



**TOWN OF WINCHESTER**  
MIDDLESEX COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS  
HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
TOWN HALL  
WINCHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 01890

**Meeting Minutes**

**Date/Room:** March 28, 2016  
McCall Middle School Auditorium

**Member Present:** Heather von Mering (Chair), Jenny Adams, Janet Boswell, John Clemson, Jack LeMenager, Michelle McCarthy

**Members Absent:** Bruce Hickey

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Public information meeting began at 7:30pm with a presentation by Heather von Mering, Commission Chair

**Comments from Audience:**

***John Natale - 45 Chester Street***

Current proposal is a financial burden to property owners, especially the elderly home owners of Winchester. If a property is in a delayed, it could possibly mean the home owner losing several \$100,000's during that year delay. Asking for the Commission to withdraw the article from the Warrant.

***Wendy Byrne - 87 Sylvester Ave***

Express her concern in regards to houses in her neighborhood do not meet state code. If Developers cannot demolish, then they just add on to the existing property without regards to neighbors or esthetics.

Heather Von Mering responded: Planning Board has a 2<sup>nd</sup> criteria they are putting forth in the Warrant. The Board is looking in to "unintended consequences"

***Paul Donahue - 1 Wolcott Terrace***

Originally came into this meeting against the article, but upon hearing the specifics of the article and the process has changed his mind. He believes this will make the town more desirable to prospective owners.

***Robert Guarente – 12 Cross Street***

Article is well intentioned, but it interferes with the property owners rights do to what they want with their home. This will allow the Commission to intimidate and badger property owners. It will also lead to higher taxes for every property owner in Town.

***Marc Sannizzaro – 52 Dunstan Lane***

He restored his home. He would like to know the exact process that the property owner has to go through to get a demolition permit.

Jack LeMenager responded: The Home owner files the application and then the Commission has 7 days to hold a hearing. At this hearing the Commission and neighbors will hear the rationale for the demolition and what the plans are for the rebuilding of the lot. The Commission will research and discover if there may be any historical significance to that specific property. If there is a delay put on the property, this timeframe allows for the Commission to do more research as well as allows the neighbors to work with the developer. In the past this timeframe has allowed for a negotiation process to occur between the Commission, the developer, and the neighbors which has been a benefit to everyone effected.

***Jacoba Vongmborn – 44 Canal Street***

Has had a positive experience with a demolition delay put on a neighborhood property. Being notified allowed them to attend the commissions meeting. The delay allowed the neighbors to ask for design changes. The developer incorporated the neighborhood's ideas into the building of the new property. She feels that the more important issue is our Zoning Laws, which need to be changed.

Heather von Mering responded: The commission is willing and able to meet with developers before a piece of property is purchased. A demolition permit is not required to meet with the commission.

***Jamie Devol - 7 Dix Terrace***

Is in favor of the by-law. A property owner does not just own their specific property. They bought in to the community, the school system and their neighborhood. Developers should not be able to change your neighborhood when they don't live there. She feels this protects her right as a property owner. The Town needs to keep the smaller more affordable house in the area behind the high school for a diverse population.

***Jack Curiale 7 Webster Street***

He appreciates historical rights, but feels the system need to be changed. Maybe there could be an Opt-In system for home owners or a shorter delay period of 6 months. New structures might actually give the community more value.

Heather von Mering responded: There was originally a 6 month delay period, but Town Meeting voted in a 12 month delay in 2000. The extra 6 months allows for the negotiation process between the Commission, the developer, and the neighborhood. The Commission is finding that developers are targeting the homes that put themselves on the Opt Out list years ago.

***Grzegorz Calkowski - 102 Pond Street***

Is in favor of the article but feels it is still too weak. Could there an incentive to property owners in way of a tax abatement if their property is on the list?

Heather von Mering responded: California does have incentives for historical property owners. Unsure if Massachusetts has any incentives available.

***Mike Costa – 3 Myrtle Street***

Just moved to Winchester 2 years ago. Purchased in this town because of the quaintness and historical neighborhoods. He feels his neighbors are all very passionate about preserving their neighborhood and town. Thanks the Commission for their commitment to the community and allowing people to speak.

***David Szabo – 189 Mystic Valley Parkway***

Why the year 1940 is considered historical is amazing to him. The Commission does not have the power to regulate construction and standards for this town. The Commission only has jurisdiction over what is considered unique and historical. The preexisting and non-conforming zoning is the main issue in this town. Most people have 1 single major investment and that is their home. The Town should not have control over my personal investment.

Brian Szekely - Town Planner responded: 95 % of special permits are approved in Winchester. The Planning Board is putting a Site Plan Review on the Town Warrant for this spring Town Meeting. This will provide regulations to new construction in regards to square footage. This new regulation will allow for 3600 square feet of construction above ground (including garages but not including basements.) It is very hard to determine what property falls into the preexisting non-conforming category.

***Doug Marmon – 16 Kenwin Road***

Would like to have his home opted in, because he wants to protect his entire neighborhood. It is beneficial to the entire town to increase our historical assets.

***David Feigenbaum - 38 Rangley Road***

Thanked the Commission for their commitment from which the entire town benefits. People have different views of what a person's property rights cover.

One view point is my house, my property, my money, is under my control only.

The second view point is my house, my neighborhood, my schools, my town. I should be able to give my input to anything in my neighborhood that affects me.

This by-law is modest, but will achieve some preservation to our Town's historical property.

***Maureen Meister – 38 Rangley Road***

Explained the introduction of the Winchester Historical Commission 21 years ago. It's well documented that property values have increased on homes that have been on the list and have been renovated.

Winchester is a desirable community because of the architectural heritage and historical homes.

***Jack Schneps - 3 Foxcroft Road***

21 Warren St is a neighboring property to their home. The home at 21 Warren St was torn down and then the neighborhood had to deal with 2 years of construction. There is now 2 homes are on that property. That construction upset our life and our neighborhood for over 2 long years.

Fully supports the Commission's by-law.

***Anthony Conte – 80 Harvard Street***

Opposed the by-law back in 1991 and still does. Resents that he has to ask the Commission for permission to do something to his own personal property. His property is his business only. If a specific property is historical and this supposedly adds to the value, then why would someone tear it down?

**Barbara Boylan – 10 Bacon Street**

The developers at 7 Grove Street actively worked with the neighbors during the building process. Developers need to know what the specific rules are in the Town of Winchester if they want to work here.

**Stephen DeConto – Real Estate Broker**

He was the broker of the home at 19 Dix St in 1991 when the by-law held up the property. The owners of that property did not make a lot of money on that sale. They did receive a tax credit. People need to know the process.

Heather von Mering responded: The commission has to hold a hearing within 21 days of an application being filed. If a determination is not made in that time frame then the demolition permit is issued. For a property to be put on a delay then a majority of the 7 members of the commission have to vote it thru.

**Maureen Meister - 38 Rangley Road** addressed the audience to provide the background to the 19 Dix street property. The Conservation Commission is the entity that provided the demolition delay to that specific property.

**Mike Papisov - 60 Woodside Road**

What happens if someone buys an old home and they end up having issues with it? What is the insurance to the home owner, if their unsafe home cannot be torn down? What is needed is a clear description of the procedure of what determines a historical property.

**Richard Murphy - 69 Westland Ave**

Believes this article is an arbitrary proposal. Who says there is architectural significance to the specific year of 1941? The newspapers have been reporting on this by-law with much bias. This by-law article has been written and submitted to the warrant all ready. This is not a meeting to seek public comment or input. It's all said and done.

Our Town's Planning Board intentionally violates the Massachusetts state law. The Board flatly refuses to sign a plan within the 21 day period.

Michelle McCarthy responded: This by-law has been drafted due to the many Winchester residents asking the Commission for assistance to save their neighborhoods. Over the past 6 years there have been many concerns raised over the demolition of Winchester houses. As a resident, I like knowing that if my neighbor's home is on the list that I can have a say as to what happens in my neighborhood. The notification process allows all the neighbors to be made aware of possible changes to their neighborhood. These changes affect our entire community, our school system and our individual neighborhoods.

**Wayne Engle - 398 Highland Ave**

Personally is a developer and takes exception to the thought that all contractors are bad. Neighbors have no right over my personal property.

Heather von Mering responded: She agrees not all developers are bad. The Commission wants to have responsible developers working in Winchester.

***Marilyn Engle - 398 Highland Ave***

Not sure if she supports this by-law yet. Feels that this meeting has been a good discussion, but there have been some dismissive attitudes by the Commission when specific ideas have been brought forth.

John Clemson responded: The Commission takes offense to the comment of dismissiveness. The Commission has attentively listened and responded to comments made by the audience.

***Katherine Hughes - 140 Cambridge St***

A home is their personal investment. Winchester has many historical homes and specific historical districts. Believes that an Opt – in list should be an option for home owners. Could the delay be changed to 6 months instead of the current 12 month period? Could there be an option of grandfathering people who have been living in their homes for many years?

Heather von Mering closed the meeting by thanking the audience for attending this informational session. The Board appreciates everyone’s comments and will look at what other steps can be taken by the Commission.

Meeting ended at 9:30pm

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Stevens, Recording Secretary

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Heather von Mering, Chair

Date

## ***Public Attendance    sign in sheet***

Nancy Bildzok	82/84 Church St
Eric Harstad	28 Ledyard Rd
Elena Langlois	16 Stowell Rd
Mike McGongle	3 Taft Circle
Ame Spry	21 Pierrepont Rd
Darren McCarthy	29 Oxford St
Wendy Byrne	87 Sylvester Ave
Barbara Warner	8 Stone Ave
John Suhrbier	9 Chestnut St
Ben Albiani	828 Main St
Darmunid O'Connell	10 Bacon St
Barbara O'Connell	10 Bacon St
Archie McIntyre	10 Old Oak
Mike Papisov	60 Woodside Rd
Jamie Devol	7 Dix Terrace
Elaine Belinsky	36 Calumet Rd
Gordon	37 Oxford st
Andrea Block	45 Salisbury St
Mike Galvin	3 Nelson St
Jiwei Li	398 Washington St
Donna Campbell	8 Parker Rd
Craig Miller	55 Wendell st
Paula Botticelli	58 Oxford St
Margaret Wheeler	47 Oxford St.
Diane & Steve Boettcher	38 Grayson rd
Mary & Fred Wingerath	31 Fells Rd
Mike Costa	3 Myrtle St
Susan Johnson	16 Ardley Place
Mark Warshauer	29 Pierrepont Rd
Majorie Berger	44 Myrtle Ter
Leo Donahue	2 Bushcliff
Paul Donahue	1 Wolcott Ter
Jean O'Connor	14 Bridge St
Charles O'Connor	18 Stevens ST
Sharon O'Connor	18 Stevens St
Jack Curiale	7 Webster St
Janet Bobcean	82 Hemingway St
Gerry & Pat Sollner	24 Mason St
Walter Maceil ?	48 Wendell St
David Feigenbaum	38 Ranglely Rd
Maureen Meister	38 Ranglely Rd
Marie & John Lacey	7 Chisholm Rd
Charlene Band	61 Hutchinson Rd

Lynn & Wayne Engle	398 Highland Ave
Tony Conte	80 Harvard St
Joyce Gigliotti	30 Florence St
Andrea Davenport	15 Governors Ave Apt #1
Marion Crandall	7 Wainwright Rd
Stephen Latzanakis	18 Cambridge ST
Amy Parker	4 Park Rd #1
Rob Rose	16 Park Rd
Bernadette Lawton	21 Glenwood Ave
Stephen Ahern	52 Dunster Ln
Mark Sannizzaro	52 Dunster Ln
Jennifer Warner	18 Sheffield Rd
Alan Ruben	15 Maxwell Rd
Betsy Sands	1 Pine ST
John Natale	45 Chester ST
Donnetto Peltier	60 Pale St
Stephen Lenhardt	380 Highland Ave
Sarah Ferguson	9 Ridgefield Rd
Paul Lohnes	80 Myopia Rd
Jessica Lohnes	80 Myopia Rd
Mary Jo Russo	171 Washington St
Kate Scanlon	39 Forest St
Irena Svetieva	222 Washington ST
Jleyo Svetieva	222 Washington ST
Colleen McInnis	33 Marion St
Jospeh Foley	27 Westley St
Mar Emmerich	43 Lawson Rd
Jack Schneps	3 Foxcroft Rd
Karen Roberts	3 Kenilworth Rd
Gerald Nardone	384 Main ST
Michale McGoff	49 Harvard St
Ann Mann	60 Swan Rd
Stephen DeConto	10 Blossom Hill Rd
Greg Calkowski	102 Pond ST
Ewa Romanuk	102 Pond ST
Lisa Badger	16 Calumet Rd
Robert & Mary Pace	28 Spruce ST
Richard and Karen Murphy	69 Westland Ave
AJ DuPlessois	20 Jefferson Rd
Meresdith Mason Crowley	10 Hinds Rd
Jacoba Vongmborn	44 Canal ST
Donald Muir	92 Church St
Earl Darlington	11 Rock Ave
Denise Darlington	11 Rock Ave
Angel Morandi	14 Hill ST
Domenic Corsetti	29 Forest St
Mario Chiuccariello	3 Red Coach Lane
Craig Garrett	295 Mystic Valley Pkwy

Irina Puscasu	2 Windsong Ln
Sunne Savage	135 Cambridge ST
Paula Swartz	15 Manchester Rd
Jim Whitehead	52 Salisbury St
Ursula Koslowski	12 Grove St
Beth Caplow	24 Wedgemere Ave
Yu Yang	58 Loring Ave
Guy Dixon	12 Johnson Rd
Sheila Puffer	12 Wildwood ST
Carolyn Schatz	10 Johnson Rd
Catherine & Lou McDonald	8 Webster St
Margaret Lowry	205 Washington ST
Nancy Bildzok	84 Church ST