

**Weymouth Historic Commission  
Kelley Room  
May 15, 2012  
Meeting Minutes**

Present: Chairman – Ed Walker, Mary Dorey, Don Mathewson, Cathy Torrey, Rodney Lundin and Jodi Purdy-Quinlan

Not Present: Ted Clarke

Also Present: Jody Lehrer/Community Development Coordinator, Office of Planning and Community Development

**Call to Order 7 p.m.**

Chairman Walker opened the May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012 meeting at 7 p.m.

**Reports – Town Liaison**

**Award Presentations**

Ms. Lehrer reported that plaques and certificates will be presented to about (12) historic homeowners on June 11<sup>th</sup> in the Mayor's office at 6:30 PM. The 2012 recipient of the Chester Kevitt Award, Bill Mathewson, will also be honored. Letters have been sent to all the recipients. Mr. Mathewson will be presented with a plaque (for his keeping) and a placard with an engraving plate, which will be added to those of prior recipients in the Canoe Room at the Tufts Library. The June meeting will follow at 7:30.

**Letters to New Historic District Residents**

Ms. Lehrer announced that she has composed (5) letters that will be mailed to:

- Owners of contributory properties in the Central Square and Sea Street Historic Districts.
- Owners of non-contributory properties in Central Square and Sea Street Historic Districts.
- Sea Street condominium complex owner.

All properties older than 100 years were identified by consultants. Applications will be reviewed by the Commission and owners will be notified of the hearing (attendance is not necessary).

(Ms. Purdy-Quinlan arrived at 7:08.)

**Approval of April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012 Minutes**

Ms. Dorey moved to accept the minutes of the April 23, 2012 meeting.

Ms. Torrey seconded.

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**Fogg Library** Chairman Walker attended the Fogg Library meeting regarding what they would like to do with the interior, so they can give a plan to the architect. He said that a lift is being discussed, but it might block the oak stairway. This building is on the National Register and Chairman Walker said he would like to see them get a waiver on getting a lift to the first floor, as the bottom floor is handicapped accessible. The first floor will be a library and the second floor will be for keeping historical records and,

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maybe, an area for doing research. Also being considered is making the side room study into a children's room.

Ms. Dorey asked if, in lieu of a lift, they couldn't (like at Abigail) have a virtual tour of the upper floors which would make those floors more accessible (by some sort of communication) to handicapped people.

Chairman Walker mentioned that, previously, a dumb waiter had been considered.

Ms. Lehrer said they want to put the lift on the main floor in the office behind the stairwell, adding that it has to be accessible, as it's on the National Register. She added that she and the HUD representative visited a lot of different sites, as they provide the CDBG monies and have to qualify any projects. At the Fogg Library, the rep felt that:

- The location where the lift is being considered would be eligible.
- The bathroom is not fully compliant, but it is also, theoretically, eligible.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan stated that there is a competition for funding.

Ms. Lehrer said it's a slow process and nothing will happen overnight.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan asked that the WHC be kept 'in the loop' (even if they are not meeting) and members asked if the views of the Commission should be made known.

Ms. Lehrer countered that she was sure their views were known and that everyone felt the same (that the structure should be kept the same and the integrity of the building be maintained).

Chairman Walker stated that the Commission wants to see the plans before anything is begun.

Ms. Lehrer said she would let the members know when the meetings are.

Chairman Walker asked for an alternate, when he is out of town; Mr. Lundin said he would, provided he isn't in Maine.

Ms. Dorey asked for an e-mail notification of all scheduled meetings; Ms. Lehrer said that public meetings are posted on the Weymouth website.

**New CPA Proposal** - Ms. Purdy-Quinlan said that, in regards to the new CPA proposal (for funds to be used to update and upgrade fields, parks and current open spaces) she asked members to do some research in order for the Board to state how it feels about the funds being used for that. She stated that the people who created the CPA purposely eliminated repair of existing fields because they feared too much money going to that instead of to purchasing open spaces, purchasing housing, and purchasing and restoring historic sites. She suggested that the Board think about how they feel the money should be used.

Ms. Torrey told the members that the CPA creator, Robert O'Leary, spoke at the Abigail Adams Annual Meeting. He said, in actuality, CPA was never meant for historical purchases; it was set up to preserve land, which is why new recreation fields can be purchased but existing fields can't be re-habbed. An

expansion to the CPA Law (which has passed in the House and is now in the Senate) would allow for field rehabilitation.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan asked why this is not being used for Legion Field; Ms. Torrey explained that it is, but someone has to apply for a grant.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan commented that, in a public forum, it was brought up that the WHC dropped the ball when they allowed Legion Field to become what it looks like now.

Ms. Torrey said it was turned over to the schools to be used for athletic purposes.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan added that people feel it was allowed to be destroyed.

Ms. Torrey she had not heard that at all.

Chairman Walker asked how the funds would be divided (under the new proposal).

Ms. Torrey said it would still be divided (3) ways, but the definition would be expanded.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan stated that she was not at the meeting when Keith Spain told the WHC that he wanted to keep the football field and CPA money could have gone towards it (if the Commission declared it as 'Historic').

Ms. Torrey stated that the stadium had to come down because it had asbestos, adding that "only (1) person said that".

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan countered that "several people" are talking about it, and she feels she's being "thrown under the bus". She said people are now asking if CPA money can be used for Legion Field, if this change to the law goes through.

Ms. Torrey said it would depend upon someone applying for, and receiving, a grant; Ms. Lehrer reminded the Board that there is competition for grants.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan expressed that Weymouth North people are disgruntled.

Chairman Walker asked if it will then belong to the Parks Department.

Ms. Torrey responded that all school fields belong to the Parks Dept. - schools pay for the upkeep, but they are under the jurisdiction of the Parks Dept.

Ms. Dorey pointed out that it isn't a park, it's a field.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan concluded by saying that it's a hot topic and asked if it couldn't be designated a historic sight.

Ms. Torrey suggested they get in touch with the Legion Field Committee.

**King Phillip War Memorial** - Chairman Walker said that in the geographic center of town (by Walmart), where the King Phillip's War plaque is, is the site of the first Town Hall. Only a small section is developed, but that is where the monument is. He asked if the Board could come up with suggestions to commemorate the site of the last Indian battle in Weymouth.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan said she is not sure if it is historical, but it is designated as an open space. She said Dick Patterson is very concerned because the Town got mitigation from DOT to make upgrades and make that piece of land look nicer.

Ms. Dorey asked who takes care of it; Chairman Walker said it isn't being taken care of.

Chairman Walker said it is a good piece of land and suggested that they wouldn't want to see it sold.

Ms. Dorey said it's probably restricted.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan said that Dick Patterson thought the mitigation would have prevented it from becoming what it has turned into. She also recalled for the members that they were trying to preserve the house in front of Shaws and expressed that it was sad that the 660 Middle St. house couldn't be preserved (mentioning the bee hive oven) saying that it was built before the King Phillip's War and was rebuilt around 1690.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan said she understands there's a light at the Wessagusset Memorial Garden.

#### **Election of New Officers**

Chairman Walker said that officers will need to be elected at the June 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan said the (3) officers to be voted upon are:

- Chair
- Vice-Chair
- Curator

#### **UPDATES**

**Abigail Adams House Update** - Ms. Torrey informed members that a waiver is being sought for the doors, as they are not wide enough to accommodate wheel chairs. She said they are waiting to hear from the ADA, explaining that once a certain percentage of restoration funds are spent, you are required to meet certain ADA standards.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan said if you don't do something, "it won't trigger it". She used as an example Legion Field, saying it will always be a wetland and when it became Legion Field it triggered the DEP to come which forced a wetland to be brought back in.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan mentioned to Ms. Torrey that Jim Bennett has been working on the roof and the custom-milled boards were put in the basement, in no special way.

Ms. Torrey said they have gotten a new grant for the siding to be re-done.

**Emery Estate Update** - Ms. Torrey informed the members that they are meeting to formulate the recommendations to present to the Mayor and Town Council, taking into account public comments. Some suggestions for the property are:

- To hold events.
- To create walking paths.
- To create a community farm: it would have a caretaker and people could buy a share (of about an acre) to create a CSA. People would be required to do a certain number of hours and, of what was grown, get to keep a portion and some would be sold and/or donated.
- To honor Dr. Emery's work with Billy Graham.

Ms. Torrey said there have been several suggestions, but there is no handicapped access and it needs a lot of work. She said there have been a couple of things *not* discussed:

- The property will have to become self-sufficient.
- The purchase of the Emery Estate was not for the house, but was for the land. Walter Flynn, CPA chair, asked if the house should be razed. She said as the public thinks it was bought specifically for the house, this would not go over well.

Ms. Torrey stated there is local support from the neighborhood, because they realize that if the Town didn't buy the estate they'd be looking at a 1000 condos.

Ms. Dorey said that liability insurance and safety issues have to be considered, before inviting the public.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan commented that the public is annoyed at the 1.9 million spent to buy the Emery Estate, while nothing is spent on Legion Field; she then asked if it is historical.

Ms. Torrey said it is not now, but it is being considered as it is older than (50) years. She said it will depend upon what the recommendations are made for the property, and it's pretty definite that a 501(c)3 would need to be formed in order to raise funds.

Chairman Walker suggested getting it on the Massachusetts and National Registry.

Ms. Torrey agreed and said that would be a function of the new non-profit group. The WHC's function is to make recommendations on how the property can be used and to cite ways of funding; from that the Mayor makes further decisions.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan offered that if it is on the Historic Registers, it opens it up to grants.

Ms. Torrey stated that grants are becoming harder to come by because (those making the grant decision) want to see a program associated with the property, and that there is a matching grant or matching funds.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan said that the Wessagusset site applied for grants worth \$485,000, and didn't get them.

Ms. Torrey finished by saying that Ken, of the Cecil Group (who is helping with strategic planning) said that Lantana, in Randolph, is very interested in running events at the estate. She added that it's the view of Boston that is selling the location, and they hope to have a final report by July 1, 2012.

**Next Meeting**


The next meeting will take place on Monday, June 11, 2012.

**Adjournment**

Ms. Torrey moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 PM.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan seconded.

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Ed Walker, Chairman, WHC

6/11/2012  
Date

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Fitzgerald  
Recording Secretary