

December 18, 2014
Historical Commission Meeting (minutes approved Jan. 15, 2015)

The Upton Historical Commission met at 7:17 pm on December 18, 2014 at the Town Hall, 2nd floor meeting room. In attendance were Chairperson, Cathy Taylor; Vice-chair, Joyce Heywood; members Howie Glassman and Russ Wood. Also joining us as guests were Beth Towne and Jennifer Doyle.

Minutes of November 20, 2014 Meetings: There were no minutes submitted, as our clerk, Maureen Byrne resigned from the Commission and was not present. She will submit the minutes at a later time.

Treasurer's Report: Howie reported an expense account balance of \$689.01 and a gift account of \$3,748.61. A check was received for \$100 from an anonymous donor; said check to be used specifically for native plantings at the park.

Other Business:

Mass Historical & Schoolhouse Foundation Update: A document was received from Mass Historical, which officially certifies the Upton Center District on the state level. The district is now under review on a Federal level for approval on the National Register. A question was asked if we want to have some sort of celebration of this approval, plus the already received CCC camp approval.

Cathy contacted Mass Historical regarding the schoolhouse foundation that the Land Stewardship (and the Commission) would like to preserve. MHC felt that the foundation is an important item for the town to preserve.

Old Burial Grounds: Mass Historical also recommends that the Commission have a historic land survey done before any further tree cutting takes place. The first trees removed were done because they were diseased or damaged, but for any other removal, a land survey should be done. A land survey includes recommendations for preservation of stone walls, gravestones, plus the general setting of the grounds. Cathy will make preliminary phone calls to get rough estimates. Once actual quotes are received, funding approval would need to come before a town meeting.

Mass Historical also suggested that our 2 old cemeteries could be added to the National Register at some time.

Eagle Scout Project Update: The Eagle Scout kiosk structure is complete and will soon have a 2-door display case installed.

Commission Resignation: Maureen Byrne submitted her resignation from the Commission. We will miss her and thank her for her contributions, especially her dedication to the historic burial grounds. It was noted that we need new members. Cathy will send an email to people who have previously voiced an interest in the Commission.

Selectmen Meeting: The Board of Selectmen has invited both the Commission and the Historical Society to attend their meeting on Jan 20. Russ stated that the Society would like to meet with us also.

IMLS Grant – Proposal by Becky Wetzel & Narragansett Tribe: The grant that Becky Wetzel spoke of during her November presentation to the Commission has been delayed and won't be submitted until later in 2015. The Ecotarium will continue to be a partner with the project, as stated by Doug Harris of the Narragansett Tribe.

Conservation Restriction Heritage Park Update: We have received an updated letter from the Narragansetts, plus a new letter from the Aquinnahs. We are waiting for a letter from the Webster (Chaubunagungamaug) Nipmucks. Per a unanimous vote of the Commission, the mentioned letters and any others will be submitted to the town lawyer so that they can be included in the CR created in Aug 2014. We will ask Mike Penko to attend our January meeting (or whenever the lawyer gives us a finalized draft of the CR) so that Mike can review that version.

End of Year Report: Cathy submitted a draft of the Commission's annual End-of-Year Report. A few corrections were suggested and she will submit it to the town by the early January deadline.

Follow up to Monetary Discrepancy: Joyce asked about the status of the \$3,000 treasury discrepancy, which the town was to follow up on once the town hall renovations were complete and everyone was moved back into Town Hall. There has been no update from the town.

Beth Towne Presentation: Beth Towne did a projector presentation of historical glass negative images that she scanned. There were many photos of a very nice quality from the early 1900s. The Commission thanked her for the wonderful job she did and we hope that some of the images can be displayed on our web page.

There being nothing further, the Commission adjourned at 8:55.

Joyce Heywood