**Local Historic District Study Committee**

**April 8, 2013, 7:30 p.m., Norwell Town Hal**l

**Members attending:** Jon Bond, Stephen Hull, Katherine Kardok, Jay McOsker, Janet Watson

**Members absent:** Gerry Preble, Kim Zayotti

**Call to order at 7:35 p.m.**

**Acceptance of Minutes**

A motion was made by Janet Watson and seconded by Stephen Hull to approve the minutes from March 25, 2013. Motion passed.

**Summary of Discussions**

Discussion with Paul Jevne, Norwell Real Estate Agent

. Paul gave us his background in real estate and Norwell in particular. He has spent over 50 years in Norwell living in antique homes and selling them. [He is rated as one of the most successful real estate agents on the south shore].

. The market for antique homes has experienced a decline in desirability since the 1970s because people’s lifestyles have changed; people don’t have time for the upkeep demanded by an antique home. More people now contract out much upkeep on their homes such as landscaping, painting, cleaning, etc. and are looking for homes that do not require a large amount of time to maintain and are not located on busy roads (most antique homes are found on busy roads). Many people now shy away from antiques. With this change in the market, there are still some people who are interested in antique homes, but this pool of people has become a much smaller market share.

. He finds that the decline in demand for these homes has led to a decline in the selling price and antiques are now selling for much less than they used to.

. Updates to an antique home make it easier to sell (windows, etc.)

. His buyers purchase antiques because they want to be stewards of the house, recognize and value the history of the home.

. First question he is asked when showing an antique home is, “Are there restrictions on the property?”

. He doesn’t know any local realtors who support historic districts. He believes that restrictions put on a property which already has a limited market can only hurt sales price and time on the market.

. When speaking of the demolition of antiques in Norwell and how that has changed the look of Norwell, he noted that no houses have been torn down in the center of Norwell. He didn’t know of any significant antiques that had been torn down around town.

. Had questions about how the historic district commission would work – i.e., would Norwell hire someone to review modifications or would it be a volunteer commission? How often would it meet? How long would a resident wait after submitting the plans before the request was reviewed?

Update on Re-mailing Surveys

. The surveys will not have a due date, just “please return as soon as possible.”

. The new cover letter was reviewed. Modification was made to the third paragraph to include a sentence noting that the LHDSC could be contacted via the new website/email address. Jay moved to approve the letter with this modification, Janet seconded and the motion was passed.

. Stephen confirmed that the LHDSC documents are now posted on our website.

. The postcard was reviewed. It is for those residents who responded and wanted more information, to let them know that the information is now on the website. Katherine moved to accept the postcard and Stephen seconded and the motion was passed.

. Jon circulated a PSA that he had written and will be sent to the Mariner.

**Discussion of Work Plan**

We discussed the direction of our report to the Selectmen and decided it will include the following:

. Introduction explaining the history of the founding of the Norwell LHDSC

.Why Norwell is historic (from the TTL report)

. Section briefly describing what other towns do, including some towns with very restrictive by-laws and some towns with loose by-laws.

. The survey and outreach meeting(s)

. All of the minutes of our meetings

. Committee statement of our findings

**Meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.**