

**MEETING MINUTES  
LANCASTER HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
March 2, 2020**

A meeting of the Lancaster Historical Commission (LHC) was held on Monday, March 2, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. in the LHC office on the upper level of the Prescott Building.

**Note:** The February 24, 2020 meeting was cancelled per specific instructions from the MA Attorney General's office when the town's website went down.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Liz Colley, Heather Lennon, Joy Peach, Joan Richards, Karen Silverthorn

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Amy Brown, Marcia Jakubowicz, Mark Schyrver, Jean Watson

**GUESTS:**

Christine & Roy Mirabito and Linnea Lakin Servey

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Heather Lennon called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm. and welcomed the guests.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The minutes of the January 27, 2020 meeting were read, corrected and unanimously approved on a motion made by Liz Colley and seconded by Karen Silverthorn.

**COMMUNITY PERSERVATION ACT (CPA) PRESENTATION:**

Linnea Lakin Servey was introduced and presented a slideshow on the CPA. A flyer was distributed to members. A discussion with opportunity for questions and answers followed. On a motion made by Joan Richards and seconded by Karen Silverthorn, LHC members voted to support the efforts of the volunteers who are presenting the information to town boards, committees and other Lancaster citizens. The group plans to prepare and get approval for a Warrant Article to be considered by the townspeople at the upcoming Annual Town Meeting in May.

**PROPOSED PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT IN LANCASTER:**

Heather Lennon reported that the Bayard Thayer Mansion (Hawthorn Hill) has not yet sold although there is still ongoing development of other portions of the estate. Discussion followed reflecting the hope that the land will not be further carved into house lots. It was the consensus of LHC members that developers should be strictly held to the bylaws and regulations as written. Also, careful study should be done by town boards who should be pressured into making serious mistakes. This has recently happened with the construction of an unsightly pump station on George Hill Road on land that was specifically designated as "Open Space".

**SCENIC ROADS BY-LAW:**

Heather Lennon reported she has not yet gotten any official feedback from the Conservation Commission on the matter after Greg Jackson's presentation. Roy Mirabito said he thought the Conservation Commission wanted *all* the town roads names as scenic roads. This needs to be verified. Greg Jackson will soon make the same presentation to the town's Planning Board (PB).

**CEMETERY INITIATIVES:**

**Capital Plan:** Heather Lennon reported she has spoken the Town Administrator (TA), and the Capital Plan has \$10,000 recommended each year for the next three years for hazardous tree removal from the cemeteries.

**National Register of Historic Places (NRHP):** Now that the Old Settlers' Burial Field and the Middle Cemetery have been listed, it's time to submit two more for approval, viz. the Old Common and North Village Cemeteries. A quotation for the necessary consultants' fees shows that the cost would be just over \$10,000. The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) would pay half the cost.

A motion was made by Joan Richards and seconded by Liz Colley for a letter to be sent to the BOS and the TA requesting that they approve this to move forward.

#### **BIRD MUSEUM/FOUNDERS' HALL:**

##### ***on Atlantic Union College (AUC) property***

Heather reported that efforts to sell off property at the AUC campus has caused concern for the "Founders Hall" building (on the NRHP) and the Thayer Bird Museum aka Bartlett Art Gallery. Heather has approached the TA with ideas to preserve the two buildings, land surrounding, and parking lot which have historical significance both for the Seventh-Day Adventist Church and the town. Discussion followed and the matter will be pursued.

#### **EXHIBIT ROOM & HOSMER DOLLHOUSES, PUPPETS/MARIONETTES, TOYS, BOOKS:**

Heather reported that work continues on the collections and once Liz Colley's camera is repaired, she will photograph all the items for inventory records. There is much to be accomplished before a "work-bee" can be held to prepare the exhibit room for an opening to the public.

#### **SIGNS AND MARKERS:**

Heather reported that Kevin Bartlett was able to get the two MA Tercentenary historic markers refurbished and put back in their correct locations. A thank you email was sent to him for his efforts.

#### **ACCESSIONS:**

1. A framed poster of the First Church entitled "Save the Best to Last" originally issued by the MHC several years ago was donated by Anne McLaughlin.
2. Three large pages of maps of Lancaster taken from old atlases were donated by Liz Colley.
3. A hardcover reprint of a diary written by Lancaster's John Gates Thurston about a trip he took to Illinois in 1836 was purchased by Heather Lennon to add to our book collection

A motion was made by Joan Richards to accept all the donations and to reimburse Heather for the cost of the book and for laminating copies of the maps. The total is \$47.77. The motion was seconded by Liz Colley and the vote carried unanimously.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Heather Lennon reminded members of the program on Clara Endicott Sears to be held March 8<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m. by the Lancaster Historical Society at the Hawkins Hall, First Church of Christ, 717 Main Street.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

The next meeting of the LHC is scheduled for Monday, March 23, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. in the LHC Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Richards, Recorder for the Meeting Minutes

