



ACTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes October 8, 2025, 7:30 pm

Town Hall, Room 126

Present: Bill Dickinson - Chair (BD), Ken Dow (KD), Bob Ferrara (BF), Bill Klauer (BK), Barb Rhines - Cultural Resources Planner (BR),

Guests: Anne Forbes (AF), Caroline Hamilton (CH), Ken & Donna Grinnell

Absent: Victoria Beyer (VB), Fran Arsenault - Select Board Liaison (FA)

Chair BD called the meeting to order at 7:37 PM.

I. Regular Business

1. Review of meeting minutes September 10th – BD moved to approve the minutes of the September 10th meeting. BF seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Residents' concerns – None

3. Any ZBA/Planning Board projects on the CRL? – None

4. Bridge project between Rail Trail and TTT at old Davis Road – BD to review RFPs. No update.

5. Status of reconciling CRL to MACRIS (barn captures): Barn inventory needs to be reviewed in MACRIS for accuracy.

6. Archeological Review Applications -- None

7. Under demo delay:

457 Mass Ave: No updates, assigned to KD for follow-up. BD will provide KD with contact information. Wait until November before reaching out.

54 Great Rd: Review of plans to be made at next meeting with Architect, assigned to BF for follow-up. BD never heard back from owners regarding proposed plans.

8. Historical Plaque Applications : 12 Coughlin Street application was submitted by Ken and Donna Grinnell. Coughlin Street is a one-way street. BD motioned to have the marker on the main building which is the original house before additions added. HC approved the application.

Ken and Donna Grinnell would like to have their plaque located at their entry door under the light and reduced from 16" wide to 14". The sign should remain proportional. BR will review with Crosby Design and get a proof for approval.

9. Historical Plaque Applications Process : BD recommended to remove the mention of HDC from the plaque application form. The HC will submit the application to HDC if required, this will not be the homeowner responsibility.

10. Consultant for National Register Application for Woodlawn Cemetery: BR is working with the town to issue the four RFPs. Between \$10-\$15k, 3 quotes are needed with lowest to be selected. Multiple forms are required to be filled out per 30B process. Discussion from town on whether it should be RFP or RFQ process.

11. Concord Road Historical Corridor update: -- None

12. Acton 250 Committee update: The Acton 250 Committee will be offering events less frequently, likely just one talk per quarter through September of next year. A celebration will be planned near 7/4/2026 likely to be held at the Discovery Museum, as well as another community celebration near April 19, 2026.

Revolution 250 Chair Prof, Bob Allison gave a talk on 9/30, "Beyond the Bridge"—approximately 100 high school students were in attendance along with 40 adults; Amy Cole did a walking tour on 9/27 (South Acton historic Mill Center) and will do another on 10/9 (Acton Center).

Northeastern Professor Bill Fowler will present "British Naval Power in the Revolution".

Refer to <https://www.actonma.gov/250>.

The still forming Acton Historical Alliance is planning their next meeting on 10/9.

13. Underground Railroad Site Outreach. 4 responses of interest have since been received: 162 Great Road, 144 Great Road, 15 Barker Road and 41 Estabrook Road. The HC asked BR to reach back out to the responders. MHC (Michael Steinitz) to be consulted by KD to see if there might be a recommended logo or format for a proposed sign. BD reached out to MHC's List Serve, BD will post email with helpful links. Locations will need to be thoroughly researched before a plaque is issued. KD will send word doc of research done for Underground Railroad. CH will work to research the addresses listed above for legitimacy in preparation for a plaque.

II. New/Special Business:

1. Historic Commission Website Update Regarding Demo Delay Process: BR proposed an update to the HC Website. HC Demo Delay Process to be located adjacent to BD video. CH will provide her mark-up to BR for review and incorporation. CH feels a separate section would be good!

2. 53 River St Signage Text: Four 3'x3' signs have been proposed. BR will email out proposed signs for review. AF and BK are to review for accuracy. Photo's are needed for the signs.

Sign 1- The Heart of South Acton Industry

Sign 2- The Shoddy Mill

Sign 3- Water Power & Innovation

Sign 4- Lives and Labor

AF will review sign wording for next meeting. BK has provided some comments.

3. New AHC Member Process: CH is working through the interview process and continues to attend AHC meetings.

BD and BF have had their terms extended to June 30, 2028. Both BF and BD have been sworn in.

III. Consent Items - None

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

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting.

- Minutes of September 10, 2025, meeting of the Acton Historical Commission
- KD Underground Railroad Research 091525