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WEYMOUTH HISTORICAL COMMISSION
November 19th, 2012 Meeting
Francis Kelly Room/Weymouth Town Hall
OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK
TOWN OF WEYMOUTH, MASS

PRESENT: Chairman Ed Walker, Jody Purdy-Quinlan, Cathy Torrey and Rodney Lundin

ABSENT: Don Mathewson, Mary Dorey

ALSO PRESENT: Jody Lehrer/Community Development Coordinator, Office of Planning and Community Development

Call to Order 7:00 p.m.

Chairman Walker called the November 19th, 2012 meeting of the Weymouth Historical Commission to order at 7:03 PM.

Reports - Town Liaison:

Fogg Library Update

Ms. Lehrer reported that the bids for the Fogg Library's replacement windows have been received and the quotes came in too high. At this point they are looking into other options.

The Chairman noted that \$2,500 was the usual cost per window and the bids received were for \$4,500.

Emery Estate Update

Ms. Lehrer informed members that there will be a meeting of the Emery Estate Advisory Committee in early December at which time they will layout the steps necessary to move forward.

Ms. Torrey told members that Mayor Kay has accepted the Committee's report.

Legion Field Wall Update

Ms. Lehrer told members that the work at Legion Field Wall is almost complete, with only a few punch list items remaining.

The Chairman asked if the plaque had been put back up and Ms. Lehrer responded 'yes'.

King Phillip Memorial

Ms. Lehrer reported that the DPW is cutting the grass and it is expected that there will also be some plantings.

Columbian Square Christmas Event

The Columbian Square Business District will holding a Christmas celebration with Christmas Caroling and more on December 8th at the Fog Library lawn from 4-7 PM.

Weymouth Tree Lighting

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan asked about the annual Christmas tree lighting and the date suggested was December 2nd (or December 1st).

Approval of October 15th, 2012 Minutes

Ms. Torrey moved to approve the minutes of October 15th, 2012 meeting.

Mr. Lundin seconded.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED

House Plaques

Ms. Lehrer informed members that she has received two new applications for historical house plaques - the first from Universalist Church located on Sea Street and the second from the Bicknell Condo Trust (the old Bicknell School) located in Bicknell Square, North Weymouth.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan moved to approve the applications for a historical plaque for the Universalist Church and the Bicknell School (Bicknell Condo Assn.).

(there was no second)

It was noted that the Universalist Church was built in 1865, well over 100 years old and it is the original building. The Reverend, Rev. Olympia Brown was the first ordained female minister in America, so this site did qualify for a plaque.

Re. Bicknell - Ms. Lehrer noted that the application did not include any backup information, nor was the building over 100 years old.

Members then discussed the criteria for approval - one of which was its historical significance.

Ms. Lehrer informed members that Francis Green was the builder and discussion of the architectural uniqueness was also discussed.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan said that it was the only original junior high school left in Town.

Ms. Torrey felt that they needed to check further before taking a vote on this application.

Mr. Lundin pointed out that the school was not 100 years old.

Ms. Torrey interjected that the criteria says that the house in whole or part must be 100 years old. Additionally the history or architecture is important if it is of a certain period/style.

It was noted that the school was built in 1926.

Mr. Lundin felt the application should explain why it qualifies as a historical designation.

Ms. Lehrer referred to the 2nd criteria, which stated in part "if it is a contributing property to a historical district", pointing out that this building is part of the Sea Street Historical District.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan withdrew her motion.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan moved to approve the application of the Universalist Church on Sea Street, being over 100 years old and of historical significance.

Motion seconded.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED

There was further discussion on the validity of the Bicknell application.

Mr. Lundin recommended the application be returned to the Condo Association and that the Commission request backup validating their request.

Ms. Lehrer again noted that it could be viewed as a 'contributing property' to the Sea Street Historical District designation. It was also noted that this is now private property. Ms. Lehrer commented that even if it was on the Demo Delay list it would not qualify.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan said that if the Commission approves it and sometime in the future they wanted to tear it down, the designation might save it.

Mr. Lundin referred to the architecture as 'classical revival' - adding if they changed the architecture, then they would have to take the plaque away, with Ms. Lehrer commenting "that's another issue".

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan moved to approve the Bicknell Junior High School request based on the fact that it is a 'contributing property' in accordance with the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

No Second

NO ACTION

Chairman Walker told members that the information on the Sea Street Historical District should be on file based on a past study that was done.

Ms. Lehrer offered to contact the Bicknell Condo Association explaining the criteria required to be approved for a historical plaque.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan told members that when they built it, they were digging a hole for a flag pole and they discovered a child and woman's head bashed in there.

Old Business

Status of Carroll Bill Painting at Trinity Episcopal Church

In regard to the disposition of the Bill Carroll painting, Ms. Torrey said that at this point they are still dismantling items from the church (Trinity Episcopal Church on Broad Street).

Chairman Walker asked how the Commission/Town could get hold of the painting.

Ms. Torrey said that if the painting can remain in Weymouth a person from the church diocese will leave it,

The Chairman wanted to point out that the Commission took a vote at their October meeting voicing their desire to keep it in the Town - presently this item is on hold.

Ms. Lehrer referred back to the plaque application from the Bicknell Condo Assn., stating that she would report back to the Commission on the status of their application after she speaks with them.

(File Note: At this point Cathy Torrey needed to leave the meeting due to a prior commitment, so there was no longer a quorum and votes could not be taken).

Fogg Library Basement

It was noted that the downstairs/basement of the Fogg Library has been gutted, with Ms. Lehrer adding that the plan is to construct meeting rooms there.

Chairman Walker told members that when he was there he noted the name of a Boston company on the original beams.

New Business

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan told members that John Deady/developer of the Clapp Memorial has asked her to help come up with historic signage for the inside and outside of the property.

Chairman Walker asked if he would go for a plaque and Ms. Purdy-Quinlan responded 'yes'.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan then asked about meeting with Mr. Deady as a representative of the Commission.

Ms. Lehrer interjected that the Commission would first need to vote their approval of the signage and Ms. Purdy-Quinlan agreed.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan added that she is also working with Debbie Sullivan of the Historical Society.

December Agenda

Scheduled for the December meeting will be "Selection of Delegate for Clapp Memorial Signage'.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan went on to say that she was attending a recent ZBA meeting when Beals Street in North Weymouth was on their agenda. The property owner was requesting to build a house on the lot, which is presently filled with purple slate from the pre-Cambrian age. She added that pre-historic animals were found in the slate within the Fore River Basin. She said at the meeting they addressed the slate and some proposed blasting, with neighbors voicing their opposition to the blasting. She explained that after the discussion the developer agreed to chip at the slate to remove it, emphasizing that she was opposed to removal of the ancient rock. (It was noted that Ray Bean was the excavator and John Rafferty the developer of the Beals Street property).

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan further stated that the Zoning Board requested that the developer work with her and the Historical Commission for the purpose of having someone investigate the rock before it is chipped away - or to come up with the best way to handle the situation or remove the slate.

Chairman Walker asked who would be paying for this and Ms. Purdy-Quinlan said she didn't see a cost.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan informed members that MIT/Harvard students are willing to come out and investigate the purple slate. She told members that there were trilobites (sp?) in the

slate, with one found in 1920 – she added that it's called Weymouthia Nobilis from the horseshoe crab family.

Chairman Walker asked if this investigative work would hold the developer's schedule and Ms. Purdy-Quinlan replied 'no'. She said that all that might happen is that pictures will be taken and possibly she will store the purple slate/shale material in her backyard.

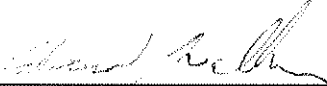
Ms. Lehrer asked if there was housing there now and Ms. Purdy-Quinlan replied 'no'.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan further explained that in September the neighbors appealed the ZBA's decision and they are now going to Land Court.


Lastly Ms. Purdy-Quinlan announced that she is producing a documentary on the Witauwamut's Head/American Truth, with a goal to sell it to the History Channel. She planned on demonstrating that there are anomalies in the wall and she will try to find the tomb. Right now is she doing some fundraising, adding that the Fore River Watershed Assn. is in support of her project.

Adjournment

The meeting ended at 7:55 PM with plans to meet again on Tuesday, December 11th, 2012.



Ed Walker, Chairman, WHC



Date
Respectfully submitted,
Susan DeChristoforo
Recording Secretary