



ACTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes February 8, 2023, 7:30 pm

Town Hall, Room 126

Present: Bill Dickinson - Chair (BD), Victoria Beyer (VB), Bill Klauer (BK), and Bob Ferrara (BF) – temporary Clerk

Guests: Anne Forbes (AF), Patrick Hearn (PH) - Agricultural Commission

Absent: Alissa Nicol (AN), Barb Rhines (BR) Fran Arsenault - Select Board Liaison (FA)

Chair BD called the meeting to order at 7:45PM.

I. Regular Business

1) Review of meeting minutes from January 11th – Meeting minutes were not available so no action was taken.

2) Citizen concerns: none

3) Any ZBA/Planning Board projects on the CRL?: none

4) Bridge project between Rail Trail and TTT at old Davis Road update: no update

5) Archaeological by-law implementation update: BF reported that he believes further work is needed with Planning Department to ensure that the bylaw regulations and procurement procedures are in place to quickly hire any of the cultural resource management firm needed for a preliminary assessment. AN noted earlier that a test case may come from the development of the Grace property. BF will contact Kristen Guichard to discuss next steps.

BF also made a proposal for late spring public session at the Acton Memorial Library. Duncan Ritchie could be asked to discuss Acton's archeological environment (pre-contact, post-contact, and more recent). The Library has a fund to support a stipend. As was done, with November 3 talk by Peter Waksman, BF and BD could add a segment (~15 minutes) explaining the new bylaw. BF also noted Acton TV has shared dates when they could stream the session if we

chose. The Historical Commission was very supportive and advised BF to continue with the planning and report back.

6) 53 River Street update – Nothing new. Waiting on the MOU from Army Corps of Engineers, which the HC and HDC can then sign.

7) Status of converting CRL to MACRIS – nothing to report

8) Under demo delay: 27 Martin Street – BF contacted Kim Amaral via email a week ago and she reported “no updates”. HC suggested that next time BF contacts Kim he should mention that neighbors are asking and if Kim wishes to do anything before the clock runs out.

9) Historical Plaque Applications: no new applications.

10) National Register application for Woodlawn Cemetery: BK presented a list of several historic properties to be considered for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Properties, possibly to form a National Historic District.

1. Woodlawn Cemetery and the Woodlawn Memorial Chapel
2. Robbins House Site, well, and memorial alarm stone
3. Morrison Farm
4. Site of Robbins Ice House and Mill Pond
- 5 Site of East Acton Train Station
6. Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
7. Barker's Forge and house site

BD asks if we need a consultant to look at this proposal and nearby properties. AF noted a revised opinion from the MHC and will send copies of the inventory forms for the Robbins House and the alarm stone. VB suggested an informal conversation with the HDC on what might be included. BD suggest creating a map and simple at the next HC meeting and then approach relevant committees (e.g. Open Space Committee, Agricultural Commission, Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, Land Stewardship Committee, and Historic District Commission). This was well received by all present.

II. New/Special Business

- 1) Review demolition application for 149 Central Street** – A hearing is set up for the March 8 HC meeting. The Building Inspector had many concerns about condition of property. BD will schedule site visit before March 8.
- 2) Morrison Farm CR update:** PH reported on January 23 Select Board meeting, at which several letters were submitted in support of the proposed plan for Morrison Farm. The Board did not approve on putting on the May 1 Town Meeting warrant. Some said they were uncomfortable for ongoing maintenance costs. AF and others noted the long history of “solutions”. PH requested the HC consider advancing a larger proposal BK has offered to connect several Concord

Road/East Acton properties in a National Historic District. (see agenda item #10 above). PH noted there has never been a formal survey done on the ~32.5 acres.

3) Update on purchase discussion of 549 Main Street per OSC.

Alissa Nicol informed us of proposal to purchase the Conant Open Space Committee warrant on TM. AN and BF participated in a January 8th walk around the property sponsored by the Acton Water District and the Acton Conservation Trust.

4) Review of updated site plan for 247 Pope Road

BD showed new plans modified per HC requests. Modified stone walls looks good.

III. Consent Items - None

IV. Announcements

1) Eastern Massachusetts Historical Commission Zoom meeting of Jan 31.

Several HC members attended this first meeting of this MHC-sponsored coalition. There were presentations from allied groups. The Zoom recording is now available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5I3OxxEYCaU>

2) Acton 250 Committee Agenda Item.

Now that the Acton 250 Committee is beginning to meet, it was suggested that the HC have a standing agenda item on updates from this committee.

Adjournment

VB moved and BK seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 9:09 PM.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

None