

# **ACTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

Meeting Minutes  
June 10, 2020  
7:30 pm

## **Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

**Present:** Bob Ferrara (BF), Victoria Beyer (VB), Doug Herrick (DH), Bill Dickinson (BD) – (Chair), David Martin (DM) - (BoS Liaison), Jaye Oman (JO), Bill Klauer (BK), Brad Maxwell (BM)

**Absent:**

### **1. Opening**

Chair Bill Dickinson opened the meeting at 7:37 p.m. and read the procedures and agreed-on policies the Town developed for these web-based Zoom meetings.

### **2. Regular Business**

- 1) Approval of May Meeting Minutes – The meeting minutes from the AHC’s May 2020, meeting were reviewed and approved unanimously by a vote of 7-0.
- 2) Citizen Concerns: No citizens’ concerns.
- 3) Any ZBA/Planning Board projects on the CRL: DH stated that he had reviewed the meeting agendas and hearings of the ZBA and did not recognize any known historic properties for review.
- 4) PAL Associates – CRL to MACRIS Update: JO reported that it was going slow but everything should be finished by June 30. A discussion followed about the amount of online research that PAL was conducting vs. on-site research at libraries and the Jenks Archives of the Acton Historical Society. It was agreed to review their work for omissions since PAL’s data gathering method tends to be internet-based vs. field-based.
- 5) Bridge Project between Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and TTT: BD is continuing to define and socialize the idea of a foot-bridge link between the Trail-Through-Time and the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail by spanning the Nashoba Brook at the old Davis Road. He has done some preliminary designs using a wood truss model that he will show at the next

meeting.

- 6) Archaeological By-Law Update: BF discussed his work on the archaeological by-law and discussion with Acton Building Commissioner Frank Ramsbottom. He reviewed the triggers that would generate an archaeological review: 1) Request for a building permit or zoning variance, 2) Planning Board development request, 3) Conservation Commission or Land Use department request, or 4) Report from a town department of extensive removal of vegetation or ground cover on undeveloped land.

BF reviewed the criteria for an archaeological review: 1) Is the activity in a high or moderate archaeological sensitivity area or wetlands? 2) Is the parcel greater than 5 acres? 3) Are there any ceremonial stone landscapes or features visible? A yes to any one criterion will generate the review. It was also recommended that the town archaeological sensitivity maps be added to the town GIS database.

BM posed questions about how the by-law would mesh with other town law and procedures; who would pay for the expert review, and whether a standard evaluation process and on-call consultant would make sense.

DM suggested that the uniqueness of archaeological items found should also be a relevant criterion in invoking the by-law.

- 7) Demolition Delay Application/Instruction Form: A draft form was proposed and reviewed for the Building Department to use. Based on discussions about the problem we are trying to solve with the form, it was agreed to add more text explaining the demolition delay process to the applicant, and to get more input from Frank Ramsbottom on what information he would find useful.

### **3. New/Special Business**

- 1) 53 River Street: The group discussed Selby's June 9 email to the AHC containing a letter from the MHC regarding the 53 River Street (Shoddy Mill Site) dam removal. The AHC will review this project as currently defined and draft a letter to the MHC confirming our need to be involved in the project generally and the Section 106 assessment specifically.
- 2) BK and BM Renewals. Both are up for renewal this year and both plan to continue serving on the AHC.

- 3) Plaque Requests for 491 Main Street and 88 Prospect Street: the former new plaque was approved and the latter replacement plaque was pre-approved.

**4. Consent Items - None**

5. **Adjournment:** At 9:05 p.m., it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously 7-0.

**Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting**

- Meeting minutes of May 2020