



Municipal Building – Town of Franklin
355 East Central Street
Franklin, MA 02038

Town of Franklin, Massachusetts Historical Commission

Meeting Minutes October 20, 2009

Attending:

Commissioners:

Del Arnold
Dianne Brunner
Alan Earls
Debbie Pellegri
Bob Percy
Alice Vendetti

Meeting Minutes

The Commission approved the last meeting's minutes from 9/15/09.

Commission members are welcome to check the Commission's mail box at the Town Offices, and to notify Commission members of any timely issues before the next meeting.

Finances

Debbie has sold postcards at the town hall, and has \$100. in proceeds. Alice reports that she has map money.

Debbie will ask Jeff N. for a printout of all the funds currently available to us.

Franklin Arts Council Visit

Hannah Close, recording secretary of the Franklin Arts Council attended this month's meeting. She wanted to understand what the Historical Commissions plans were, if any, to host art events at the New Museum after its opening (currently expected in the Spring of 2010).

The Franklin Arts Council typically hosts 2 shows per year, each lasting one weekend. We offered the possibility of using the new museum space for this purpose, but also the old museum on Washington St. The FAC would cover basic expenses of the event (such as the use of utilities), and would provide volunteers to “gallery sit.” One of the goals at these events is to sell art. Her organization will examine the building on Washington St., and if interested, write a letter to the Historic Commission expressing their intent.



Refurbishing the Museum (80 West Central St.)

Debbie reported on museum progress.

A lot of the electrical work is done. The gift shop area is coming along. The tile is being changed in the kitchen and bathrooms. The carpeting has been ordered. A leak was found under the cupola and is being repaired.

Tri-County students are in the process of building cabinets in the library.

There is a possible change order to extend the wooden flooring closer to the office area (toward the west side of the main display hall).

The heaters on the south wall will not be continuous. They will be only under the windows. This will allow us to place display cabinets between them, flush with the wall.

Status of Old Museum

We need to winterize the building. See also “Franklin Arts Council Visit”.

Museum Procedures

Alan has been working on a museum management document. He would like to replicate this and make it available on demand, to give to volunteers and museum interns.

Museum Move – Layout Planning

As part of this meeting, we held a planning session to help us determine where specific displays will be situated for best effect. Del brought floor plans of the new museum, and provided hand made scaled down models of display cabinets and other display items to help us decide where to place them.

There are separate display rooms: North and South. (As you enter the building, the South is on the left.)

South Room: about the Red Brick School. Place the standalone stove in the middle of the room.

North Room: Victorian era. Place models of women in Victorian garb here. Decorate the entire room with Victorian Era artifacts. (Though Victoria reigned from 1837 to 1901, ‘Victorian’ usually means 1870 to 1900 or so.) Place the metal fireplace in this room. (This fireplace was rescued from the Ray House on Main St.)

There is room for two display cases to fit on the outside wall of the North Room.

We will need to put descriptive signage on things.

Though we have made progress on layout, we could still benefit from the advice of someone who has studied museum design. Debbie suggested contacting someone from a surrounding town to assist. Alan knows someone who may be able to help.

Forming a 501 (c) 3 Organization

The preparation for creating the “Friends of the Franklin Historical Museum” is nearing completion. Jeff Nutting proposed that the new organization have membership dues, and said he would give the first \$50. himself. We will have to determine the amount of dues. (For comparison, the Franklin Arts Association charges dues of \$25. for full membership and \$10. for junior members.)

Housing Rehab Requests – None

Demolition Requests

The Commission discussed the general procedures for addressing demolition requests, based on research that Debbie performed. She distributed copies of the document “Demolition Procedure – Hearing for a Historically Significant Building/Site/Structure.” Following this set of guidelines, we are required to schedule a public hearing whenever we receive a demolition request.

The issue was partially prompted by the receipt of a demolition request from Ms. Colleen Grady through David Roche for an existing house and barn located at 678 Pleasant Street at Green Street. Bob P. inspected the house and outbuildings on the property. The outbuildings are in poor condition and are not of historical significance. The main residence, however, is of very unusual design: a steeply pitched Cape Code. It dates from at least 1790 and very likely earlier. The house is a candidate for a public hearing on its future.

At the time of the meeting (Oct 20th), the status of the Woodward House on the Dean campus was uncertain. It was demolished in the following days, some 3 months after the end of the agreed upon one-year demolition delay.

Research Requests

Ongoing request from Robert Fahey, Veterans Agent. He would like to have a list of the seven “corners” (street intersections) in Franklin that have been honored with names of Franklin veterans. There is a consolidated list of these locations in town. Debbie will attempt to locate it.

We received a letter from the Massachusetts Historical Commission requesting additional information about the possible archeological value of a piece of land at the corner of Pond and Elm streets. They wonder whether an archeological survey of some kind is necessary.

Gathering with Seniors

Members of the Historical Commission attended an event at the Senior Center, Wed., Sept. 23rd at 10AM, and brought some of the museum’s hard-to-identify photographs with them. These prompted lively discussion among attendees, who were able to identify important details of about 8 of the photographs! A note for the future: Tuesdays are the best days for such an event. Debbie plans to call Karen at the Senior Center to schedule a follow up event of this kind.

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