

Minutes
Meeting of Great Barrington Historical Commission
September 9, 2013
Great Barrington Fire Station, Main Meeting Room

ATTENDING: Marilyn Bisiewicz, Malcolm Fick, Don Howe, Paul Ivory, Gary Leveille, Bill Nappo, David Rutstein

MINUTES OF JULY 8, 2013

- The minutes were accepted unanimously.

FY14 WORK PROGRAM: REVIEW OF DRAFT ARCHIVIST JOB DESCRIPTION

- The Commission reviewed and generally accepted the draft job description and letter of agreement. Gary will review in more detail and e-mail Paul with any comments.
- The Commission also agreed that because of potential challenges in supervision, coordination and division of labor, at this time, it was best to operate this project as a discrete Commission program and eschew any joint effort with any other town body.

COLLECTIONS

1. Gift Of Bicentennial Parade Trophy
 - Paul requested and received as a donation, from the St Peter's Church tag sale, a silver plated trophy plate presented to the Mount Everett Chapter of the Knights of Columbus for their float in the 1961 Great Barrington Bicentennial Parade. Gary will catalogue the object.
2. Mahaney Gift
 - *Paperwork Completed:* The cataloguing inventory has been completed and signed, the Deed of Gift signed and returned and the letter from the Selectmen/Town Manager signed and sent. Paul turned over the original Deed of Gift to Gary for the gift accession file. Paul will retain the various Mahaney Gift correspondence files until complete accession files are organized.
 - *Exhibition:* Marilyn will install a small exhibit of the donation in a display case at the Mason Library.
 - *Media Release:* Paul will draft a media release with a photo. The main thrusts are the gift and emphasizing the sizable and important local history collection that the town owns. Notice of the exhibit is an important component of the release as well.
3. Ramsdell Library Spaces: Paul and Gary met informally with members of the library board. The library remains interested in exploring Historical Commission use of the Ramsdell spaces. The next step is for the Commission to present the space requirements for its various operations. Paul will draft a table expressing the square footage for each operational category. This can be used in working with the library in planning space usage and allocation. Bill has blueprints of the

- library and will send the square footage for the cellar and "fish" room to Paul. Everyone agreed that this preliminary estimate should explicitly differentiate between public/exhibition and support spaces.
4. Archival Supply Order: Paul took advantage of a University Products' sale to order archival storage cartons. Gary will pick them up and notify Paul who will submit the bill to the town for payment.
 5. Computer from Town: Paul received the surplus town PC from Lauren Sartori and will deliver it to the Ramsdell HC work area. Bill volunteered to set it up for operation to ready it for use when assigned by the HC.

WHERE'S GREAT BARRINGTON? PROJECT

- At their planning meeting, Marilyn and Malcolm discussed the options for delivering the program's message to the public. There are advantages to using a Facebook page but this medium would require a commitment from each Commission member to complete posts according to a rotating schedule.
- Bill offered to talk to the *Berkshire Record*.
- Whether on-line or printed in the *Record*, if the program follows a contest format, prizes will be needed.
- Paul will ask a colleague in the National Trust's general counsel's office about the legality and requirements needed for taking and publishing photos of privately owned buildings. Don stated that it was permissible as long as no monies are received for use of the image.
- Publicity should include a cross-link.
- Marilyn and Malcolm will prepare a proposal and example of an entry for discussion at our next meeting. Once the draft is completed and agreed on by the membership, we can prepare the delivery medium and start scheduling assignments.

MHC PRESERVATION CONFERENCE

- Paul encouraged everyone to attend the conference. The variety and number of topics of the content sessions are outstanding. Don stated his intention to attend. Paul will try.

HISTORIC MARKER PROGRAM

- Don recommended, and the membership concurred, that the Marker Oversight Committee to operate this program consist of three members, one each from the Historic District Commission, Historical Commission and Historical Society. Since it isn't an officially designated town committee, the Selectmen don't need to appoint the membership.
- However, it is appropriate, and a courtesy, to inform the Selectmen and Town Manager about the program and the committee's role.
- Affixing a plaque on a building in a local historic district does not constitute a change that warrants an official public hearing to determine conformity with design guidelines.
- The fee for a property owner to enter the marker program is \$40. Proceeds will be used to administer the program.

NEWSBOY STATUE: Gary

- Problems with Artifact: corroded pipes; deteriorated dolomite pedestal; overgrown Juniper bushes at base holding in moisture and broken water pump. Although the bronze statue is stable, it needs waxing to protect from elements, especially acid rain.
- Treatment: the DPW has completed some trimming of the bushes. Daedalus art conservation submitted a condition report and a treatment proposal in 2009 (Gary will forward a copy of their report to the membership). Their estimate was \$13,250 in 2009. Gary figures the cost would be \$18,000 in 2013.
- Funding: The New England Association of Newspaper Executives used to fund maintenance but has ceased their support. Options are including the repair in the annual FY budget or on a town meeting warrant. Don noted that the Historic District Commission funded conservation treatment of Winged Victory through an extra budget line. The Historical Commission could try the same tactic. Too, this project would be eligible for Community Preservation Act funding.

CELL PHONE APP FOR HIKING TRAILS

- Malcolm has negotiated with Christine Ward, chairmen of the town Trails Committee, the inclusion of an app for Great Barrington hiking trails. The trails will be shown as an option on our historic walking tour app. It will also be promoted on the Lake Mansfield kiosk and their website. Malcolm, his wife and Christine will hike the trail tomorrow to document all stops.

DEMOLITION DELAY IN SHEFFIELD

- Don reported that the Sheffield building Inspector doesn't favor the demolition delay bylaw because it increases bureaucratic requirements and conflicts.

DAVID ON TRAVEL CHANNEL

- The Travel Channel will interview David about Searles Castle as part of their coverage for a program about Great Barrington. David will alert the membership when he finds out the airing date.

BILL AND TYLER STREET FIRE STATION

- Bill has submitted a proposal for the rehabilitation and adaptive use of the Tyler St. Fire Station, Pittsfield.

NEXT MEETING DATE

- Monday, November 4, 2013, 7:00pm at Fire Station