

## ORLEANS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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## MINUTES OF MEETING

Date: Tuesday, January 17, 2012 3PM

Place: Orleans Town Hall

## Present:

James Hadley, Chair

Ann Sinclair

Bonnie Snow

Dennis Dowd

Catherine Southworth

## Absent

Richard Besciak

Sarah Bartholomew

Representing Richard &amp; Lisa Pell

David Lyttle, from Ryder &amp; Wilcox

Dan Davis, contractor

Richard O'Hara

Kiel Blood

Bill Wardwell from the Oddfellows

John Holt from CPC

Sue Christie

George Meservey, Town Planner

1. Minutes of October 19, 2011  
Bonnie Snow moved and Ann Sinclair seconded a motion to approve the minutes for Oct. 19, 2011. MOTION PASSED
2. Discussion of a demolition request for barn/guest house at 114 Barley Neck Road, East Orleans

David Lyttle said that Ryder & Wilcox had been hired to design this old barn into an up-to-date guesthouse for the owners, Lisa and Richard Pell. (Note – Mr. Hadley had requested Mr. Lyttle to obtain a letter from the owners designating him as their agent and this has been done.) However Ryder and Wilcox found the barn to be in such poor condition that a new guesthouse was designed instead. The new building will retain the shape and size of the existing barn.

Richard O'Hara stated that the barn had been moved to the property in 1968. Neither he nor Bonnie Snow knew where it was moved from. At that time, it and the adjacent house, now demolished, were renovated. He stated that the barn was probably built in the mid 1800's. It has had renovations over the years which resulted in there being two bedrooms and a bath on the second level and a bedroom, office, living room, kitchen and sitting room (the former goat pen) on the first floor. Bonnie Snow said that it is not on the Historic Inventory.

Dan Davis said that he had assessed the structure and stated that it had been through multiple changes. There is no foundation under most of the structure. Some of the beams have been cut through. He said that if the existing building were to be renovated, only the frame would be retained. The plans are to reuse beams and floorboards that are in good condition.

The Commission agreed that the building does not retain its historic integrity. Dennis Dowd moved and Bonnie Snow seconded a motion finding that this building is not a "preferably preserved historic structure" and therefore the Commission is not opposed to its demolition. MOTION PASSED

### 3. Items for CPC Funding

#### Federated Church – HVAC upgrade

The work on this project has already been done. There is a Preservation Easement on this building. The Commission can not determine whether this project is appropriate for preservation funding without a technical report from a mechanical engineer with experience in this type of project. The Commission's concern is condensation within walls which can cause mildew and promote deterioration of the structure.

Bonnie Snow moved and Dennis Dowd seconded a motion to require a report from a mechanical engineer with a background in heating, ventilating and air conditioning of historic structures, or failing this, with experience in this work for buildings of an age similar to that of the Federated Church. MOTION PASSED

#### Habitat for Humanity – Five affordable houses

*Appendix A*

Habitat for Humanity has been asked by the Town of Orleans to be developers of 5 affordable houses on a five acre property at 31 Namskaket Road. There are three structures on the property. One a barnlike structure the others, a garage, not historic, and a house that was surveyed by the Orleans Historical Society in 1981, and has a Form B on file with the Town and State. This fact was overlooked when the town approached Habitat for Humanity. Informal discussions with Town officials have indicated a possible way to preserve this structure by using the 40B process which would allow the building of the five units without demolishing the house.

Habitat for Humanity plans to take down the barn for reuse. They do not restore houses and had planned to demolish it. The house was built c. 1850. George Meservey stated that the house has a mildew problem and is in very bad condition. The Commission was invited to tour the inside of the house on January 25 at 2PM so they could see the condition themselves.

The Commission agreed that the barn has no historic value.

#### Orleans Historical Society - Glass Plate & Lantern Slide Preservation

The OHS has received funds for this kind of work previously from the CPC. The glass plates that constitute the Harry J Sparrow Archive were preserved digitally with CPC funds. The fact that these are glass plates denotes that they are historic, however, the Commission would like some testimonial to their historic value. Bonnie Snow will review and report on them.

## Odd Fellows Lodge – Restoration

Appendix B

There is a Preservation Restriction on this building which is on the Orleans Historic Inventory.

David B. Maclean, architect for the work on the Odd Fellows Hall has submitted drawings and renderings to OHC for the proposed work. The CPC has already determined – via a review performed by Town Counsel – that the work in connection with the commercial kitchen – including design - is not fundable. In addition, according to the Town counsel's statement on preservation – "*protection of personal or real property from injury, harm or destruction, but not including maintenance*" – would appear to preclude much of the work shown on the applicants' drawings. Note however that all work to bring an historic structure into conformance with the American with Disabilities Act is fundable.

Bill Wardwell, of the Oddfellows, talked about the need for an addition to hold the kitchen, bathrooms and stairs. He also talked about the need to be able to rent the building for functions in order to get income to keep the building maintained.

Jim Hadley noted that the work on this building is most correctly categorized as an Adaptive Reuse. It is a preliminary design which according to Mr. Hadley may not confirm to the MA building code, as all the exit stairs are not enclosed. It is also not readily discernable as to whether the toilet fixture count is sufficient for the Assembly use category. Hence, the final status of the design is not known. It is clear that the addition to the building is fundable because it includes a stairway, elevator and accessible toilets. (However the stair is not enclosed.)

Mr. Hadley told Mr. Wardwell to have the Architect to take the design to the building commissioner for his comments.

The new dormers on the existing building were questioned by the Commission. Wardwell said they were to let in additional light to the third floor which the Oddfellows want to use as a lounge. Most of the Commissioners feel that the dormers on the existing roof appear to modify the original historic structure in a way that alters its character. Dennis Dowd asked the architect to show us photos of similar historic buildings. As the dormers let in more natural light, they do represent an energy saving strategy. The OHC must determine whether these elements actually contribute to the "protection" of the property by enhancing the use of the building in order to provide greater economic viability for the organization that owns and maintains it. The same must be said for the terrace on the Rock Harbor side of the structure.

Mr. Wardwell argued that the terrace was needed for functions to have a level outdoor space for use in connection with income-producing events. The Commission understood that need.

The Oddfellows are applying to the CPC now for money for construction drawings. The Commission has legitimate concerns regarding the preservation effort represented in the drawings, because of the substantial visual alterations to the structure, representing a potentially substantial modification to the character. Any decision will be deferred until the above-stated concerns have been addressed.

#### 4. Demolition by Neglect Discussion

*Appendix C*

The Commission received and reviewed comments from the Town Counsel. Mr. Ford is preparing final language for the proposed bylaw, which he will formulate as an amendment to the existing Demolition Delay bylaw, and will review the language with the OHC, the Zoning Bylaw Task Force and other interested parties within Town government.

A key provision in the amendment will be the process of identification of a building that is possibly suffering from *Demolition by Neglect*. Mr. Ford suggests that this must be the responsibility of the OHC. Inspections and comments on building condition of a building so identified will be undertaken by the Orleans Building Department.