

MINUTES
LANCASTER HISTORICAL COMMISSION
October 15, 2018

A meeting of the Lancaster Historical Commission (LHC) was held on Monday, October 15, 2018 at 6:30 pm in the LHC office on the upper level of the Prescott Building.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Amy Brown, Marcia Jakubowicz, Heather Lennon, Joy Peach, Joan Richards, Mark Schryver, Michael Sczerzen, Karen Silverthorn and Jean Watson

Absent: Jay Moody

GUESTS: Greg Jackson, Christine Mirabeto, Roy Mirabeto

CALL TO ORDER:

Heather Lennon called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

After review, the minutes of the September 24, 2018 meeting were approved unanimously as corrected on a motion made by Michael Sczerzen and seconded by Marcia Jakubowicz.

NETFLIX REQUEST FOR GAZEBO ON TOWN GREEN:

Heather Lennon reported that she spoke during the public comment period at a recent Board of Selectmen (BOS)'s meeting to provide background and reasons for keeping the Town Green intact suggesting that the Netflix gazebo be moved after filming is complete to a more appropriate location off the Town Green.

Further, she reported that when the matter came up again at a later BOS meeting, there were several in attendance who expressed serious concerns about changing the look of the Town Green without due consideration to the long term effects of such a decision. The BOS agreed to delay a decision to another meeting.

The three guests listed above, said they agreed that the structure be moved off the Green after the filming is complete.

LHC members voted on a motion made by Joan Richards and seconded by Jean Watson to have Heather Lennon request a public hearing so that further information such as that from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Preservation Massachusetts, and/or, the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) could be given for townspeople to have a clear understanding of the concerns and the issues. She agreed to contact the Town Administrator (TA) to request this.

PROPOSED GOODRIDGE BROOK 40B DEVELOPMENT:

Heather Lennon gave some background information relating to the LHC letters sent to the MHC and the local Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). At this point, it is unclear if the recommendations for the submission of a project notification form (PNF) and an environmental notification form (ENF) will be required of the project proponent.

Guest Greg Jackson said he has been attending Sewer Commission meetings and DPW Commission meetings. No clear answers have been gotten relating to water and sewer issues and this is very concerning.

Further, the project proponent has not yet provided clear maps or models to show townspeople what the project would actually look like.

HISTORIC CEMETRIES – NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATIONS:

Heather Lennon received a copy of the work accomplished by the two consultants hired to prepare the nominations on the Middle Cemetery (MC) and Old Settlers Burial Yard (OSBG). Heather reviewed the documents and made comments and corrections, which have been mailed to Betsy Frieberg at MHC. LHC members can review the documents here in the office if they wish.

HISTORIC CEMETERIES – CLEAN-UP:

The MC tree work by Brian Favreau is complete. Brandy Tarantino, from National Grid's Forestry Division, agreed to remove three pine trees along the west front stonewall. These are yet to be taken down. Beyond that, there are still numerous trees that are a hazard to the markers in the cemetery. A question was raised regarding requesting a transfer of money from the town's Reserve Fund to accomplish this ongoing task.

SPECIAL PROJECTS:

Display Cases: Heather Lennon reported that Dana Houghton, a descendant of early Lancaster settler, Ralph Houghton, visited the LHC office in early September. He offered to donate an amount up to \$1,500.00 in honor of his ancestor who was Lancaster's first Town Clerk. He left it to the LHC to decide what would be best. After discussion, members voted on a motion made by Mark Schryver and seconded by Joan Richards to obtain a quote on one or more display cases to submit to Mr. Houghton for his approval and transfer of funds.

Project Footstone: This work at the MC continues. Associate member Marcia Jakubowicz and volunteer Ashley Driscoll have identified and reunited 14 footstones with their respective headstones. There have been 57 footstones inventoried so far. Many are broken and some are strangled by roots and/or partially covered with lichen. Marcia said she hopes they can get as many as possible reunited with their respective headstones by November 11, 2018.

Museum Room: Heather Lennon reported that Lancaster volunteer Dick Belanger has come in and helped repair and restore numerous pieces of damaged or scratched furniture. He is also building a platform to position the largest dollhouse to an optimum level for display. A letter of thanks will be sent to him in appreciation of all his hard work.

Historical Marker Survey: Amy Brown reported she is still working on her inventory on the condition of the town's numerous historical markers.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR MEMORIAL:

Heather Lennon reported that the monument is in place, and, in early November, Regonini- Zoll of Clinton will install the bronze plaque. We will unveil the marker at a special Dedication Service on November 11, 2018 at 2 pm. Heather Lennon distributed a draft of the dedication program for comments. The Stow and Boxborough Minutemen have agreed to participate and invitations will be sent out on October 23, 2018. There will be a reception following the dedication at the Thayer Performing Arts Center (TPAC) diagonally across the street and parking will also be allowed around its driveway.

FINANCE:

Joan Richards reported receipt of a monthly printout noting the purchase and payment for some office supplies.

ATHERTON & PONAKIN BRIDGES:

No report given.

GRANT AWARD (through the State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) :

Joan Richards was able to obtain a copy of the material on file in Noreen Piazza's disaster plan file, and, it turns out much of it was related to flooding. Joan has put in a call to the Fire Chief to ask if the town has a fire disaster plan for the Prescott Building. In order to complete our work on the LHC's Collection Management Plan, a disaster plan needs to be included. Joan Richards suggested contacting SHRAB and asking that copies be sent of what other similar organizations have in place. Once this is complete, our document can be submitted for final SHRAB approval.

ROWLANDSON ROCK AND TOWN POUND HISTORIC SITES:

Heather Lennon reported she is still waiting to hear from John Aurin and/or Nolan Stocker. An LHC work party may need to be arranged to clear the area of debris before the winter months.

TOWN CLOCK MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU):

No new report given. The Town of Lancaster is still waiting to hear from George Franz at the First Church for a status report from the church's Standing Committee.

ABNER POLLARD HOUSE REHABILITATION ON OLD COMMON ROAD:

No report. The LHC has long tried to get information from Massachusetts Department of Capital Assets Management (DCAM) related to the condition of these state buildings which are deteriorating at a rapid rate due to lack of adequate maintenance.

ACCESSIONS:

Heather Lennon reported that Jocelyn Fay (a former Lancaster and Princeton resident) contacted her and has some items related to Luther Burbank, which she will donate to the LHC. She also recently donated a portion of an iron gate used at a pet cemetery where a number of Thayer family pets were buried. The cemetery was formerly located behind what was once known as the "Red House" which is no longer extant.

It was noted that the busts of Shakespeare and Milton, on display in the LHC office, were from Larry Tata who has recently deceased. When the Lancaster High School closed, Mr. Tata "rescued" these former senior class gifts and later donated them to the LHC.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The town was notified that Netflix would be filming in the Town Green area again on October 17, 2018. much of the available parking space around the town buildings would be unavailable and it was suggested to park in the library parking lot.

DEMOLITIONS:

Heather Lennon reported that the detached section of "Fairlawn" aka AUC's "White House" might soon be slated for demolition to make way for a parking lot for the College Church of Seventh-Day Adventists (SDA's). It is located on the corner of Main Street and East George Hill Road. This demolition has *not yet* occurred.

ADJOURNMENT AND FUTURE MEETING DATE:

Joan Richards made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. and Michael Sczerzen seconded it. A vote was called for and it carried unanimously.

The LHC's next meeting will be held in the LHC office on the top floor of the Prescott Building (PB) unless otherwise notified.

DATES:

Monday, November 26, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

Monday, December 17, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Richards, Recorder for the Meeting