

WEYMOUTH HISTORICAL COMMISSION

JANUARY 9TH, 2007 MEETING

PRESENT: Ted Clarke/Chairman, Tom Curtis, Mary Dorey, Steve Puleo, Richard Pattison, and Jodi Purdy-Quinlan

ALSO PRESENT: James Clarke, Director of Planning and Community Development
Jody Lehrer/Community Develop Coordinator, Dept. of Planning & Community Development

Chairman Clarke called the January 9th, 2007 meeting of the Weymouth Historical Commission to order at 7:05 PM.

Approval of December 12, 2006 Minutes

Mr. Patterson moved to approve the minutes of the December 12th, 2006 meeting as amended.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED

Approval of Previous Minutes - June 13, 2006

Mr. Curtis moved to approve the minutes of the June 13th, 2006 minutes as written.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED (4-0 with 1 abstention, Mr. Pattison)

Letter of Intent - Survey & Planning Grant

Ms. Lehrer informed members that today the Massachusetts Historical Commission should be sending out invitations for full proposals, adding "we're hoping to hear".

Associate Member provision

Mr. J. Clarke reported that Mayor Madden has agreed to submit changes to the Ordinance regarding the Associate Membership on the Commission. He noted that the Mayor has given the information to the Town Solicitor's office to review and convert to the appropriate language. Once this is accomplished, it will be returned to Mayor Madden and at that point will be forwarded to Town Council for their consideration and approval. He told members that this process could take a couple of months.

Sea Street

Mr. J. Clarke reported that the paperwork is almost ready to be forwarded to the Mass. Historical Commission. He said that he received an email from Wendy in regard to the size of the acreage, and requested a copy of the latest map - then it will be 'ready to go'. He expected this would all be all set within the next week or two.

Mr. Pattison stated that he spoke with Ken Ryder, who was upset with the manner in which the house is being rehabbed at 32 Sea Street. It was noted that this is the house next to the one Mr. Ryder bought. Mr. Pattison told Mr. Ryder there was nothing the Historical Commission could do about it.

Mr. Pattison went on to say that he would like to work on the Demolition Bylaw, which would require the Commission to be notified when demolitions are going to take place. Presently the Commission has the ability to advise the owner if their plans call for destroying a historic landmark or character of house/building.

Mr. J. Clarke cited Sea Street as being a perfect example, when the proper zoning is in place. He commented that Ken Ryder has done a pretty good job restoring the house and creating the building behind it. He went on to say that Mr. Rafferty, who is doing the other two houses, put as much as he could onto the lot. He told members that the new zoning regulations will be put forward the next 30-60 days. He noted that stronger requirements for a 'Village Area' are now included in the site plan review.

Mr. T. Clarke asked if this requirement could be extended to include an Historic District and Mr. J. Clarke replied that the Village Area presently includes the Historic District.

660 Middle Street

Next, Mr. J. Clarke reported to the members that Mayor Madden decided not to proceed with the project at 660 Middle Street, because he didn't like the relocation site. He further stated that he has not notified the property owners or the realtor of the Mayor's decision as yet. He pointed out that there were other options or things that could be done, adding he was still interested in a developer's proposal and having a survey done of the property/building.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan said she would like to have an archeological study done, adding probably some interested residents could be there.

Mr. Pattison commented that if the site is to be demolished, he knew of a company in Portland, Maine who might buy it for the historic value of the materials, which they would take back and resell.

Mr. J. Clarke told Mr. Pattison that he would be happy to coordinate that with him. He also informed members that he has the name of a person in Scituate who does barn/house preservation work.

Mr. Pattison stated that he was on the Mass. Historical internet site and noticed that some person was looking to buy/move an historical barn.

Ms. Dorey asked for the name of the person who did the railroad station and it was noted that it was John Iredale.

Mr. J. Clarke said he could speak with him.

Mr. Pattison noted that the South Shore Bank in Assinippi took an old house and made a bank out of it.

Ms. Lehrer commented that she spoke with the Monte Granite Company about replacing/redoing the plaque. The price for the plaque at Wessagusset Gardens. The price for the plaque and boulder was \$1,895 and the price for the (damaged) bench was \$800. The work will take about a month.

Community Preservation Committee (CPC)

Mr. J. Clarke informed members that the Cemetery Committee submitted a proposal to the CPC and at this point they will be making a presentation to the committee this Thursday (1/11/07). They will be addressing the Elmwood and Reed Cemetery.

Mr. T. Clarke asked if their request would overlap with this Commission.

Mr. Curtis stated that the CPC gives preference to those proposals that fall under Open Space and Historic Preservation. He went on to say that he walked some of the cemeteries this past weekend and discovered some interesting headstones - and names that included Chandler, Whitman, Holbrook, Reed, Tirrell, Copeland and Truffant - with some dating back to the early 1700's and 1800's. He commented that the Elmwood Cemetery was the best maintained.

Mr. T. Clarke asked about the 'historic budget' - and what would happen if some of this money went toward cemeteries. He also asked if the 'repair' of a gravestone would qualify.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan asked how much they were seeking.

Mr. Curtis said they would be considering the Needs Assessment re. grave markers, etc. and re-creation of walls and fences based on their historic nature. The number was \$50,000.

It was pointed out that Weymouth is Massachusetts's second oldest town.

It was felt that \$50,000 was a lot of money for a study - and that it could be done for much less.

Mr. Curtis said the proposal came from Liz Chicchese, Vice Chairman of the Cemetery Committee, adding there was no time line. He noted that the application was submitted on a form that was similar to what was requested by the CPC.

Mr. Pattison pointed out they were Town-owned cemeteries.

Mr. Curtis commented that he suspected many of the proposals would be for town-owned property; such as, Legion Field. He said that the Weymouth Preservation Committee needs to decide what will be done.

Mr. Pattison asked if they would be deciding the value too and Mr. Curtis replied 'yes'.

Mr. Curtis said they would be looking into a Needs Assessment/Study, restating this matter would be before the CPC this Thursday.

Mr. T. Clarke asked if that would be the highest and best use and Mr. Curtis responded 'yes', adding that is their only application to date.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan stated that she was under the impression the CPC was still working on the criteria for proposals and has in her possession many copies of the drafts they have worked on.

Mr. Curtis urged Ms. Purdy-Quinlan to get her proposal together as soon as possible.

Mr. J. Clarke thought that Rita Lounge had mailed Ms. Purdy-Quinlan the most recent application form.

Mr. Curtis informed Ms. Purdy-Quinlan and the members that 'content' and 'back up' were most important as well as the 'amount of funding' that would be needed over the next five years, if applicable. Also to be included with the proposal are the reasons for the request along with verification of the reason. He noted that included with the Cemetery Committee's application was a list of many of the many of well-known and prominent Weymouth ancestors that are buried in the cemeteries.

Mr. Curtis said if Ms. Purdy-Quinlan could include letter(s) from the family to support her efforts it would be helpful, adding that there is nothing the WHC needs to do at this time.

Mr. T. Clarke recalled that at their last meeting the members spoke about discussing any historic applications that come before the CPC.

Mr. Curtis told members that he would continue to give them updates - and would keep them advised on any action taken in regard to the Cemetery Committee's application at CPC's Thursday night meeting.

Mr. Puleo asked what was involved once the item is on their agenda.

Mr. Curtis said they will discuss the application, then the CPC Chairman Walter Flynn will take a vote to see if the Cemetery Committee should be contacted regarding their judgment.

Mr. J. Clarke said that members of the Weymouth Cemetery Committee will be there when their application is presented and discussed.

Mr. Puleo asked if the vote could be finalized at Thursday night's meeting, with Mr. J. Clarke responding he would be shocked if this were the case as this is the first application that has come before the CPC.

The procedure was then recapped for the members:

- a formal presentation by the applicant
- at that point it could be sent to a subcommittee

or the full committee could just ask for additional information for future consideration

Mr. J. Clarke noted they are entering into the next fiscal year and this calls for a new public hearing to be scheduled/posted to review the upcoming year's funding.

Mr. Puleo asked if the next step (after the committee decides and approves a proposal) called for the proposal to be forwarded to Mayor Madden and then to the Town Counsel and Mr. J. Clarke told him that Mayor Madden has to agree to pass it on to the Town Council.

Mr. Pattison recommended the members discuss the Cemetery Committee's proposal at their next meeting and Mr. Curtis agreed.

At this point members agreed to schedule the next meeting for Tuesday, February 6th, 2007.

43 Bicknell Road Update

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan noted that the CPC's form lists ten (10) items that should be addressed which included:

- the goal
- community need
- is it covered in the Town's plan

Mr. J. Clarke clarified that the Town's plan referred to the Town's Master Plan.

Other items on the list include:

- community support

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan commented that she has neighborhood support as well as a petition. She then asked if they should seek the support of the Historical Society.

Mr. Curtis felt the gesture should be made, adding that having their approval would be helpful.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan continued with the items on the list.

- time lines
- permits
- success factors (how are they measured)

Mr. J. Clarke commented it would be the preservation of house and an addition to Wessagusset Garden.

Mr. Curtis referred to attendance/fees, adding it should be addressed by year and fee - asking if it would be self-sustaining.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan noted that she would need to 'identify all expenditure items', adding she would need the value of the project. She felt an independent appraisal would have to be done. She then threw out the figure of \$600,000 as the value of the property, but quickly added it could be less. She asked if she could estimate the value.

Mr. J. Clarke commented that this was a semi-uncharted area. He thought the property had been on the market, so he felt she could find out the asking price.

Mr. Curtis felt that since this project was fairly grandiose in scale, by having the application accompanied by substantive data would be most important. He recommended Ms. Purdy-Quinlan submit 'more' information than 'less', letting the CPC sift through would be applicable.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan next referred to the CPC's budget. She said she spoke with the homeowner of 43 Bicknell and they discussed different ideas and ways to approach it. She noted that she didn't necessarily need the full amount

the first year. She went on to say that she also spoke with the mortgage company, who told her at this point they really didn't want to foreclose on the property. She said they are aware of the potential proposal before the CPC and they are supportive.

Mr. J. Clarke recommended they 'keep it simple', pointing out the CPC needs to follow the law with regard to acquiring property. He noted that negotiating is part of the process. He further pointed out that the acquisition of property is part of the Open Meeting Law, although if appropriate they could go into Executive Session. He said they could offer that the owner is open to different ways to make it work.

Mr. Curtis told Ms. Purdy-Quinlan that from the CPC point of view, he felt she was going about it all wrong - adding that bailing out someone who wants to sell their property is not the CPC's job. He said her objective should be to sell the CPC on the reason why the property would benefit the Town.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan said she was just trying to make the purchase more financially amenable.

Mr. Pattison and Mr. Curtis discussed the value of the property to the Weymouth citizenry.

Mr. T. Clarke asked if this committee had actually voted on the matter, adding that his recollection was they 'supported' it and it was not part of a formal vote.

Mr. Curtis said he wasn't under the impression 43 Bicknell Road was a WHC project.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan responded that if she didn't have the support of the WHC she wouldn't waste her time.

Ms. Lehrer said it was also her recollection this Commission was 'supporting' her efforts, with Ms. Purdy-Quinlan asking 'so this is not a Commission project?'

Mr. Curtis noted that the historic value of the property is actually in the 'basement'.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan replied that she saw it as being the whole property, commenting that the basement holds the tomb of the first settlers. She went on to say that she was waiting for the CPC to put their papers together before she prepared the final paperwork.

Ms. Dorey suggested that take a vote now.

Mr. Puleo asked if they could get a one-page summary on the property first, adding he too remembered that the members were supportive of Ms. Purdy-Quinlan's efforts.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan commented that, as Vice Chairman, she would be foolish to go before the CPC without the Commission's support.

The Chairman said at this time they don't have:

- a budget for the property
- the reason for it
- what it is intended to do

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan stated that she felt the whole Town should know about this site. She said she would put it together and have it all done. She noted that she read the December 12, 2006 minutes which stated the members discussed what was going on with the CPC. She then asked if the CPC's general guidelines were done and Mr. Curtis replied that they were.

Mr. J. Clarke said that the latest version re. the Needs Assessment was completed in December - and the Form was finalized in October.

Mr. Curtis told Ms. Purdy-Quinlan not to worry about the form as it can also serve as a guide.

Mr. Pattison felt it important to have a good narrative and an estimate of the cost (\$600,000).

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan asked if the money could be spread out over a period of three (3) years. She felt it would be more acceptable that way. She noted that with the Ryder property they had to negotiate the price - with Mr. Pattison interjecting 'that was done some time ago with the Board of Selectmen'.

To Recap: Ms. Purdy-Quinlan agreed to submit a one-page synopsis for the Commission.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan then asked if at that point the members would vote on the proposal and the response was 'yes'.

Mr. T. Clark felt that Ms. Purdy-Quinlan proposed one thing to the Commission but then brought something a little different to the CPC. He told her the members would also need to know why the site is valuable to the Town.

Mr. Pattison agreed adding he would like Ms. Purdy-Quinlan to refresh the members' memories about the site.

House signs

Ms. Dorey said she has no new news since the last meeting. At this point she is waiting to hear who is interested and about the best size for the sign. She told members that she has seen some similar, attractive signs when she drives through Hingham that are a pretty good size.

Mr. Pattison asked if they were on High Street and Ms. Dorey replied 'yes', adding there are 3 or 4 homes on the left hand side and she found them very readable.

Ms. Lehrer commented that she saw some on Main Street in Hingham, adding she thought Ms. Dorey's sample was very sharp.

Ms. Dorey thought they could offer two choices.

Ms. Lehrer told members that she is waiting for a sample package that is being sent to her by Phil Bergen of MHC.

Ms. Dorey reminded members that Voch Tech offered to do the work, they just needed the supplies.

Mr. J. Clarke said if the samples come in on time, he would bring them to the next meeting.

New Business

Mr. Pattison asked that the next agenda also include "Nominations for the Chester Kevitt Award" - emphasizing that he felt this award should be given out annually.

Adjournment

Mr. Pattison moved to adjourn at 8:10 PM.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED

Respectfully submitted,
Susan DeChristoforo
Recording Secretary

Ted Clarke, Chairman