



TOWN OF MEDWAY
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
HISTORICAL COMMISSION

*Medway Town Hall
155 Village Street
Medway, MA 02053
Phone (508) 321-4890
Email:
historicalcom@townofmedway.org
www.townofmedway.org*

Minutes

Wednesday, November 17, 2021, 7:00 p.m.
In-person Meeting at Senior Center, Oakland Street

*Commission
Members*

Jeanne Johnson,
Chair
Paul Russell, Vice
Chair
Eugene Liscombe,
Treasurer,
Representative to
Community
Preservation
Committee
Cher Hamilton,
Member
McKenzie Ward,
Member
Morgan Harris,
Member
Rich Eustis,
Member

Members in Attendance: Cher Hamilton, Paul Russell, Morgan Harris, Rich Eustis, Jeanne Johnson, Gene Liscombe

Members Absent: McKenzie Ward

Others Present: Barbara Saint Andre, Director of Community and Economic Development, Katherine Mitchell, Recording Secretary

Meeting was called to order by Historical Commission Chair, Jeanne Johnson at 7:01 PM.

I. Demolition applications to consider--None

II. Treasurer's Report—Gene Liscombe. No change.

III. Minutes to consider – October 27, 2021

On a motion made by Gene, seconded by Cher, the Historical Commission voted unanimously to approve the September 22, 2021 Meeting

Minutes.

IV. CPC Report (Gene Liscombe) Gene did not attend the most recent CPC meeting. He has mistakenly been removed from their e-mail list and isn't getting their notices. He and Barbara will fix this.

V. Updates

a. Evergreen Cemetery

Paul attended Selectmen's Meeting on November 1st to make an announcement to the Town of Evergreen Cemetery being accepted onto the National Register of Historic Places. Select board suggested they have the certificate framed and hung at the Town Hall. It is hung outside the town's clerk office. Paul notified new owner of Evergreen and sent Certificate and Letter from the State. There is an article about Evergreen Cemetery in Metrowest Daily News, Milford Daily News, and online for Milford Daily News. Jeanne stated the pictures are in color online and it is a very nice article. Paul would like to find out who did the plaque for Buzz Johnson Park– they would like a similar plaque for Evergreen Cemetery. Jeanne has the contact, and she will reach out to get pricing.

b. Flagpoles

Paul Russell stated the project is complete. Jeanne went to take photos. DPW secured three flags but Jeanne noticed there isn't one at St. Joseph's. Paul thinks the issue is their concern about

enough lighting on the flag, adhering to flag etiquette. Paul noted that LED lights are attached to the poles and should be adequate. Jeanne inquired whether supplemental LED lights should be added? Rich is on their parish council and will check on this issue.

c. Fencing

Project completed. Next steps are to excavate a few inches down around the fenced portion of the foundation to expose the location of the house that was there. The State Historical Commission will need to approve this. A plaque describing the importance of the site in Medway's history is also needed.

d. Flexible wraps around traffic boxes. No discussion.

e. Historic districts and Demolition Bylaw

Barbara gathered some information on establishing local historic districts. She has the town of Lincoln districts as an example, as well as a few others. Paul stated we are looking into setting up a local historic district for homes built before 1800. This project will take time, money, and research. Members asked what type of restrictions we would need to put on the district.

Jeanne stated there aren't any restrictions on houses/buildings in a National Register district, by definition, which is what our two districts are. It is a matter of prestige, not restrictions, and encourages homeowners to take pride in their historic homes and the areas in which they are located. Jeanne reminded members that if an application to demolish a historic house is submitted and the HC determines that the house is historically significant, a public hearing is scheduled. If, after the hearing, HC members determine that the house should be preferably preserved, demolition cannot take place for one year, during which time the owners must make efforts to save it. All they must do right now is wait a year and then they can do whatever they would like. Setting up a local historic district needs all the homeowners to agree to it and can be complex to setup.

When the Medway Village area was nominated and approved for National Register, a survey from the 90's was used which showed the oldest properties in the area. A letter was sent out to every homeowner and building owner describing the project, and a public meeting took place at the Senior Center.

MA Historical Commission is encouraging Medway to review this since there are homes in town older than homes in both existing districts. They could be their own district and do not need to necessarily be next to each other. For example, we could start by preserving anything built before 1800. Medway currently has two historic districts with the possibility of a third (area of Village and Lincoln Streets) as many homes in this area are built in the 1800's. There are other areas, too.

Barbara asked for clarification – Do the members want to create a local historic district and add specific restrictions? Paul stated yes – local laws add protection to the homes.

Rich asked what the purpose of the one year wait period was regarding the demolition by-law. Jeanne stated the owner should make a massive effort to find an alternative use for the building. Jeanne read from the demolition bylaw. Jeanne referenced the e-mail from Barbara that she forwarded which includes suggestions we discussed at last month's meeting. Jeanne suggested start with speaking with owners to see if they are interested in being part of a local historic district. Some towns are stricter than others. It depends on how the local by-law is set up. Cher asked how many homes would be considered. Barbara suggested working on identifying homes that would warrant preservation if the owners were interested. See what restrictions would make sense. Determine homes, determine restrictions, and go from there. The process for establishing a local historic district is daunting and making edits is as well. Paul suggested determining restrictions that make sense. Morgan stated the state has a step-by-step guideline.

Jeanne suggested Paul and Cher identify the first five houses- possibly drive by them. Five homes will be a good start.

f. Holbrook bells

Historical Commission members were interested in knowing if the Holbrook Bell owned by the Medway Community Church is still in Medway and still in use. (West Medway, MA, The Second Congregational Church [Community Church], CAST BY GEORGE H. HOLBROOK E. MEDWAY MASS 1834) The bell was taken down while the church and its steeple were repaired after a hurricane a few years ago. Jeanne spoke with a representative of the church and learned that the bell was returned to the steeple, but it is not used; a carillon is used instead. She also called the Village Church and inquired about their Holbrook bell. They use it regularly. On Veterans day, for example, they ring the bell on the 11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month. Ultimately, we have two Holbrook bells in Medway and do not need to purchase the one for sale in Maine, as discussed at a previous meeting.

VI. New Business – Demolition By-Law – Potential Amendments

Jeanne asked if everyone was able to review the proposed changes in the by-laws. Various edits were discussed. Jeanne stated this would come before the spring meeting in May/June. Start reaching out to other boards in town to get their thoughts. Get support before town meeting.

Volunteer appreciation celebration – December 13th at Thayer Homestead. RSVP by December 5th.

On a motion made by Gene, seconded by Paul, the Historical Commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:16 PM.

Next meeting is scheduled for December 22, 2021, at 7:00 p.m at the Senior Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Mitchell, Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historical Commission meeting on December 22, 2021.