickery seconded, unanimous vote to adjourn at 8:55 pm.