

**WEYMOUTH HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
**May 8th, 2007 MEETING**  
**Weymouth Town Hall - Kelly Room**

**PRESENT:** Ted Clarke/Chairman, Jody Purdy-Quinlan, Mary Dorey and Richard Pattison

**ABSENT:** Tom Curtis and Steve Puleo

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

*(File Note: The Commission presented the Chester Kevitt Award to Barbara and Bill Johnson in the Mayor's Chambers at 6:30 PM earlier this evening - at that time Chairman Clarke made the presentation outlining the contribution the Johnson's have made to the Town of Weymouth - this presentation can be found as an addendum to these minutes.)*

Chairman Ted Clarke called the May 8th, 2007 meeting of the Weymouth Historical Commission to order at 7:00 PM.

**II. Minutes**

Mr. Pattison moved to table the April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007 and the February 6th, 2007 minutes to the next meeting.  
UNANIMOUSLY VOTED

Mr. Pattison moved to include the speech drafted by the Chairman honoring Barbara and Bill Johnson as the recipients of the Chester Kevitt Award become as part of the May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2007 minutes.  
UNANIMOUSLY VOTED

**III. Reports:**

**A. Town Liaison**

**1. Weymouth Landing Historic District -**

Ms. Lehrer stated that she and the Chairman met with Betsy Friedberg, National Register Director/Massachusetts Historical Commission in regard to the Abigail Adams House. They were seeking her input in obtaining a successful nomination.

Next, Ms. Lehrer referred to the interpretive panels being created for the Weymouth "T" stations, adding she hoped to have the material in the near future for the members to look at.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan wanted to know why the WHC application was not approved.

Ms. Lehrer felt there were a variety of reasons, including that the funding seemed circular in nature, adding that Betsy thought the amount of funding available to kick in for the match was insufficient to do the work. She said even though the members felt using the money would be viewed as an incentive, in the end it worked against them.

During their meeting, Chairman T. Clarke questioned Ms. Friedberg as to why the fact that the Weymouth Historical Commission had access to some funding to supplement any grant funds was deemed a negative, and Ms. Friedberg replied that the proposal form would probably need to be revised and that it was a new form.

Chairman T. Clarke went on to say that Ms. Friedberg thought the best way to proceed with nominations would be to first hold a public hearing, then hire a consultant. During the meeting with Ms. Friedberg, Chairman T. Clarke asked her if she would do a 'walk-through' with them to evaluate the Commission's chances and she agreed to do so.

Mr. Pattison next asked if any progress has been made on the two bridges with the "T"; i. e., Weymouth Heights and on North Street, adding they were supposed to be constructed, in part, with Weymouth granite facing.

Ms. Lehrer replied that she hadn't heard - but she would check with Jim Clarke.

Ms. Dorey told members that she recalled Jim Clarke stating it was being addressed - and the Green Street bridge would have granite columns.

## 2. Fulton School Reuse Proposal

Ms. Lehrer referred to a copy of the proposal for the Fulton School Development, and a letter drafted by Jim Clarke, stating they submitted a successful bid for the senior units. Mr. J. Clarke requested that the Commission read and approve the letter for mailing and that the letter be signed by Chairman Ted Clarke. This letter outlined the historical criteria and guidelines for the restoration of the units (members were given an opportunity to view the letter/report). She noted there would be 51 housing units at the Fulton School.

It was pointed out that the units offered in the Fulton School should be for 'extremely low income'.

Mr. Pattison asked what the name of the housing development would be and Ms. Purdy-Quinlan thought they would remain with the name 'Fulton'.

Members continued to discuss the wording of Jim Clarke's letter and felt it needed to include more.

Mr. Pattison noted that the school was originally called the Pond School, then it eventually was renamed the Alice Fulton School. Because of the historical nature of the building, he felt of the school's name/history should be written on a plaque at the school, so it not it would lose its history. He commented 'they should also pay for us to put out the history booklet', adding he couldn't support Mr. Clarke's letter without that requirement.

Chairman T. Clarke commented that he saw their vote as provisional, that the wording re. the plaque should be included.

Mr. Pattison said he wanted to see this stipulation in writing. He went on to note, that in the past others have said they would include historical information, etc., but it was never done - citing the Weymouth Landing Fire Station and Columbian Square.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan felt there should be certain specific conditions:

- the naming of the school
- the history of the property
- a deed restriction for the future.
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Ms. Purdy-Quinlan then referred to the rehab of the Jefferson School, at which time the Commission was asked if they could use vinyl siding on this historical site and the Commission was opposed to it. She also wanted to point out how the Town Hall now has air conditioning units that are not in compliance with historical preservation criteria.

Chairman T. Clarke noted that these things should not be coming to the Commission's attention after the contract has been signed.

Ms. Lehrer then asked for the specific language the Commission would like to see on the Fulton School's historical plaque.

Mr. Pattison replied that he would like to speak with Mr. Clarke about it first, adding he would like to see something similar to what they did at Boston Edison.

Mr. Pattison said he would first like to see a sign outside of the Fulton School, that would be mounted on the exterior of the building and on the interior of the school a document outlining its history - along with a picture of the original building. He offered to supply the wording for the document.

Members continue to address the wording on the letter drafted by Mr. Clarke - noting that they would like to see the following addressed "The Weymouth Historical Commission would agree to support the proposal with the understanding that they provide the funding for 100 printed copies highlighting the historical data of the school, with copies to go on file in Town buildings; i. e., libraries.

(It was noted that Ms. Lehrer would clarify the members' concerns with Mr. Clarke.)

Mr. Pattison moved to approve a new amended letter as discussed to be drafted by Mr. Clarke and that the final copy be approved by the Chairman before it goes out.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED

#### **IV. Other Business**

##### **A. Unfinished**

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan wanted to have an update on '**43 Bicknell Street**' from the Board's representative, Tom Curtis and Jim Clarke (re. the action taken by the CPC/Town Council). She went on to say that they need Jim Clarke assistance with the Legion Field deed and the Clapp Memorial deed.

Ms. Purdy-Quinlan wanted to point out to the members that Legion Field was given as a gift to the Town of Weymouth and has a deed restriction. Additionally, the Clapp Memorial was a gift to the Town from the Clapp family, yet it was sold by the Town in 1983. She wanted to see the paperwork documenting the transfers of both properties from the beginning to the present. She informed members that the son of the Clapp family died in 1902, at which time he gave the property to the Town as a gift, but she noted it is now for sale and not being used for the purpose it was deeded/intended to the Town. She wanted to have these answers in case anyone asked her about them, adding she wouldn't like to see either property touched.

##### **1. Signs**

Ms. Dorey reported that the **Abigail Adams sign** is being repaired by the DPW, per Bob O'Connor, Director. He told her that the sign would be repaired and reinstalled, commenting that the Abigail Adams folks wanted to see it moved to a different location.

**Historical House Signs** - Ms. Dorey presented a sample wooden sign (for the Weymouth Landing fire station) plus two additional samples drawn on paper for the Commission's consideration. She stated that they were created by Michael McCarthy/Yankee Woodcarvers, adding he has also done the historical signs for the Town of Scituate. She explained that the sample is painted wood (White with black lettering) and the cost for the labor, painted pine sign including the Town seal is \$70. She noted that a similar sign constructed with 'white' Sintra wood would be \$62, as it would not need to be painted. The paper signs had two different formats - the first had the name at the top, the year in the center and the Weymouth Historical Commission at the bottom and the cost for that sign (without the Town seal) would be \$42.00. The format of the second paper sign included the year the house was built at the top and the Weymouth Historical Commission at the bottom. She noted the cost of the town seal alone was \$50.00.

Members discussed which of the three formats they would like to go with. The final decision was to offer an oval White Sintra sign with black lettering - the year would be on the top the family name or the Town Seal would be in the center (depending on the choice of the party ordering the sign) and the bottom would have the WHC spelled out - at a price of \$70.00.

##### **B. New**

**Applebee's** - Ms. Purdy-Quinlan noted that since **Applebee's** Restaurant in North Weymouth has closed. She has placed a call to them requesting they return the historical photograph/information re. the Medal of Honor winners, etc.

Mr. Pattison said he would like to have this information on some type of portable sign/board where the historical information could be affixed and it could be taken to the schools and presented/explained to the school children. He would also like to see it housed at the Whipple Center.

Mr. Pattison went on to say that Linda Pratt Lovelace, a 1954 graduate of Weymouth High School, puts out a quarterly newspaper that includes historical data on the Town. He said he could pass on newsworthy historical info to her and she would print it.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Pattison moved to adjourn at 7:59 PM.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED

**Next meeting June 12, 2007 at 7:00 PM.**

Recording Secretary: Susan DeChristoforo

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ted Clarke, Chairman, WHC

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Date

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\*Barbara & Bill Johnson/Chester Kevitt Award Presentation is as follows:

*BARBARA and BILL JOHNSON*

*We're honoring tonight Barbara and Bill Johnson. Bill has passed away, but Barbara is with us tonight and she continues to work to preserve our knowledge of town and local history.*

*From my point of view, one aspect of historic preservation is preserving the knowledge of the people and events that have been important in a town, and making that information known or available to others. Barbara and Bill have done that.*

*Barbara has acquired some habits that are precious to historians. She is curious. She is thorough, and she looks for authenticity.*

*She comes to those characteristics through an interesting progression. She was brought up in Medford in the shadow of Tufts University and her father was part-owner of an antique shop. Barbara went to work for him. One of the things she did, at a young age, was to attend auctions. This required becoming an expert on the value of objects. She learned how to trace their provenance and evaluate their quality. Besides auctions, she found things of interest in castoffs and in the town dump.*

*People come to an interest in history in different ways. Learning to appreciate old objects typically means learning about the people who owned them, the times they lived in, their houses, the events that shaped them – in short – all the things that historians want to know.*

*Another, less common trait Barbara has, is an appreciation for the environment. She has had a particular interest in natural disasters like hurricanes, tornadoes and fires. She mentioned to me an earthquake that occurred in Weymouth in 1655, and it led me to write a newspaper article and a chapter for a book.*

*Bill had an allied interest. His special thing here in Weymouth was the Herring Run, which is almost unique in this town. He also liked working with children and honing their natural interest in this event – which he took charge of. Bill, too, was protective of the environment, but particularly of this natural phenomenon.*

*Bill also served on the Weymouth Waterfront Committee and Barbara on the Back River Committee. Both were town meeting members for 24 years, and belonged to the Whitman's Pond Association. Bill was town registrar while Barbara served as President of the League of Women Voters. The League picked Barbara and Bill as Citizen of the Year.*

*Barbara continues to collect and to serve. The convenient thing about Barbara's collecting is that she collects facts. Usually these are in the form of newspaper articles or letters or diaries. She has arranged the clippings in scrapbooks arranged by subjects and is able to find what's needed rather quickly. She means to make these scrapbooks available for historical research.*

*Those who've had conversations with Barbara are likely to know that a special interest of hers has been Cotton Tufts, one of the town's most prominent citizens. When Barbara moved to Weymouth and joined the Weymouth Historical Society, she helped at the museum where she saw a photograph of Tufts and asked about him.*

*She was told that he started the library (which he didn't) and that he had no connection with Tufts University (which he did), so she did some investigating of her own and was able to find an encyclopedic amount of solid information that has led to a proper appreciation for the accomplishments of Cotton Tufts.*

*She has also delved into the history of Idlewell and the White family, and has done research and writing on the mills of Weymouth, Medal of Honor winner Thomas Hamilton and Colonel Castle.*

*Barbara is one of the stalwart members of WHS and currently serves on its Board, as did Bill. She attends virtually all the Society's events and continues her pursuit of learning and of making contributions to our town's historical heritage. She is active in other town activities as well. It's curious, but yet not surprising that she comes to the Chester Kevitt Award because of Chester Kevitt. She first developed an interest in Weymouth history and joined the Weymouth Historical Society after going on a bus tour led by Chet.*

*We're proud to salute Bill and Barbara Johnson and to present her with the 2007 Chester Kevitt Award for contributions to the preservation of Weymouth's history.*