

NEWBURY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2011

Call to Order

A regular monthly meeting of the Newbury Historical Commission was held in the Duncan Phillips Library at The Governor's Academy on Wednesday, December 14, 2011. The meeting convened at 6:30 PM.

Members in attendance were Chris Drelich, Channing Howard, Marcia Peirce, and Nancy Thurlow. Absent were Barbara Rogers and Bill Towne.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the 11/9/11 meeting were presented and approved on a motion made by Channing Howard.

Reports

Based on New Business Item #3 of the 11/9/11 meeting (drawing together records, resources, and assets), the following reports were presented:

1. Nancy Thurlow & Barbara Rogers

Nancy and Barb visited the Lower Green Schoolhouse on Monday, November 14, 2011. They looked through various items and removed the following items for safekeeping: (a) 23 audio cassettes which contain taped oral histories by James Lowe, Martin Burns, John Marsh, Richard Knight, Fred MacBurnie, Ed Sternfelt, Truman Nelson, and Darcy VanBokkelen, (b) transcriptions of interviews by James Lowe, Fred MacBurnie, Martin Burns, and John Marsh, (c) Bell & Howell cassette recorder, and (d) file with Charles O. Bailey obituary and copies of newspaper clippings dated 1896.

Nancy also reported that she was in possession of several transcriptions of audiotaped interviews from the Oral History Project (1984-1987) of Grace Colby, Dan Brown, Amelia Little, Charlotte Cook, Keith Walton, James Lowe & Jim Stone, and Alfreda & Harold Dusharme.

2. Chris Drelich

Chris visited the Schoolhouse on Tuesday, November 22, 2011. He replaced the broken glass in the post lamp outside and installed a photocell on/off control for the lamp, installed the electric candles in the windows for the holiday season and took the remaining contents of the gray file cabinet to review at home. He also found an antique oil lighting fixture in a box, wrapped in 1976 newspapers. He assumes the lamp was packaged for safe keeping during the 1976 schoolhouse renovation but never re-hung. He cleaned the parts and placed the lamp and its box back in the schoolhouse for now. He is going to find stylistically-matching chain and will re-hang the lamp in the spring.

Over the course of several days, Chris reviewed the files from the file cabinet, finding the following: (a) several old Massachusetts Historical Commission pamphlets and booklets from the early 1970s, (b) about 50 folders of newspaper clippings or Xeroxed newspaper clippings from local newspapers, 1890-1940; many of the clippings are of historic-type stories and tales from bygone days; others are obituaries of various Newbury residents over the years, (c) photographic reproductions of six old photographs of mill workers and work scenes, probably from the Byfield mills.

Left in the schoolhouse are models of various historic homes around town and several photo albums from the early 1980s of school projects documenting local historic houses.

Old Business

1. Channing presented a summary of the Conflict of Interest Law for Municipal Employees and the Open Meeting Law. Members are to take home the packets, read them, and then returned signed copies to Town Hall.
2. Regarding the identification and drawing together of resources, we reiterated the need to find a central location to house our collections. Until something more permanent can be found, all materials collected will be temporarily stored at Chris's house, The Coffin House, 14 High Road, Newbury, in the 2nd floor spare bedroom. Channing also suggested that we begin the process of copying and scanning all photos and documents, and converting audio cassettes to a digital format. There may be grant money potentially available for such an undertaking.
3. Regarding the condition of the Lower Green Schoolhouse, there was discussion about the potential restoration of windows and shutters. John Seamans was identified as someone who might be able to help us with this project. Chris announced that he was exploring the attic of the Schoolhouse and found some major holes and damage to the chimney; Chris spoke with Sam Joslin, building inspector, who was aware of the problems and is working to rectify the situation.

New Business

1. Channing suggested that the HC begin exploring a Demolition Delay By-Law. Topsfield and Georgetown were towns identified as having strong policies that we could look at for reference. Channing would like us to put this on "our active to-do list."
2. Essex National Heritage's *Trails and Sails* event will be happening again in September of 2012. Channing suggested that the HC could put together an event, including tours of the Schoolhouse, and exploring the Lower Green / Cottage Road areas, perhaps with a printed map of historical points in town. The 375th Anniversary Committee had success with their events, and Peg Plumer was identified as a person we may want to recruit for assistance.
3. Open house hours were discussed for the Schoolhouse. Chris stated that he would be happy to sit down in the Schoolhouse if the HC decided to have some open house dates. Other members present agreed they would potentially volunteer to do the same. We

identified important events during which time we definitely would like the Schoolhouse open: Trails & Sails (potentially in conjunction with an event at the Lower Green), Yankee Homecoming, and the Sons & Daughters of the First Settlers of Newbury annual meeting.

4. The topic of keys to the Schoolhouse was discussed. The committee identified that Channing and Chris should each have a key (along with Dick Cunningham, who currently holds one). Chris will talk to Sam Joslin about getting keys for himself and Channing.

Announcements

Channing is still trying to reach Chris Skelly of the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Mr. Skelly may be able to come up to a HC meeting for help and insight.

Adjournment

The next meeting of the HC was confirmed for Wednesday, January 11, 2012 at 6:30 PM in the Meeting Room of the Newbury Town Library, 0 Lunt Street, Byfield MA.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 PM.

Christopher Drelich
Christopher Drelich,
Clerk

January 17, 2012
Date of approval