

Minutes
Watertown Historical Commission
Thursday, September 14, 2017
Philip Pane Lower Hearing Room
7:00 p.m.

Historical Commission Members Present: Thomas Melone, Susan Steele, Marilynn K. Roach, David Russo, Elise Loukas

Member(s) Absent: Joseph Panto, Donald Berg

Staff Present: Gideon Schreiber, Susan C. Jenness (adopted on 10.12.17)

David J. Russo opened the meeting.

1. Discussion on Duties and election of a new Chairperson for the Historical Commission

The discussion on electing a new chairperson for the HC and possibly a vice chairperson continued. Russo was asked if he would consider vice chairperson once the Chair has been selected. He said that he would consider.

Roach explained at the last meeting and again at this one, that she thought Loukas would make a good choice because she is a lawyer and seems very comfortable in situations that would call for her to stand up to an audience during intense conditions. Roach said that she would not consider herself as a chair for the commission though.

Loukas said she would be doing a lot less traveling in the upcoming future which would allow her to be more available than at prior times. She is considering.

Melone pointed out that all of the duties Russo has been responsible for in recent years could be handled much easier if divided by two. He also said he was in favor of considering a lawyer for the chair position.

The discussion about the election was continued until the October 12th meeting.

2. Minutes from August 10, 2017 Historical Commission Meeting

After brief discussion and minor modification a motion was made to adopt the minutes of the August 10, 2017 Historical Commission Meeting.

Motion: A motion was made by Melone to adopt the minutes as modified. Loukas seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached to adopt the minutes of the August 10, 2017 meeting.

3. Discussion on Historical Commission article about 105 Russell Ave.

In 2005 Russo said that the HC had done some research on the home at 105 Russell Ave. At that time, the research was reported into the record, and recently Russo who was conducting new research on the home found some new and very significant information about the house very worthy of writing about.

Russo said that in 2005 it was thought that R.B. Wells was the designer of the home at 105 Russell Ave. Russo recently discovered that the designer was in fact Royal B. Wills who is credited for reintroducing the Cape Cod Cottage into the American vernacular.

Russo stated that Wills is on par with Ralph Adams Cram, the American architect associated with designing collegiate and ecclesiastical buildings. Cram is credited with having the ability to understand very old forms, such as Gothic style and translate them into modern buildings.

Melone agreed that Royal Barry Wills was a very famous architect. On You-Tube, Melone said he saw Bob Villa interview the son of Wills on This Old House. Melone encouraged members of the HC to look on line to see examples of his work, and interviews about his contributions to American Architectural Design.

Russo intends to update the form B on 105 Russell Ave. The commission agreed that they would like the Historical Society to publish the article in their newsletter coming out later on in the fall.

Once the newsletter is published, a link will be posted on the Historical Commission Web Site for public viewing.

4. New Business

Russo is assisting the Newton Historical Commission with their endeavor of updating and documenting some Form B's in their municipality.

Russo submitted historical research letters that arose from when he was recently doing research for the Historical Plaque Program on three homes in Watertown. The letters will be filed in the Historical Preservation Office and also scanned and emailed out to the members of the HC to enjoy.

The meeting was adjourned.