

PRESENT: Ted Clarke/Chairman, Mary Dorey, Ed Walker, Joan Rotundo and Phil Smith.

ALSO PRESENT: Jody Lehrer, Community Development Coordinator
Christina Pungerchar and Brian Carlic (58 Church Street); Donna and Bruce Valicenti (104 Lake Street); and Beth and Tom Jacobs (237 Pine Street)

Chairman

Chairman Ted Clarke called the April 13th 2010 meeting of the Weymouth Historical Commission to order at 7:00 PM and took a moment to welcome the historical house plaque recipients also in attendance.

Presentation of House Plaques

Chairman Clarke asked each homeowner to say to give a little background on their homes before their plaque is presented; i. e., to give a brief synopsis of their home and any interesting historical data they have learned about their home for inclusion in the minutes.

Christina Pungerchar/Brian Carlic (58 Church Street- built c. 1838; "The Blanchard House")

The first speakers were Christina Pungerchar and Brian Carlic of 58 Chauncy Street who were receiving a plaque on behalf of their home which was called 'The Blanchard House'.

Members were told they purchased the house 2 years ago and because they were interested in the date it was built they researched it at the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds. In doing so they discovered that there were over 5 owners of this house - with its first use being a church. They noted that there was another 'Blanchard' house built across the street. Brian explained that their home had belonged to James Blanchard, a laborer. He stated that the other Blanchard house claimed to be older, but he quickly noted that house was 'vinyl-sided'. He told members that during his research he found a book in the barn which contained photographs of the Blanchard's. He went on to say that he realized the house was old because of the construction; i. e., plumbing, knob & tube, old cormax and cloth wire.

At this point Ms. Lehrer presented the plaque with the name "The Blanchard House" to Christina Pungercar and Brian Carlic.

The Valicenti family (104 Lake Street - built c. 1844; does not have an historical name)

Bruce and Donna Valicenti came before the members and gave some background on their home. They said that the house lot originally consisted of 16 acres back in the 1800's and was located across from the Hingham Humphrey School which has been there since 1867.

Mr. Carlic went on to say that in 1894 water was brought onto the lot. The property was originally known as the "Shaw House", then the "Lindquist House", then Tirrell Lindquist assumed ownership - they are the 4th owner. It was pointed out that they were the first four houses in Weymouth with water.

Members were further told that old tax records were discovered in the Town Hall attic made out to the Tirrell's.

Mr. Walker asked about the first name, but he didn't know it - although he knew that Wilbur Tirrell (which Tirrell Street was named after) was the grandfather. It was noted that there were a lot of shoemakers in the family.

Mrs. Valicenti said that the town atlas shows an addition built in 1860.

Mr. Valicenti said that their granddaughter found a tree in the crawl space of the house.

Mrs. Valicenti mentioned that the entrance is now covered with soil/mulch.

Beth & Tom Jacobs family (237 Pine Street -built c. 1718; does not have an historical name)

Beth and Tom Jacobs came before the Board. Members were told that the house dated back to 1718, with Mr. Jacobs adding that Beth's aunt and uncle's family (previous owners) go back to 1690.

Mr. Valicenti asked if it was the Golden house and Mr. Jacobs replied 'yes' - with Mr. Valicenti noting his was the Cape.

In describing the house Mr. Jacobs told members that there was a closet as you enter - where the front door was originally located. He said they researched the property in Dedham/Registry of Deeds and found that it dated back to the 1800's. At that point they went to Suffolk County for further research. He told members that the house has been in the family for 100 years, adding that originally it was a summer cottage. He said most associate it with Warren Bates 1830. He told about doing renovation work and finding a child's leather shoe in the wall, which he heard was to ward off evil spirits.

Mr. Jacobs went on to inform those present that back in 1759 the family had (11) children and learned that (5) children died in the summer of 1759 - he felt they were most likely five of the eleven. He then described the house/kitchen as having exposed beams/fireplace with another added in the 18th century. He felt it notable to point out that with all the recent flooding this old house did not experience any water problems.

Chairman Clarke asked about the fireplace and he said there was one in the kitchen that was a pretty good size, dome shaped with no flue, adding that there was a bee hive section in a steel door with new flue. He told members that he had an experienced person look at it and he could not figure it out.

Mr. Valicenti commented that there was another one owned in the 1700's by Paul King who said it was used for baking - and he believed that is where the expression 'let them eat cake' originated (for the poor people).

Mr. Walker noted that the plans say that the work was started in 1912 - and he told the Jacobs he could give them some additional information on their home site.

Mr. Jacobs informed members that the cul-de-sac was part of Longmeadow Drive, adding it was sold in 1973.

Mr. Walker interjected that Vining was involved and added that Bates was buried there.

The Chairman thanked all for being present and for the information they passed on to the Commission.

Mr. Walker asked if there was any new news about the cousin and was told that the cousin was now living in an assisted living facility in Norwood.

It was also noted that Mr. Jacobs was the principal of a school in Easton and a member of the Weymouth Historical Society. Further the original name of the restaurant was the Brown Swan - with the explanation that is where the name 'dirty duck' came from.

Chairman - Kevitt Award

Chairman Clarke announced that the MLK Award would be presented on Tuesday June 15th at Tufts Library in the Canoe Room.

Ms. Lehrer informed members that the plaque will read "M. Joseph Merton" and will also include a small placard.

It was noted that Mr. Merton was the first principal of the Wessagusset School.

Chairman Clarke said he was at the school's Open House which he thought took place in the late 60's. He said that he found information on the School's website, but it did not include any history or a date. He found the info under "School Buildings in Weymouth" (Google) with the date 1973.

Approval of the Minutes - March 9, 2010

At this point Ms. Rotundo asked about the Fogg Library Committee's next meeting date/time and was told that the meetings take place at the local bank in Columbian Square.

Ms. Rotundo moved to approve the minutes of March 9, 2010.

Ms. Dorey seconded.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED

Reports

Chairman Clarke told members that Jim Clarke would request the Patriot Ledger to attend the Chester Kevitt Award presentation for a press release.

Ms. Dorey asked if Weymouth News would also be invited and the Chairman responded 'yes'.

CPC Update

Chairman Clarke wanted members to know that Mr. Matheson wasn't present this evening due to his wife Sally's illness.

Further Mr. Matheson attended the CDC meeting and learned that the work for the Legion Field Wall has gone out to bid.

Town Liaison

Ms. Lehrer stated that she had nothing new to add this month - and that Jim Clarke was out of the office attending a business meeting. She did want members to know that both new Historical Districts are scheduled for approval of September 10th - but prior to that date they would need to hold a public hearing. She further reminded members that (1) Timothy Orwig and (2) PAL are the consultants for Weymouth Landing/Front Street. They are now waiting for comments which need to be submitted within the next month or so to the Mass. Historical Commission - then the process should be finalized. At that point the Town will have (4) historical districts.

Chairman Clarke referred to the Mass. Historical Commission, stating he was at the dinner the other night and the person who purchased the John Adams School, which is now a Day Care Center, wanted to know about the school's historical background. It was noted that Joe Merten was the past principal.

Mr. Walker said he believed the John Adams School was actually Weymouth's first high school, (after the Town Hall on Middle Street) built in the 1850's.

Ms. Lehrer noted that presently Mrs. Gildea runs it.

Chairman Clarke said that the Mass. Historical Commission should have any additional info.

Mr. Walker said at one time they were looking at it for the Town's museum and Chester Kevitt was involved - he thought it was part of the Adams School.

Museum cases

Mr. Smith said he has not had much success in finding any museum cases but will continue to look.

Mr. Walker suggested they look at those in the museum (re. locked cases).

Architectural Preservation District

Chairman Clarke noted that Mayor Kay is out on sick leave at this time. He said they could scan the bylaw they have into the computer and use it as a basis for Weymouth. He asked members to give it some more thought.

Mr. Walker wanted to point out that some buildings are not in a Historic District. He suggested they start with a rough list and possibly down the road add others - and to go with a basic bylaw then include the building(s) separately.

Mr. Smith asked if they could include all buildings in one and Mr. Walker responded 'yes', adding they could also add more as time goes by.

Chairman Clarke said they might want to include specific details in order for them to qualify.

Mr. Smith explained to those present that the Commission wants to protect specific buildings in Town - and then if anyone wanted to make changes as they move forward it would be permissible.

The Chairman stated that the only alternative would be a 'Local Historic District', which restricts change/ modifications to the house/structure.

Mr. Smith noted that the Fogg Library is already on the National Historic District, with Mr. Walker adding the Jefferson School and YMCA building are included as well.

Mr. Walker pointed out that any proposed changes would have to come back before this Commission, as well as the Mayor and Town Council. He also wanted to note the other historic buildings in the National Register include the John Adams School and the Washington School.

Further it was noted that in order to add any other buildings public hearings would be required.

Ms. Dorey referred to one of the homes in Town that look like Mt. Vernon.

A member of the audience told members that William Howard Taft stayed in that house and spoke at the Clapp Memorial.

Mr. Walker suggested that they could also consider something at the Air Base, adding he would like to create a list right away, but for now they need to wait on Mayor Kay.

Mr. Smith felt the members should work on coming up with a list and it was agreed by the Commission that Mr. Walker and Mr. Smith would be responsible for the list.

Chairman Clarke said he would review the bylaw.

Ms. Dorey then asked if there were bunkers at Great Hill and Mr. Walker said there were, adding they were located there to protect the shipyard and Edison - against Germany in WWII.

Mr. Walker further stated that they would include those in the National Register as well as Clapp Memorial.

Chairman Clarke asked about the Mt. Vernon home and Mr. Walker agreed that should also be included.

Then Ms. Dorey asked about the Clapp Memorial and Mr. Walker told her that was already listed in the National Historic Register, with the Chairman interjecting 'but it has no protection, so it should go on the list'.

Mr. Walker agreed and added that the list should also include the Jefferson School and the Washington School.

At this point Mr. Smith felt the list would include minimum of (10) buildings to start with and Mr. Walker agreed.

Chairman Clarke asked about including the Stetson building and members agreed, with Mr. Walker added the list should also include the shoe factory on Wharf Street.

Ms. Dorey suggested the Gatekeeper Building at the bottom of the Fore River Bridge and the person in the audience interjected 'you could probably forget about that based on what they said at the meeting he attended last night'.

New Business

No new business this evening.

Other Business

Canoe Update

Mr. Smith told members he would be getting to updating them on the canoe shortly.

Ms. Rotundo commented that she heard about a crack on the canoe and recommended that it be checked.

Mr. Smith referred to the humidity issue, commenting that they didn't have any options in regard to the temperature - then asked 'what is optimum temperature range?'

Mr. Walker said he spoke to a professional preservationist with reference to humidity and he said it was running way to dry - the ideal (humidity) temperature would be 55° to 58°.

Mr. Smith said they could look at something that is not heat/humidity sensitive, possibly encase it in glass.

Ms. Dorey asked if anyone at the Ma. Historical Society has that expertise and Mr. Walker replied 'not really'.

In referring to the humidity question, Chairman Clarke said that some buildings in Back Bay are up on pillars, adding they discovered the items should be kept damp.

Mr. Walker told members that they moved the temperature up to 58° a couple of years ago, noting that in the past the humidifier had remained broken for many years.

Chairman Clarke commented that preservation is not an easy accomplishment.

Adjournment

Mr. Walker moved to adjourn at 7:55 PM.

Mr. Smith seconded.

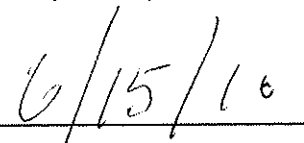
UNANIMOUSLY VOTED

Next meeting 5/11/10

The next monthly meeting will take place on Tuesday, May 11, 2010.



Ted Clarke, Chair



Date

Respectfully submitted,

Susan DeChristoforo
Recording Secretary