

ACTON 250 COMMITTEE
HISTORY SUBCOMMITTEE
Monday, August 25, 2025, 9:00 AM
ACTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY
In-person Meeting

Acton Historical Alliance planning meeting

August 25, 2025

Amy Cole, Bob Ferrara, Anne Forbes, Pam Lynn, Andy Magee, Michaela Moran, Bob Pion

Pam Lynn began the meeting by explaining that, since a quorum of the Acton 250th History Subcommittee planned to attend, she had posted it as a public meeting on the town website.

In addition to three members of the subcommittee, the affiliations of those in attendance included representatives of the Acton Historical Commission, Conservation Commission, Conservation Trust(?), Community Preservation Committee, Acton Memorial Library trustees, Acton Historical Society, Iron Work Farm, Friends of Pine Hawk, and independent tour guide Amy Cole.

The group was asked that we consider some particular questions, including:

- How is Acton's history relevant to what has become a very diverse community?
- How will a new AHA overlap with the Acton 250th Committee's idea of a consortium of entities and organizations?
- How might the AHA help deal with the disposal of closed historic properties?

Bob also suggested we think about eventual repositories for historical material and resources, and reminded everyone that some Alliance plans will probably depend on grant funding. In that regard, it was pointed out that an organization doesn't necessarily have to be a 501 (c) (3) to qualify for grant money, depending on the grant source.

Pam and Bob then gave a brief summary of the efforts so far toward establishing a collaboration to carry forward some of the efforts and goals of the Acton 250th participants into the future, particularly through the establishment of a new website linked to the various participating organizations and focused on providing a historical overview of Acton's history and the relevant available resources. Those efforts overlap with the evolving goals of the Acton 250 Committee to create a consortium of local organizations and institutions concerned with those matters.

Potential mission statement

There was a brief discussion about what might be included in a mission statement for the group, such as the broad goal of promoting greater appreciation of Acton's history through education, publicity, and awareness of the available resources. Vehicles for doing that might include various ways to help the alliance's member organizations such as the establishment of a new, collaborative

website and a common events calendar. The involvement of the town through the Acton Celebrations Committee and other town boards might also be sought.

Specific suggestions for action included:

- Set up a common website aligned with the AHA mission. This could be established, and a web manager funded, through a local grant program such as the CPA, Cultural Council, or with help from Freedom's Way
- Create a comprehensive map of Acton historical sites
- “ “ chart of Acton's historical and geological periods
- Establish a common calendar of relevant local events
- Set up a Google Drive, beginning with the AHA mission statement
- Establish a tourism or information center in a centralized location such as the Memorial Library or the “red house” (462 Main St.)
- Publicize the Alliance and Acton's history through activities such as display tables at local events, etc.

Andy took on the responsibility of writing up a first draft.

Proposed members and partners

What groups and organizations might be included in the alliance? After discussion, it was agreed that representation should be limited to Acton and groups with an interest or affiliation with the town's history. Consequently, it was agreed that organizations whose primary interest is in towns adjoining Acton would be outside the intended scope of the alliance, although they might be listed as “friends” for the purposes of communication. Examples given included the Boxborough Historical Society, and the Boxborough Minutemen, who might be listed as “friends”, while the Acton Minutemen should be included in the alliance.

Similarly, local commemorative groups not primarily focused on Acton's history, such as veterans' organizations, would probably be considered “friends,” as well. Important local institutions without a primary historical focus or function, such as the Acton-Boxborough schools, would also fall into the “friends” category. The Memorial Library, however, because of its function as a repository of historical documents and resources, would be an important part of the Alliance. And the question was raised as to how working with the schools' curriculum might fit into the Alliance's goals. Still to be discussed: the role of institutional or business owners of some of Acton's important historic properties, such as several of the town's historic churches, Powers Gallery in the John Robbins House, etc.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m. NEXT MEETING: September 15, 9:00 a.m., Acton Senior Center

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Forbes