



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

Meeting Minutes

Date/Room: June 20, 2016
Winchester Town Hall (Winchester Room)

Members Present: Heather von Mering (Chair), Jenny Adams, Janet Boswell,
Jack LeMenager, Michelle McCarthy

Members Absent: Bruce Hickey (vice-chair), John Clemson

Also Present: Brian Szekely – Town Planner

A quorum being in attendance, the hearing was called to order at 7:54.

Meeting Minutes

Chair Heather von Mering requested that all members review the May 23, 2016 public meeting minutes.

Motion That the Historical Commission approve May 23, 2016 public meeting minutes as amended at table. The motion was made and seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

5 in Favor 0 Opposed VOTED
Absent: John Clemson, Bruce Hickey

Chair Heather von Mering requested that all members review the June 6, 2016 public meeting minutes.

Motion That the Historical Commission approve June 6, 2016 public meeting minutes as presented. The motion was made and seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

5 in Favor 0 Opposed VOTED
Absent: John Clemson, Bruce Hickey

Community Preservation Act - CPA

Heather von Mering has reached out to the FINCOM, Conservation Committee, School Committee, and Planning Board chairpersons to start the local government involvement process in regards to Winchester pursuing a CPA. The Winchester Star is currently writing an article on the Community Preservation Act. The Historical Commission is starting the developmental process to then have the Planning Board/FINCOM continue on with the Town Meeting voting and implementation process. The originally scheduled Planning Board meeting with the Historical Commission has been changed from June 28th to July 12th. The Historical Commission's representative from FINCOM should also be in attendance at this meeting to assist with the monetary numbers.

Brian Szekely explained the positive financial benefits the CPA would bring the Town. Ideally, the precursor work would have to be done to assure review by Fall Town Meeting, after which the question would be put to the voters in a town-wide election. Discussion focused on the need to ask all committees to research what projects they had/will have that might qualify for reimbursement through a CPA - historic buildings, field construction, purchasing of land, etc.

Other Business

At last month's HC meeting, the idea of increasing the price of demotion permits to assist in the funding of home surveys was discussed. If there were such an avenue to receive funds to pay for this expense, it would mean a departmental revolving fund would have to be set up. This revolving fund would have to be voted on during Spring Town meeting. One means of fundraising discussed was plaques designating historic properties, which would likely be available in 2017. Individual homeowners would pay a fee to have their home researched as well as receive a plaque stating any historical significance the property might have.

The Downtown Winchester train station is in the process of receiving historical signs from the MBTA. Mass Historical Society is waiting for the MBTA to produce drawings before providing any feedback.

There was discussion concerning the new Senate bill in regarding the proposed state-wide zoning changes. These changes will affect site plan reviews and in-law apartment requirements. The new changes appear to support demolition and rebuild, but not the rehabilitation of existing properties. The new changes will not affect 40B or low-income housing needs.

Heather von Mering said she has spoken to the National Association of Home Builders in regards to historical restorations. They are in support of rehabbing historical structures and would like incentives be given to responsible builders to entice preservation.

The development of a LHD (Local Historic District) is being brought forth to the Board of Selectmen to ask for a committee to be established to consider an LHD encompassing the Town Hall, Town Library Lincoln School and McCall Middle School.

MAPD Lunch

Mass Association of Planning Directors is holding their monthly meeting here in Winchester on Friday, June 24th - topic is Teardowns. The MAPD did not relay this luncheon information to either Brian Szekely or the Historical Commission even though it is being held in Winchester. Discussion occurred that it is critical that someone from the Winchester Historical Commission attend this luncheon to obtain any and all information that can assist with preservation.

Winchester By-Law, Chapter 14 Discussion

Heather von Mering stated there is no new information in regards to Selectmen Stephen Powers request for information last month.

There was discussion regarding having every property in Winchester subject to review when an application for demotion permit is submitted. More investigation needs to be done in regards to having a hardship clause similar to the by-law in the Town of Lexington. Brian Szekely will speak to the Lexington Town Planner as to how the clause has performed in their Town as well as to how the process by which the bylaw was enacted.

The Chapter 14 By- Law would be written explaining all of the criteria a property must meet to qualify as historically significant not just to the Town of Winchester, but also State and Federal guidelines. Delay would be imposed if State or Federal standards are met.

Discussion occurred in regards to the summer time is the best time to research and develop the language for the by-law due to the slower government activity.

The goals of the Demolition Delay By-law are to promote responsible development as well as the restoration and rehabilitation of the town’s historical properties.

Jack LeMenager will request that Bruce Hickey investigate the process that the City of Woburn uses in regards to the use of a rolling date to define which properties are subject to review.

Brian Szekely stated that the Demolition Delay does have a Planning Board component to it, but does not fall under the Planning Board’s purview. He feels that the entire by-law does not have to be entirely rewritten. He suggests that all members of the HC review the current by-law and make notes as to what should be edited out as well as any additions needed. During the next meeting all input will be discussed.

The Building Commissioner needs to be included in the development of this new by-law.

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting will be held on July 11, 2016 in the Waterfield room at 7:30 P.M.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 9:18 P.M.

VOTED

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Stevens, Recording Secretary

Heather von Mering, Chair Date