



TOWN OF WATERTOWN
Historical Commission
Administration Building
149 Main Street
WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS 02472

Elise Loukas, Chairperson
David Russo, Vice Chairperson
Thomas Melone, Member
Susan Steele, Member
Marilynne K. Roach, Member
Joseph Panto, Member
Matthew Walter, Member

Minutes: Thursday, November 14, 2019 Philip Pane Lower Hearing Room 7:00 p.m.

Historical Commission Members Present: Elise Loukas, Chair, Thomas Melone, Marilynne Roach, Matthew Walter, Susan Steele, Joseph Panto

Member(s) Absent: David Russo

Public Present: N/A

Staff Present: Gideon Schreiber, Susan C. Jenness

Loukas opened the meeting with the minutes.

1. Minutes- From October 10, 2019 Historical Commission Meeting.

After a review of the minutes from the October 10, 2019 a motion was made.

Motion: A motion was made by Roach accepting the minutes from the October 10, 2019 meeting. Steele seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached accepting the minutes of the October 10, 2019 meeting.

2. Review- Meeting and Filing Dates for 2020

Motion: Roach made a motion accepting the meeting and filing dates for the Historical Commission for 2020. Panto seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached accepting the meeting and filing dates for the Historical Commission for 2020.

- 3. Update-** 77 Riverside St. The George Tyler Bigelow Landmark Designated Structure- To review proposed modifications to the existing gutter system. Mark and Ernesta Krackiewicz, Applicants/Owners

Schreiber updated the commission that the owners of 77 Riverside St. had contacted the office seeking information about how they should proceed with the installation of solar panels given the landmark designation status of the property. They also inquired about the possibility of making some repairs to the gutters.

Schreiber explained to the board that the installation of solar panels is a non-applicable process, and that a letter of determination was issued by the Steve Magoon, in his official capacity as the Acting Conservation Agent which also contained directives on how to proceed with the gutter project if and when they decided to propose that project to the board.

Mark and Ernesta Krackiewicz said they will do more research on the gutters, and said they will submit an application with the Office of Historic Preservation if they decide to apply to make changes to the existing gutter system

- 4. CPAC Update-** Steele updated the commission on the latest developments on CPAC.

Steele informed the board about Jen Goldson who was selected to become the coordinator for the CPAC. She holds a Masters in Community Planning from MIT. She has worked with a number of other communities such as Chelsea, Bridgewater, Sharon and Middleboro prior to her arrival in Watertown. Goldson is also the creator of the Franklin Park Coalition. She is currently developing a schedule for setting up the business of the committee and she is currently planning the 1st CPAC kick off meeting. Steele said she was the candidate who brought the most experience to the process.

She attended the kick off meeting at the Commanders Mansion and has decided to slow down the process on community engagement in order to be very thorough when the process moves forward into engagement in the community. Schreiber clarified for the board that the first public process was moved from December of 2019 until at least January of 2020.

Steele said that each member of the CPAC has been asked to engage at least 10 guests to commit to the first public engagement meeting. She said she plans to speak at the next CPAC meeting about inviting the group to come and speak with the Historical Commission about plans for future projects.

Steele mentioned that she is interested in speaking more about what should be part of the plan for historic preservation and also about potentials for local projects.

- 5. Discussion-** Demolition Delay Ordinance

Loukas began the discussion by informing the board that Cambridge was the first city in the area with a Demolition Delay Ordinance. She and Schreiber discussed that they have houses

that are on a list of protected homes. Loukas said she thought there were and drawbacks to making a list of protected houses, including the time it would take to produce such a list.

Schreiber said that many of the houses that are protected will become apparent over time. Steele pointed out that funds for CPA cannot go to private properties. She said she would like a group of people to do some research on this topic for additional information in her growing role as a member of the two boards.

The group focused on the aspect of the filing of a demolition application as a trigger for a demolition delay hearing. Schreiber brought up a house that had been renovated on Summer St. and Pearl St. He said that this house would have been a significant building if the town had such a list. He said the project involved removal of the façade, a side, and it was cut down at the roof but there was no trigger for a demolition delay hearing.

Loukas brought up the house on Belmont St. that the board had reviewed and said that the house now looks like a completely different house.

Schreiber said that Cambridge has clear criteria about significant buildings and demolition.

Loukas suggested the group to go to a Newton Historical Commission meeting. Schreiber said he knows staff in Cambridge who would come and discuss their process at a future meeting. Loukas said she would like to find a video that they could watch as a group.

Walter said he was most interested in an early weeding out process and how that would likely be dealt with. Steele said that she valued the public and their participation in the process.

Loukas said that she thought there was a lack of a good definition for demolition and asked Schreiber about garages and accessory structures. Schreiber responded that the definition of demolition is any act of pulling down either total or substantial and it included houses and accessory structures at the current time.

Walter inquired about the houses that are getting an addition on one side, and he noted that one wall could be up to 25% of a structure. Schreiber said that would include a lot of structures in Watertown. Steele said that preservation districts can be an interesting tool. Schreiber said the heart of the matter is that you do not want your time taken up with things that are not significant. He clarified for them that he thought what they do not want is a house coming to them for the removal of 1 wall. He said he felt they need to clarify what the next steps that should be taken to come to some resolution on this matter.

Schreiber reminded the group to consider whether or not they want every house in Watertown that is tearing off the roof to be coming before them. He added that he did not think that the Historical Commission wanted Watertown families to not to be able to add an extra bedroom to their house if they needed one.

Loukas asked members to read page 45 of the Model Demolition Delay before the next meeting and that they should be prepared to discuss their thoughts.

Roach said she felt that the Historical Commission should be part of the beginning of the process instead of at the bitter end.

Motion: Roach made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 PM. Walter seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 PM.