

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Commission of October 14, 2021

A regular meeting of the Peabody Historical Commission (PHC) was held on Thursday, October 14, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Smith Barn, Felton St., Peabody. Present were Commissioners: John Andruszkiewicz, Michael Bonfanti, Jeff Budd, Carolina Busta, Dave Cronin, Deborah Eskenazi, Frank Hardy, Andy Metropolis and Cheryl Millard. Absent: None.

Also present were: Rachel & Joshua Meyer, Epoch; Dick St. Pierre, Ramone D'Olivier, Pat Todisco, Judy Suleski

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Michael Bonfanti.

Upon **Motion**, duly made by Dave Cronin, seconded by Cheryl Millard, to suspend the rules and let guests speak before resuming normal agenda items. Motion passed: unanimous.

Chairman's Remarks: 1) Mike spoke to Mrs. Mackey re: the Needham Cemetery. She has been taking care of it herself.

Correspondence: None.

Approval of Minutes: Upon **Motion**, duly made by Andy Metropolis, seconded by Dave Cronin, to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of September 16, 2021. Motion passed: unanimous.

Committee Reports: 16 Crowninshield St: The plaque will be completed in November. Winn would like to hold a ceremony in November. Debby will get the date and make sure the Mayor is invited. The Commission is going to continue pushing for benches.

Old Business: Historic Signage: The sign maker will make 4 signs per district. The Mayor is paying for signage.

Cemeteries - CPC Grant & Signage: There are 16 templates ready. If anyone knows of a cemetery that needs a new sign, let Mike know. Debby & Cheryl are going to check out signage at New Russell and Felton Family cemeteries. Cheryl is also going to take new pictures of the Old South Burial Ground. Mike would like to start asking neighbors if they will take care of cemeteries in their neighborhoods. Each sign costs approximately \$135 including posts, lettering and installation.

2 Washington St/St. Paul's Church Updates: No update.

Donn Conn/CPC Funding: He has not responded.

Status of Old South Burial Ground: Rachel & Josh Meyer, Epoch, have been restoring headstones. Mike is hoping to build a relationship with them for future restorations. Epoch has been in business approximately five years. They started ten years ago saving a cemetery in Gloucester, took classes, apprenticed with stone conservatives. There are no conservators on the North Shore. They have restored close to 2,000 headstones with the oldest grave being 1647. Rachel worked for the City of Salem and preserved five cemeteries. Their goal is to stop the erosion. They have 30 out of 65 done and hope to complete another 10-15 if the weather permits. These are mostly marble. Epoch suggests taking 3-D scans and using magnets to attach a sign to the headstone with the information as they can not be re-etched or brought back. They would like to see the Emerson Cemetery restored next.

Sutton House Marker: There is going to be a ceremony with both of the Sutton House boards to place the marker on Saturday, October 30th, 1:00. Cheryl will email invitations.

House Markers: Ron Christianson will make historic house marker templates at the Sr. Center for the cost of materials. We have to provide him with dimensions.

New Business: 20A Franklin St: Pat Todisco has a good reputation, is bringing the downtown back and trying to restore 20A Franklin. He is having an issue finding wood windows and is here seeking relief. Pat is able to take windows from the back and use them to restore front and side windows but can not find wood windows as materials are not readily available. It will take 3-6 months to get historically correct windows. He would like to use vinyl windows in the back and thinks he'll need 9-10 of them. The front will still be historically accurate. It will be a financial burden to wait 3-6 months and cost \$1,000. There was a discussion about whether or not vinyl windows should be allowed, if they'll detract from the historical value of the house, if Pat has exhausted all avenues. Mike is going to call the Sr. Center and see if the wood shop can help. If not, a decision will have to be made to proceed. His view is to move on as Pat has made the effort to do the right thing is being made.

67 Margin: Ramone D'Olivier, general contractor, has been hired to replace the porch that was hit by a car a few months ago. He is going to rebuild it to it's original footprint but would like to use 1"x6" pressure treated wood for the floor. Mike spoke to the building inspector who will keep an eye on the project and make sure it is being done as promised.

182 Lynn St: The upper floor is vinyl, the lower is wood. They will replace the lower floor with wood.

143 Lynnfield St: This is the L. Fine Building. Mike spoke to a few department heads who all say to tear it down. There is a group looking at 13 Corwin, Stahl, which is also in the process of being demolished.

Felton St. Cemetery: The MRI Center took care of Felton Cemetery. Ed Charest has talked to the developer about maintaining it during construction. There was a discussion about adding care of the cemetery to their special permit and asking the new owner/property management company to care for it once the development is complete.

Military Exhibit: The Historical Society would like to invite everyone to the opening of the Military Exhibit on November 11th.

John Andruszkiewicz:

7 Park St: Joan Suleski has a condo at 7 Park St., the former United Baptist Church. None of the owners are aware of their responsibility. The city has altered the brick sidewalk by adding handicapped ramps. There was a discussion about who owns the sidewalk – 7 Park owners have been told that the sidewalk and Park Square area are theirs to maintain. They want to add outside HVAC systems but want to make sure they are able to. It was suggested that they build boxes around each one to make them blend in to the building.

Remarks by Commissioners:

John Andruszkiewicz: John is going home Thursday. It was an interesting meeting.

Jeff Budd: Great meeting, lots of substance to work on.

Lola Busta: Noting to add.

Dave Cronin: Nothing to add.

Debby Eskenazi: Debby has been asked to sit on the Parks & Rec advisory board and asked if she should bring up cemeteries yet (no, from Mike). She would like to discuss rules/parameters for issues similar to Pat Todisco's. She is going to call the owners of 18 Lynn St. and ask if Pat can have their old wooden windows.

Frank Hardy: He makes a good argument – the pandemic is across the world and these are extraordinary times. He has made every reasonable effort. He doesn't want to be punitive to someone trying to do the right thing. Maybe we can afford him relief with a motion allowing it only at 20A Franklin.

Dianne Marchese: Nothing to add.

Andy Metropolis: the windows bother him. In the last 25 years, the Historical Commission has denied vinyl. Pat is doing this to flip the house, not preserve its history. By allowing vinyl windows, Andy is worried the Commission is setting a precedent. Hopefully Ron Christianson can help. Debby agrees, adding that he buys a lot of property and may take this as permission to continue using vinyl windows.

Cheryl Millard: Nothing to add.

Next Meeting Date: The next meeting date is scheduled for November 18, 2021 at 6:00 pm at the Smith Barn.

Adjournment: **Motion** to adjourn at 7:55 p.m. by John Andruskiewicz, seconded by Dave Cronin. Motion passed: unanimous.