



Minutes of the Historical Commission Deerfield, MA.

**Town Offices
November 10, 2009**

**Members present: Henrietta Kocot, Chair; Edie Lipp, Clerk; Pat Potter
Guest: Jane Trigère**

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:35 P.M. by Chair, Henrietta Kocot. Minutes of the October 27th meeting were approved by consensus.

2. We began by outlining for Jane Trigère, a potential new Historical Commission member, the initiatives we have under consideration: (a) a site for the Deerfield Historical Commission (b) a South Deerfield Central Village Walking Tour (c) Signage for the Sugarloaf Cemetery and the north end of North Main Street (d) an Oral History project focusing on senior citizens who have spent many years in Deerfield (e) a Sugarloaf Cemetery renovation project.

Jane recommended that the Deerfield Historical Commission become members of the Pioneer Valley History Network. (pioneervalleyhistorynetwork.org)

3. Old business updates:

- Edie reported that Tim Neumann at the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association (PVMA) has approved the Historical Commission using a photo from their collection for our informational poster. There will be no charge. Sheila Damkoehler at PVMA will email the photo once we hear from Kayce Warren on printing details and photo resolution needs. Jane recommended that in addition to other postings the poster be shown on the Community TV channel.
- Jane also talked about the Historical Commission having an easily visible “face to the street”, a place where people could find us. Edie reported that Kayce is setting up the HC email and voicemail for ease of contact from citizens. That information will go on the poster.
- Edie is still trying to track down the John Kruk photo of the Capt. Lathrop House. *The Recorder* does not have it.
- We discussed signage. Edie reported that she had not yet gotten feedback from Bill Benoit at Frontier about student-made house signs. For the larger signs, she reported three local sign makers. According to Tim Neumann, Hale Signs on Montague Road

(774-5663) made the historic reproduction sign at the White Church in Old Deerfield, but the ink has begun to run. Andre Banville (772-0606) in Greenfield did World Eye, Green Fields Market, Linden Hill School, among others. Mantis Graphics in Easthampton (413-527-8716) has done work for UMass and Williston-Northampton School. We can also contact Thayer Street Associates for design ideas for all signs and perhaps for the large sign construction. Jane mentioned Vern Harrington as a contact person there.

- We discussed the South Deerfield Central Village Walking Tour CPA proposal. Tim Neumann suggested to Edie that we contact Abbott Lowell Cummings (665-7004). Cummings is an expert on historic New England architecture. He was the Executive Director of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities – now Historic New England. David Bosse of the PVMA Library (775-7125) said the library could provide access to Deerfield Assessor and Census records (back to 1790), as well as the 1871 Atlas of Franklin County. Jane suggested that ultimately we might ask PVMA to join us in co-producing a booklet on South Deerfield historical sites.
- Edie reported that she will have a phone conference next Monday with Maria Abunnasr, Director of Internships at the UMass History and Public History Departments. The conversation will help the HC find out if we might enlist a student intern to do Walking Tour building research. Jane wondered if PVMA could be the hosting agency if the Historical Commission does not qualify.
- We discussed the oral history initiative. David Bosse at PVMA Library told Edie that the 5th grade at Deerfield Elementary did an oral history project within the last few years; it was called *If These Walls Could Talk*. We should ask Bette Schmitt about it. Bosse also said in 1995 the PVMA did oral history interviews. Five stories with photos are on the PVMA website. Jane volunteered to help train students who might be involved in the oral history project.
- We discussed audio and video options for doing the oral history project. Harold Wrisley has said we can use the town equipment. Jane suggested also contacting Marty MacGuane at Frontier Community Access Television (FCAT) about video recording training and equipment. She also mentioned the technology at the Bennington Museum where cell phones can be used to hear explanations by either a curator or a student.
- Edie Lipp reported information from Karen Herold, Chair of the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) on the Historical Commission CPA Pre-applications. Karen emailed the Pre-applications to Stuart Saginor, Executive Director of the Community Preservation Coalition (33 Union Street, Boston, MA 02108 PHONE 617-371-0540). Stuart's feedback suggests that our CV Walking Tour proposal would not be eligible for CPA funding.

We agreed that it remains the intent of the Historical Commission to raise local and tourist interest in the historically important buildings in South Deerfield's Central Village. We will continue to pursue avenues to make this initiative happen. If a UMass intern is without pay, for example, we can pursue the research. Perhaps we can raise funds to purchase copies of the Howes Brothers photos of South Deerfield houses, so these would be available for display. Perhaps our poster will encourage town residents to come forward with other photos we could scan. Perhaps local businesses like Hardigg or Yankee Candle would be interested in helping underwrite the project. This Walking Tour initiative will be an ongoing effort of the Commission.

- The information from Karen Herold and Stuart Saginor suggests that the Sugarloaf Street Cemetery project will be eligible, with some revisions, for CPA funding. Jane will pursue a cemetery inventory and a cost analysis from TaMara Conde, the gravestone repair specialist recommended by the Greenfield based *Association of Gravestone Studies* (413-772-0836). Jane and Pat will complete the detailed cost analysis. If Tamara's cost is more than \$5000, we need to get two additional estimates. Jane will find out if the AGS will read our CPA Application and possibly write a letter of support for this project.
- We agreed by consensus that since CPA funds don't cover maintenance, we accept Hap Eaton's offer to do brush and shrubbery clearing at the Sugarloaf Street Cemetery this fall or next spring. Pat will discuss with Hap having Jane present when brush and tree work is done at the cemetery so attention can be paid to stones that might need protection.
- We agreed by consensus to postpone the issue of getting an historically accurate fence for the cemetery since we do not have time before the Dec. 3rd CPA Application due date to get the required information about the posts as well as the fence. Jane reported that TaMara Conde said Hydrangea PG were typically used in old cemeteries.
- Discussion followed on a permanent site for the Deerfield Historical Commission. The St. James Church is for sale and is of historic value because it was the first church in South Deerfield – Monument Church. It would be ideal for displays as well as talks and performances. The space could be rented to help support the upkeep of the building. As perfect as the location and building would be, the cost and size of the building seem prohibitive. The Charsky building next to Sugarloaf St. cemetery might be a more cost-effective option. Henrietta will call Mr. Charsky to discuss what he is asking for the building and to see if we can visit. She will also contact Bernie Kubiak to find out what the town might see as problems related to assuming responsibility for a property, even if funded through a CPA grant. For any Historical Commission site, we hope we can find volunteer labor for initial repairs and renovations.
- We need project endorsements, so we must get CPA Application research, budgets, and write-ups done promptly. **The CPA Application due date is December 3, 2009.**

4. Assignments

- Henrietta: (1) Call Al Charsky to find out if his building is for sale, for what price, and when he bought the building (2) Meet with Bernie Kubiak to see what concerns the Town might have about purchasing a property for the Historical Commission to use for displays, etc. (3) If Bernie Kubiak does not see problems, arrange for the Historical Commission to visit the Charsky building before our 11-23 meeting. (4) Check with Vern Harrington at Thayer Street Associates about an historically appropriate design and cost of sign for Sugarloaf Street Cemetery. (Do they work in weather-proof materials?)
- Edie: (1) Call the Kruk family and Frank Moro, Jr. to see if they have old South Deerfield center photos we could use. (2) Ask realtor how to evaluate building values (3) Speak with Maria Abunnasr at UMass about internship possibilities (4) Email Bill Benoit at **Frontier Regional School** about sign-making project: timing, materials, design (5) Finish CPA Application for Sugarloaf Cemetery projects so the HC can approve it on 11-23 and submit it on 12-3. (6) If research proves that a CPA Application for an Historical Commission site is feasible now, begin that Application also. (7) Send Jane inventory information on Old Albany Road cemetery. (8) After 11-23 meeting, send CPA Application to Tim Neumann, asking for letter of support before 12-3. (9) Email HC the talking points for the 11-18 SB meeting. (10) When write budget letter, include reference to volunteer help. (11) Contact Abbott Cummings to see if he would work with us on CV architecture identification.

- Pat: (1) Work with Jane on final budget for Sugarloaf Cemetery project. If TaMara Conde's costs are over \$5000, get two other estimates. (2) Talk with Bernie Kubiak and Hap Eaton to confirm that Historical Commission would like the brush removal and tree trimming work to be done by the town since these can not be done through CPA funds; ask that Jane Triguere be present when the work happens to ensure safety of gravestones (3) Finish **materials-needed** list for the springtime Sugarloaf Cemetery cleaning project and then see Bernie Kubiak and Hap Eaton to find out what materials the town can provide and what we will need to purchase (4) Check old photo to see if we can better describe the old Sugarloaf Cemetery fence (5) Talk with Marty MacGuane at FCAT about about possible free training in using equipment and about possible broadcast of oral history interviews. (6) Contact Bette Schmitt about the 5th grade oral history project.
- Jane: (1) Pursue cemetery inventory software (2) Follow up with TaMara Conde. Get information to Edie as quickly as possible for inclusion on the CPA Application. If her estimate is over \$5000, work with Pat to get two more estimates (3) Call AGS to ask if they will write a letter supporting our CPA Application for Sugarloaf Cemetery work. (4) If Henrietta discovers town might support a CPA Application for a permanent Historical Commission site, research the Charksy building at the Registry of Deeds – so we can find its historical significance.
- Everyone: Think of people we know in Deerfield whose families might have photos or other records of historical interest to the town. Once we've generated a list, we can start making some inquiries. The goal is twofold: to gather information for the Walking Tour, and to begin a photo collection for display. Of course the ultimate goal is preservation.

5. At 8:25 P.M. Edie made a motion and Henrietta seconded it that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by consensus. The Historical Commission will meet with the Select Board on Wednesday, November 18th. In order to complete the CPA Applications, the next meeting of the Historical Commission will be Monday, November 23, 2009 in Room 130 of the Town Offices.

Respectfully submitted,

Edie Lipp, Clerk
Deerfield Historical Commission