



ACTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2021
7:30 pm

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Present: Bill Dickinson (BD) (Chair), Bob Ferrara (BF), Doug Herrick (DH), Bill Klauer (BK), Victoria Beyer (VB), Dean Charter (DC) - (Select Board Liaison), and Alissa Nicol (AN)

Absent: Brad Maxwell (BM)

1. Opening

Chair William Dickinson opened the meeting at 7:35 p.m. and read the procedures and agreed-on policies the Town developed for these web-based Zoom meetings.

2. Regular Business

- 1) **Approval of March Minutes** – The meeting minutes from the AHC's March meeting were reviewed. It was proposed that changes be made in the Citizens' Concerns section and were approved unanimously by a vote of 6-0.
- 2) **Citizen Concerns:** A concern was raised about a barn demolition request from the owner of 358 Great Road.
- 3) **Any ZBA/Planning Board projects on the CRL:** DH stated that he had reviewed the meeting agendas and hearings of the ZBA and did not recognize any known historic properties for review.
- 4) **Bridge Project between Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and TTT:** Nothing to report while we wait for the CPC decision on funding.
- 5) **Archaeological By-Law Update:** Town Counsel Nina Pickering joined the meeting to review with BF the various suggested changes to the draft by-law. It was suggested to remove the explicit mention of an applicant's right to appeal to the Select Board. In addition, references to the intended use of the land should drive decisions and triggers and not the type or identity of the owner. AN brought up the issue of how to define lot area: total lot size vs. the size of the undeveloped area within the lot. Nina will follow



up. BF will continue to socialize the final draft with town departments and groups.

- 6) **Historic House Plaque Requests Update: 292 Central Street, 14 Maple Street, 93 Harris St., 29 Windsor Ave.** All of these plaque requests were approved and VB will follow up with the vendor making the plaques.
- 7) **53 River Street Update:** DH and BK updated the group on the Grey & Pape intensive archaeological investigation of the dam site that occurred on April 13-15. Test holes revealed foundations and floors of the old mill buildings, shoddy wool and buttons, and various metal items and machinery. G&P will return the week of April 26 to remove some of the asphalt with a backhoe. The AHC decided to pursue nomination and eligibility finding of the site as a candidate for the National Register of Historic Places.
- 8) **Status of Converting CRL to MACRIS:** BD reported that he has all the completed work that PAL completed, and that the MACRIS team is still reviewing and uploading the survey forms. This can take up to a year given the large number of forms received by MACRIS.
- 9) **Update on 19-21 Maple Street** – No news since the last meeting, although the AHC was encouraged to stay current on recommendations from the town. AN will follow-up.
- 10) **Historic Marker Program Segment on Acton TV** – There is still interest in having Acton TV do a piece on the AHC historic marker program. We will continue to work out the details and determine who will do the on-air presentation.

3. New/Special Business

- 1) **88 Prospect Street Preliminary Design Review:** Owner Joe Hebert walked the group through his renovation proposal to remove some mid-century add-ons and elements from this historic building and extend the original salt box roof slope to give the overall design an integrated, more historic look. BK stated that this house was identical to the Simon Hunt house and the latter should be reviewed for renovation ideas.
- 2) **Is 7 and 13 Strawberry Hill Road Historical?** This question was raised in an email by a town resident. The answer was yes, and BD will respond.
- 3) **Discuss Conservation Restriction on Morrison Farm:** An email from Bettina Abe of the Acton Agricultural Commission proposing a conservation restriction on the Morrison Farm property was discussed. This proposal would retain the existing farmhouse and restore the barn for use by the Town. The existing community gardens would be retained along with the walking trails. The proposal was seen as generally positive, although the issue was tabled until the next meeting when everyone will have had time to review it.



4. Consent Items - None

5. Adjournment: At 9:36 p.m., it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously 6-0.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

- Meeting minutes of March 2021