



ACTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes March 9, 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: Anne Forbes (AF), Joanne Bissetta (JB), Steve Long (SL), Leo Bertolami, Paul Kirchner

Absent: none

Opening

Chair Bill Dickinson called the meeting to order at 7:34 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 February Minutes – Meeting minutes from the AHC's February meeting were reviewed; BF moved and BD seconded a motion to approve the minutes; the minutes were approved unanimously, with a minor edit to the Woodlawn Chapel construction year, by a vote of 5-0.

2) Citizen Concerns: JB and SL, owners of 8 Church Street, presented their project for renovation of their 2 family home, Thomas Buckborough is the contractor. The project involves the removal of one of three chimneys; the commissioners must determine if this is subject to the demo delay bylaw. 8 Church Street is a 2-family home, only 1 chimney is functional, in addition to the removal of a non-functional chimney to enable a kitchen renovation, one window will be removed and one window will be enlarged. AN is concerned about not having a public hearing. BK agrees that neighbors should be allowed

to comment. JB notes that neighbors are Sal's Auto and Theater III. SL notes that chimney is in poor shape, a safety issue. JB adds that email address was incorrect and owners did not receive a note about the need to contact AHC in a timely manner; construction slated to begin next week. BD reads the criteria for triggering the bylaw and suggests chimney is a "significant architectural feature." Also notes that it is possible to add a faux chimney if it needs to be removed for safety or project needs. AF notes that commissioners should have inventory form for property during discussion, and the chimneys are considered "significant architectural features." The commissioners vote unanimously that a public hearing is required.

3) Any ZBA/Planning Board projects on the CRL: none

4) Bridge project between Rail Trail and TTT at old Davis Road update: BD reports survey work is complete, structural engineer and landscape architect to be hired

5) Archaeological By-Law Update: BF reports survey has been distributed and 179 responses have been received, upcoming meeting with Planning Dept staff, a few tweaks needed, review by Town Counsel needed. Important dates - 3/15 presentation to Planning Board, 3/23 Public Forum at 7:00 PM, Duncan Ritchie from PAL invited (created arch sensitivity maps for Acton), 4/4 presentation to Select Board, 5/16 Town Meeting. Also notes Friends of Pine Hawk unanimously endorsed by-law. VB asks for most recent iteration for commissioners to read. BF will send clean copy to AHC and Town Counsel. BD notes that the objectives remain unchanged through the various edits, important change is 2nd investigation to be paid for (future allocation of CPA funds? Grants?) BR notes the benefit to town of preserving or record archaeological finds

6) 53 River Street Update - Memorandum of Understanding not yet received. BD will check on this with Andy Magee. VB note that CPC likely to approve funding request for Shoddy Mill project.

7) Status of Converting CRL to MACRIS: BR to meet with BK to reconcile lists, "a street a week." AF notes that Mass Preservation is hosting webinar on 3/10

II. New/Special Business

- 1) 60-62 Pope Road stone wall** - applicant completed requested corrections to stone wall, removing mortar from wall and removing posts flanking driveway; commissioners vote unanimously that the work is acceptable.
- 2) Looking for house plaque manufacturer** - AN suggests reaching out to Minuteman Tech or North Bennett Street School

Commissioners discuss whether to begin meeting in person, and decide that April meeting will be via Zoom.

BK notes that Select Board is looking for all boards and committees to offer feedback on proposal to add increase to CPA surcharge onto Town Meeting Warrant. BD notes that an increase would mean more funding available, and this serves Historic Preservation. VB notes that the state gives an additional round of matching funds to communities who adopt a 3% surcharge. BF notes a synergy with archaeological bylaw funded by CPA funds last year. AN moves, VB seconds that Chairman write email to Select Board noting AHC support for an increase to CPA surcharge. Motion is approved unanimously

III. Consent Items - None

Adjournment

AN moved and BK seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 9:07 PM.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

- Meeting minutes of February 2022
- Presentation - existing house at 8 Church Street and architectural rendering of renovation project per Joanne Bissetta and Steve Long
- Presentation - photos of stone wall at 60-62 Pope Road per Paul Kirchner and Leo Bertolami