



TOWN OF MEDWAY
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Minutes

Wednesday, March 23, 2022, 7:00 p.m.

In-person Meeting at Senior Center, 76 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: Paul Russell, Morgan Harris, Jeanne Johnson,
Gene Liscombe, Cher Hamilton

Members Absent: McKenzie Ward, Rich Eustis

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

Many guests attended the meeting:

Thiago Silveira – Owner of 5 Winthrop Street; Sheila Dubrawski – Medway
Historical Society President, Alan Earls – Franklin Observer, Linda
Donnelly – Medway Resident, James Kozak – Medway Resident, Karl
Skelin – Medway Resident, Annmarie Fontecchio – Medway Resident,
Stephen Malloy- Medway Resident, Rebecca Purcell- Medway Resident,
Michael Regan – Medway Resident, Lisa Camp – Medway Resident, Laura
Rymer – Medway Resident, Astrid Nicolaou – Medway Resident

I. Meeting was called to order by Historical Commission Chair, Jeanne Johnson at 7:02 PM.

II. 5 Winthrop Street – discuss potential changes to the outside appearance

Mr. Silveira recently purchased home built in 1850, a prominent historic house on Winthrop Street, and he plans to update it with an addition, replacement windows, and painting. His partner, Sarah Costa, was advised to speak to Medway Historical Commission. They shared photos and plans although not required to since they are not demolishing the house. The concern of the Historical Commission is the outside appearance, and the addition will not be seen from the street. Jeanne expressed disappointment that new windows will not have the same appearance as the originals. The HC thanked Mr. Silveira for coming.

III. Sanford Mill Dam Discussion – Possible removal of the dam in the future

A group of citizens from Franklin and Medway, mostly residents of the Sanford Mill Condos in Medway, attended this meeting to alert the Historical Commission of their concern. The Sanford Mill Dam on the Charles River which connects Medway and Franklin, though not currently on a removal list, is under consideration for removal by the Charles River Water Association. Linda Donnelly, spokesperson for the group, stated they were made aware of this plan by Alan Earls in an article written for the Franklin Observer, a Digital format newspaper. Representatives of the Charles River Water Association (CRWA), a nonprofit organization, met virtually with Franklin officials to inform them of an inspection report stating that the dam is in poor condition and steps that could be taken to remedy the situation, including removal of the dam. CRWA seeks to remove all the dams from the Charles River except the one in

Boston near the Science Museum. Reasons include floods, saltwater incursion, migrating fish, returning rivers to their “natural condition,” huge cost of maintaining dams, unknown ownership, etc. This dam is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as it is in the Medway Village Historic District. It was the second mill site in the entire country and was built by Slater. The group gave us a packet of historical information regarding the dam and its place in Medway’s history. They want the dam saved and are worried it may be removed without citizens even being aware it is happening. The character of that section of Medway would change drastically if the dam were removed.

IV. Cultural Council reps attended a recent meeting of Select Board to promote decorating the traffic signal box at Choate Park by having a local artist paint his design on it. Select Board did not vote in favor of this idea, objections being that brightly-colored designs may distract drivers and cause accidents, and also that they don’t fit in with the historic district.

Cultural Council members did not attend our meeting as expected. Paul provided an update on our plan to use flexible wraps featuring historical Medway photos on several boxes, including this one. The pictures could be on just two sides, if approved, and each would be accompanied by a brief description of the photo. The price for these wraps has increased somewhat from last summer’s estimates but are within the HC budget and would not require CPA funding. Guests at this meeting like the idea of subtle historic photos and mentioned there are already many distractions along the street: large digital sign, business signs, etc. They also mentioned the large amount of funding over the last few years to rebuild the road, install beautiful street lighting and sidewalks, and they would like to see that “classy” look maintained and continued, contributing to the look of a historic small town. These citizens told us they support what we would like to do.

Cher asked if we could get a comparison quote for covering all 4 sides of the boxes versus just 2 or 3 sides as each signal box has doors, vents, etc. The next step of the project is to make a presentation before the Select Board. Paul will do this.

V. Demolition applications to consider: None as of this date.

VI. Treasurer’s Report (Gene Liscombe) No change. \$2,500 balance.

VII. Minutes to consider – December 22, 2021

On a motion made by Morgan, seconded by Gene, the Historical Commission Committee voted unanimously to approve the December 22, 2021 Meeting Minutes.

January 26, 2022

On a motion made by Gene, seconded by Morgan, the Historical Commission Committee voted unanimously to approve the January 26, 2022 Meeting Minutes.

VIII. CPC Report (Gene Liscombe)

CPC allocation for Medway: \$58,000. \$5,800 (10%) for historical

March 7 Annual Public Hearing— Gene L., Jeanne J., Paul R. attended (Zoom meeting)

Where do CPA-funded projects stand? Fire truck refurbishment project— may not be able to proceed.

Sign wanted at Oakland Cemetery explaining Civil War vets project we did a few years ago.

158 Main Street (Jacob Ide House) – one of the most historically significant homes in Medway.

Town is looking at overall utilization – overview of town buildings. See above discussion. Paul would like to get the house on the National Register of Historic Places as it is just outside the Rabbit Hill District. The house is deteriorating. For the Thayer House purchased years ago, the Town formed a committee. Gene stated they have to make a decision on what they want to do with this property. There are structural issues, especially with the foundation. Parks & Recreation is utilizing the property now, as is Animal Control Office. Barbara states they are looking for input.

They also discussed updates on the Master Plan.

V. Project Updates

A. Evergreen Cemetery

Working on signs for the cemetery explaining how it came to be, people who are buried there, history of the cemetery. Similar to the signs at playground at the corner of Park Street and School Street.

B. Local Historic Districts Table this item for now.

C. Demolition Delay By-Law Members were OK with the changes resulting from the Select Board meeting, which suggested a change they felt was too restrictive. Barbara Saint Andre omitted one sentence from the changes and that satisfied the Board.

Article 17, Section 4.1 (ii) Omit the last sentence

On a motion made by Paul Russell, seconded by Cher Hamilton, Historical Commission members voted to approve sending the final version of Article 17 to the by-law review committee for their input on its inclusion on the warrant of the May Annual Town Meeting.

VI. New Business

Questions arose during the month regarding the project to Digitize the Jameson History Book

Sheila provided an update to questions from CPC and the Select Board about the book's already being available at some websites online. Versions online frequently contain errors, and when copied or downloaded are often unreadable, which disclaimers do note on these websites. The Town of Medway would own the version that Almont Green proposes to do. Copies of the book could be printed and sold, portions used to produce postcards or other items for sale, but primarily would be a searchable source of historical Medway. Funding of \$10,000 for this project is included in the CPC warrant article for Town Meeting. If passed, Allison Potter, Assistant Town Manager, will be sure the project complies with town and state regulations regarding requests for proposals, etc.

Annual Report is due

Jeanne is working on this.

Historical Commission received two letters

A. 1st letter - Notification of Safe Streets project - improving sidewalks near schools, making it safer for children who walk to school. The proposed walks do go through a part of the historic district. Sidewalks will be on both sides of the street. We do not need to take action.

B. 2nd letter - Medway Grid wants to put battery energy storage facility near West Street. They filed with NEPA and sent out notices to various offices. Mass Historical Commission had some questions/comments and Medway was copied. We do not need to take action.

On a motion made by Cher; seconded by Gene, the Historical Commission voted unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:53 PM. Next meeting is scheduled for April 27, 2022, at 7:00 p.m at the Senior Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Mitchell, Recording Secretary