



## ACTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

**Meeting Minutes May 11, 2022, 7:30 pm**

**Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

**Present:** Bill Dickinson (BD) - Chair, Bob Ferrara (BF), Bill Klauer (BK), Alissa Nicol (AN) - Clerk, Barb Rhines (BR) - Planning Division, Victoria Beyer (VB), Fran Arsenault (FA) - Select Board Liaison

**Guests:** Laurie Ullmann (LU), Michaela Moran (MM), Clare Siska (CS), Gaby King Morse (GKM), Andy Magee (AM), Anne Forbes (AF), Kim Amaral (KA), Anne Kress (AK)

**Absent:** none

### Opening

Chair Bill Dickinson called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM, and read the procedures and agreed-on policies the Town developed for these web-based Zoom meetings. Now that the Mass. Legislature has extended the open meeting pandemic rules about using Zoom vs. in-person meetings, the AHC will continue with Zoom meetings indefinitely until there is consensus about returning to in-person meetings.

### I. Regular Business

**1) Approval of April Minutes** – Meeting minutes from the AHC's April 13th meeting were reviewed; BK moved and BF seconded a motion to approve the minutes; the minutes were approved unanimously by a vote of 5-0.

**2) Citizen Concerns:** AN suggests a link be placed on each month's agenda to the Town's Docushare so the public has easy access to materials in the meeting packet (agenda, plans, area forms, etc.)

**3) Any ZBA/Planning Board projects on the CRL:** 115 River Street, early mill location office and shed and dam foundation, demo proposed, rebuild facility on a non-conforming lot, comments due 6/1 (NB - this address is not on CRL)

**4) Bridge project between Rail Trail and TTT at old Davis Road update:** no update

**5) Archaeological By-Law Update:** BF reports that this will be Article 10 on the Warrant; presentations have been made to Select Board, Finance Committee, and Economic Development Committee (EDC produced an overlay map of business districts to illustrate commercial properties potentially impacted); a simple majority is required to pass the article; BD will present the article at Town Meeting; BF recorded a video at Acton TV for pre-Town Meeting viewing; if the article passes, the bylaw will go into effect on July 1st

**6) 53 River Street Update -** see agenda item II. 2.

**7) Status of converting CRL to MACRIS -** no update

## **II. New/Special Business**

- 1) Demolition Delay Hearing of 27 Martin Street -** KA presented details of property that was inherited; two-family vacant for ~20 years, work required to make habitable, to be an investment property, no plans yet, gathering info on options; commissioners note current zoning requirements, set backs, etc. make a rebuild a difficult hurdle, appears to be in restorable condition, preferable to restore, structure appears sound, not much settling, walls, windows and doors are straight, gut renovation required for interior; KA notes that owners desire to retain home and rent it; AK abutter supports preservation, 2 family part of older neighborhood “New England Village” with smaller lots, homes closer together, appears period despite some alterations; AF direct abutter notes that it is good example of durable home, possibilities for renovation within zoning, also requests inventory form be entered into AHC discussion; MM leaving home in place is best for owner and town, lot is small, personal experience renovating 3 family, possible and rewarding; GKM abutter hopes to keep look of street; CS supports saving house; BD moves demo delay be imposed and notes possibility to lift if proponent returns with plans and commissioners agree; VB seconds; motion passes unanimously 5-0; BD will submit letter to Building Inspector and copy proponent.
- 2) 53 River Street progress presentation -** AM presents MOA for project; ACOE to review and send to SHPO for comment; consent from MHC and AHC; HDC approved the removal of 2 buildings and breach of dam (all but abutments) to bring into Office of Dam Safety compliance; landscape schematic includes outlining building footprints in stone, historic plaques will include photos of buildings, grading will be steep to recreate floodplain, Conservation Commission is working on a naturalized shrub planting (identifying species and quantities); project will have adverse effect on Shoddy Mill Area/South Acton Woolen Company; MHC recommends the MOA include 1) archaeological monitoring within the archaeologically sensitive areas, 2) pre and post construction documentation, and 3) educational/interpretive panels; comments to be

collected from all stakeholders for permit; BK requests adding to MOA that AHC be informed/updated, and AM acknowledges this is a valid request; commissioners agree that the plan is preferable to past proposals and look forward to execution; AF asks whether the brick chimney base will be preserved, AM confirms that Dennis Dale has proposed preserving the base and the doorway, but not clear if this is feasible.

- 3) **Sign request at 713 Main Street** - LU petitioner notes that home is dated 1799, second wife of Ebeneezer Wood may have been born there; BR will provide application to be completed and submitted.
- 4) **Cistern at 4 Piper Lane** - Land Stewards are concerned about condition of concrete cap and Bettina Abe emailed AHC to suggest possible solutions (replace, seal or bulldoze); located west of 6 Piper Road, fed by natural spring at side of Great Hill, supplied 6-7 houses; BK suggests a good artifact to protect, perhaps built by Francis Conant (brickwork); BD will contact Bettina to suggest the cap be replaced.
- 5) **Review/discuss HC - CRL outreach flyer** - BR will follow up with owners of homes pictured; to be mailed out after consolidating CRL/MACRIS and removing Historic District properties from list
- 6) **Looking for house plaque manufacturer** - VB to contact AB grad suggested by FA.

### **III. Consent Items - None**

#### **Adjournment**

BF moved and BK seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 9:10 PM.

#### **Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting**

- Meeting minutes of April 13, 2022
- Presentation - 53 River Street per Andy Magee