

HARVARD HISTORICAL COMMISSION

13 AYER ROAD • HARVARD, MASSACHUSETTS 01451



The Harvard Historical Commission is chartered "...to preserve and protect the historic assets of Harvard, its buildings, structures, places, sites, and surrounding settings of historical or architectural significance."

Following are the minutes for the regular meeting of the Harvard Historical Commission at the Hildreth House, 15 Elm Street, on September 2, 2015 at 7PM.

CALL TO ORDER. Chair Joe Theriault called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

ATTENDANCE. Joe Theriault, Moe Dancause, Pam Marston, Rick Veltri (assigned to vote for Wendy Eldredge who was absent), and Sherry Graham. David Vannicola attended as a prospective member

REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES OF LAST MEETING. The minutes of the August 5 meeting were approved as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY. There were no comments from the public.

REVIEW NEW APPLICATIONS. The Commission reviewed an application for the Harvard Methodist Meeting House, 13 Mass Avenue. The Commission voted to move that the addition of a garage is substantial. Four members voted affirmative. Rick Veltri voted negative.

PUBLIC HEARING. None scheduled

CHAIR'S TIME. Chair Joe Theriault briefly reviewed his visits with Mike Volmar at Fruitlands to discuss areas of possible collaboration and to invite Mr. Volmar to review the current Inventory Records in the Local Register for the museum to identify missing and incorrect information.

Joe also visited with Nancy Reifenstein to discuss the town's early period of historic preservation. Nancy was one of the key participants in the 1980's and 1990's to help in the Historical Society's work and the work of the Historical Commission. She was largely responsible for the successful bid for designations of the Harvard Center National Historic District and the Historical Society's Still River Baptist Church (Meetinghouse) on the National Register. The interview with Reifenstein would be the basis for "*Our Preservationists*," a new section of the HHC website. For the same reason, Joe interviewed Marge Darby about her knowledge of the historic preservation effort in the 1970's through 1990's. Ms. Darby was a key contributor to the foundation of the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area.

CORRESPONDENCE. The Commission received an answer to its query to Mr. Richard Tavelli, past president to the Boston Area Shaker Group regarding their knowledge of the monument installed at the entry to the Shaker Village Cemetery. He will ask his group to see if there is any knowledge of how that monument came about.

ON-GOING BUSINESS.

The status of the Applications for Historic District projects were reviewed. (See atch 1 Applications Status)

The status of Action Items was reviewed. (See atch 2 Action Item List)

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND LIAISONS:

Administration Working Group (WG): The Commission reviewed the following paragraphs of the Policies & Procedures and voted unanimously to approve the changes: 3.1.5.5 and 3.1.10.1.4

Communications WG: The traffic statistics for the HHC website predict about 5,000 visitors for the year visiting about 12,000 pages.

The Chair reported the successful completion of the past three years work on the Shaker Village Cemetery with the Joint Commissions 'Shaker Celebration' hosted by the Historical and Cemetery Commissions. Aside from the Chairs, the speakers included our local independent Shaker researcher, Roben Campbell, and past-president of the Boston Area Shaker Study, Richard Tavelli, Town of Harvard Selectman Stu Sklar and our newly minted Eagle Scout, Pat Pesa who reported on his project to fabricate a reproduction of the gate at the entrance of the Shaker Village Cemetery. The gate is thought to have been destroyed in the Hurricane of 1938.

The Chair asked the Commission to visit the new section to the Commission website, "Our Preservationists." The new page presents the history of the enactment of the Historic Districts in Harvard in 1972 for the Shaker Village Local Historic District and in 1973 for the Harvard Common Local Historic District. Perhaps more importantly, the page also documents the individuals who were involved in that early historic preservation effort.

Community Preservation Committee (CPC): CPC Liaison, Pam Marston, reported no CPC activity which did not meet this summer.

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Cemetery Commission Liaison, Moe Dancause talked about the repair of 12 burial markers with welding. A CPC project will be proposed for that work. A suggestion was made by Commissioner Sherry Graham that the local Scouts could help with resetting the markers.

Education & Training WG: No report. Commissioner Eldredge was absent.

Historic Districts WG: In the absence of a chair for the Historic Districts WG, Joe Theriault reported on finalizing the cost proposal by CAI (Harvard GIS Contractor) to develop the new GIS Layer for the two Historic Districts. The cost (\$1200) proposal will be honored through the beginning of FY2017 when the work is expected to be done. The cost of this project will be included in the Commission's budget request to Finance Committee in October.

Historic Properties WG: On the Local Register work by Sally Dancause, Joe Theriault, and Susan Lee, Joe Theriault said that data entry has focused on correcting existing records. The Working Group will be organizing its survey work by getting a list from the Assessors of all of the properties that are 100 years old and older. The WG will use this list to determine which properties are visited, surveyed, and photographed.

Pam Marston reported on the Historic House Marker Program to say that all requested markers have been delivered. So far, TBD Markers have been installed.

Joe Theriault spoke of creating a program on 'Fading Harvard' which will focus on those historic properties that Harvard is in the process of losing. For example, the Joseph Fairbank House at 105 Stow Road, the Farwell- Edward Houghton House at 87 Ayer Road and the Coolidge House. Some of those properties are deteriorating by "demolition by neglect." This is a concern for HHC.

Master Plan Steering Cmte Liaison: The MPSC is looking forward to wrapping up the Devens section of the Master Plan in December.

Membership Cmte: Moe Dancause nominated David Vannicola as Alternate Commissioner and the Commission voted unanimously to nominate him to an appointment by the Board of Selectmen.

NEW BUSINESS:

CPC Project Proposals: The Chair presented a list of potential CPC projects. The list was modified down to three projects which will be submitted to the CPC by end of September: Shaker Village Cemetery Proposal, Shaker First Herb House Proposal and a proposal to place \$75K in the historic preservation reserves for future acquisitions of Preservation Restrictions of a selected and most important historic property. The Commission voted unanimously to propose the three proposals. The HHC will be presenting its proposals to the CPC at their Wednesday, October 14 meeting.

Planning HHC Budget Request for FY2017: The Chair presented a budget that was prepared by the Officers. The HHC will be presenting its Budget Request to the Finance Cmte in October/November. The Budget Request was approved unanimously.

HHC Briefing to BOS on Current Strategy and Plan for its Operations until 2020: Joe reviewed the presentation for BOS. The purpose of the presentation is to inform the Selectmen on the strategy and plans for the Commission to execute all aspects of the Town's Chapter 48 Historic District Bylaw. The plan is the basis for the HHC's budget request for FY2017. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the presentation. (See Atch 3)

Annual Review the Design Guidelines was postponed to the October meeting.

The next meeting was set for October 7, 2015 at the Hildreth House.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Marston
Secretary