

Lancaster Historical Commission (LHC)

Meeting Minutes

December 28, 2022 via ZOOM

Present:

Amy Brown, Heather Lennon, Marcia Jakubowicz, Joan Richards, Karen Silverthorn

Absent:

Judy Elwell, Mark Schryver, Jean Watson

Guests:

Jay Moody

Call to Order:

Chairperson Heather Lennon called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm. Participants identified themselves with their names and addresses.

Review and Approval of Minutes:

Meeting Minutes from 11-30-22 were approved unanimously as written on a motion made by Karen Silverthorn and seconded by Marcia Jakubowicz.

Appointments:

Chairperson Lennon reported that Joan Richards has recently informed her that she is moving. Her residence at 9 Burbank Lane will be up for sale no later than April, 2023. She has agreed to stay on until the vacancy is filled as long as she remain a legal resident of Lancaster. LHC members discussed possible candidates for filling the full member vacancy. Joan is willing to move to associate member if there is a candidate who would want to be considered for appointment by the Select Board (SB) as following the protocol for membership. Heather Lennon stated that the SB read a notice of appreciation and thanks to Joan Richards at their meeting of December 8, 2022. Joan first became an LHC member in 1992 and worked in the office from 1993 to 2010. After that, she served as an associate and then full member until the present time. The LHC commends Joan highly for her thirty years of dedicated service.

National Register of Historical Places (NRHP) Survey and Planning Grant:

Chairperson Lennon, the town's grant coordinator for this project, met with Massachusetts Historical Commission members as well as representatives from the Public Archaeology Laboratory (PAL) in Pawtucket, RI on December 8, 2022 for a "Start-up Meeting" via ZOOM.. PAL is now fully authorized to begin their work on the four historic cemeteries to be evaluated. If all goes according to schedule, the work should be completed by August, 2023.

Hazardous Tree Removal in the Middle Cemetery:

Chairperson Lennon reported that she had spoken to Ike Kilbourn, the tree removal specialist hired to do the work in the MC. The last phase of tree removal will begin when the weather and Ike's schedule allows.

Local Plan for the Semiquincentennial in 2026:

Heather Lennon reported that she has recently reached to the Middlesex County Volunteer Fife and Drum Corps to see if they may be available for a performance date in Lancaster. While they are cannot perform on the actual day (July 4, 2026), they might be available on days leading up to or after. LHC member Amy Brown's son performs in this group and it is highly recommended. Revolutionary re-enactors may also be contacted through Jay Moody as his group from Boxborough

did a fine job at the Revolutionary War Marker Dedication in 2018.

Discussion followed with suggestions of partnering with Freedom's Way and/or the Joslyn DAR Chapter in Leominster, MA. It may also be possible to apply for funds through Lancaster's Cultural Council. Other possibilities will also be explored.

Community Preservation Act (CPA) Projects:

Discussion took place regarding applying for money from CPA resources to restore the MC after the hazardous trees are all down. Chairperson Lennon reported that she has reached out to several consultants who do this type of work to get estimates. Two have visited and more are scheduled. The due date for application submittal has been extended to January 13, 2023. More meetings with consultants will be arranged and the application will be submitted before the deadline.

Significant Property Developments in Lancaster:

1. The John Eliot Thayer II estate is still on the market for sale.
2. Restoration work continues on two historic residential structures formerly belonging to Atlantic Union College (AUC). They are near the intersection of Main Street and Sterling Road in South Lancaster.
3. The remodeling work at the circa 1790 antique saltbox house at 2121 Main Street, the Oliver Baldwin House on Ballard Hill, is ongoing.

Historical Panels Project:

This agenda item is on hold until the new year begins.

Announcements:

1. Jay Moody mentioned his concern for emergency preparedness for seniors and at-risk citizens of Lancaster during power outages. Apparently, the town does not currently have a plan in place. The LHC supports Jay's campaign to get this problem resolved as it is a serious concern for all.
2. Heather Lennon mentioned that the Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon held on December 13, 2022 at the College Town Inn went very well and thanked Lancaster Historical Society (LHS) member John Schumacher-Hardy for providing the venue and the lunch free of charge.
3. Seth Kilbourn who lives in San Francisco, CA but has deep family ties to Lancaster is planning to soon donate family and town memorabilia to the LHS. An update will be provided at our next meeting.

Adjournment and Future Meeting Date:

Adjournment at 6:37 pm was approved unanimously on a motion made by Karen Silverthorn and seconded by Marcia Jakubowicz.

The next meeting of the LHC is scheduled for Wednesday, January 25, 2023 at 6:00 pm via ZOOM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Richards, Recorder of the Minutes