



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

Elise Loukas, Chairperson
Thomas Melone, Member
Susan Steele, Member
Marilynne K., Member
Joseph Panto, Member
Matthew Walter, Member
Richard Glenn, Member

Minutes: Thursday, October 13, 2022, Remote Meeting 7:00 p.m.

Historical Commission Members Present: Elise Loukas, Susan Steele, Marilynne Roache, Matthew Walter, Richard Glenn, Thomas Melone, Joseph Panto

Member(s) Absent: N/A

Public Present: Todd Rivers

Staff Present: Larry Field, Senior Planner, Susan C. Jenness, Assistant

1. Acceptance of Minutes - Review and Acceptance of Minutes from September 15th Meeting.

After a review of the minutes from the September 15, 2022, meeting, they were accepted as written.

Motion: Roach made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Glenn seconded the motion made by Roach.

Roll Call: After a roll call, it was determined the minutes were unanimously accepted as approved.

2. Applications for Community Preservation Committee (CPC)

Old Burying Ground and Common St. Cemeteries Rehabilitation- Marilynne Roach, President of the Historical Society stepped out of her role as member of the Historical

Commission to present the topic of the Application to the CPC, for the Old Burying Ground and Common St. Cemeteries Rehabilitation.

Roach explained that both cemeteries need some professional upgrades to maintain their deep value to the community. She explained that the issues are regarding some stonework, some landscape, that include trees that could eventually pose a threat to monuments and visitors as well. Roach defined the scope of the proposal to have a professional consultant evaluate the cemeteries and determine the best order for the improvements to take place. Roach explained that no work would be done in this phase of the application, but a deep, thorough inventory of the work with a view towards preservation of the burying grounds for many years to come would. Roach clarified that the cemeteries are owned by the city, and they are a benefit to the residents of the city as well.

Mark Krackiewicz, Chair of the CPC was present. He claimed it would be beneficial if the members of the Historical Commission would make a statement, they agreed this was a good project for Historic Preservation funds of the CPA. Loukas reminded members that the cemeteries were on the Historic National Register, so they needed only to decide if they would like to support this project for CPA Historic Preservation funds.

Motion: Walter made a motion that he was in support of this project application for historic CPA funds to hire a consultant to inventory the variety of work needed at burying grounds and cemeteries. Steele seconded the motion.

Roll Call: A roll call was taken, that Roach recused herself from, and all other members agreed with the motion made by Walter.

Historic Edmund Fowle House and Museum Gutter Replacement.

Todd Rivers, the Vice President of the Historical Society was present to explain the project to replace the gutters at the Fowle House and Museum. Rivers explained the gutter system was wood on the historic house and museum had been completely replaced in 2006 and 2008. The wood has continued to rot out, resulting in water seeping into the 250-year-structure. River explained that artifacts and objects are also housed inside the building that require protection. Rivers said he was told within the next 7 years; a new wooden gutter system would rot out and risk more damage to the internal and external structure and all the contents.

Rivers said his team consulted with Historic New England and were informed about fiber gutters systems that replicates the old Boston look. The new systems features an internal structure, wider than the original gutter that increases the capacity to channel more water without leaking over the surfaces of the building. Rivers reported that the contractor Fiberglass of Massachusetts. is also the manufacturer and they have installed this system on several historic homes in the area. River clarified that the Historic District Commission

had already approved a Certificate of Appropriateness on the work after a public hearing, including all the materials.

Motion. Walter made a motion to support the project as worthy of historic funds for CPA. Panto seconded the motion.

Roll Call: A roll call was taken, and Roach recused herself, but all other members agreed with the motion made by Walter.

Historic Edmund Fowle House and Museum Climate Control/HVAC Upgrade

Rivers was present to review the project scope for the Historical Society. He described the interior of the Fowle House and Museum as filled with artifacts, which some of them are as old as the Fowle House, now celebrating its 250th birthday. The rooms now fluctuate in both temperature and moisture levels. The system now in use is not being replaced; it is being upgraded so that it would be able to stabilize the temperatures and moisture in the future.

Steel asked if there were areas inside the house or museum that needed additional protection. Rivers said the whole inside of the structure would be protected by the system upgrade. Walter asked what makes this upgrade different than air conditioning. Rivers explained that the new system has a humidity agent that puts moisture back into the air, and it comes with a monitoring feature that makes the atmospheric adjustments as needed.

Motion: Walter made a motion that he would support the application for historic CPA funding for the HVAC and climate control upgrades at the Fowle House. Melone seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members except for Roach agreed with the motion made by Walter.

3. Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Update by Matthew Walter

Walter reported that the members of the CPC reviewed all the incoming projects to assess the application process and the eligibility requirements to move them forward. Members discussed whether there were any improvements needed by applicants to qualify for the funding. He reported that he thought all projects were well thought out. Walter also reported some members of the CPC felt that the Edmund Fowle House, now applying for funding for several projects is not opened enough hours to the public. Krackiewicz who was present, reported he felt that the Historical Society had underestimated the cost of the gutter replacement proposal. Walter said there were four Historic Preservation applications, one for Housing funding, and one project for Open Space funding. He said there is an upcoming discussion session planned for the next meeting.

4. Discussion A. Historic Assets Inventory

Field was present to discuss a proposal and a timeline he created for upcoming opportunities for grant money to support the execution of a Historic Assets Inventory of the City.

Field defined the areas that the MHC grants are eligible for. He shared on the screen the document he planned to help them strategize without missing any deadlines or skip any criteria.

2022 MHC Grants

The Massachusetts Historical Commission's Survey and Planning Grant program offers support for:

- Completion of **cultural resource inventories**.
- Nomination of significant properties to the **National Register of Historic Places**.
- Completion of community-wide **preservation plans**; and
- Other types of **studies, reports, publications, and projects** that relate to the identification and protection of significant historic properties and sites.

Application Process Fiscal Year 2023

Pre-application (letter of intent) deadline:	November 14, 2022
Invitations for full applications issued:	December 14, 2022
Full application deadline:	February 6, 2023
Award selection:	March 8, 2023
Project end date:	June 30, 2024

Pre-application must identify local match/request specific amount and include 1-page narrative explaining project & discussing how it meets the selection criteria.

Selection criteria: public benefit, firmness of local match, financial need, realistic proposal (timeline & budget), geographic distribution (including whether community has received prior award).

Next Historical Commission meeting: November 10

Field noted that the Commission has been considering two possible study scopes for the Commission: a geographic area (south of the Charles River) and converting raw property research compiled by David Russo into Form Bs to be submitted to the MHC for

inclusion in MACRIS. The proposed scope could include both (or at least part of both). Russo's data comes from many parts of the city.

Walter stated he was pleased about the specific area Field targeted for geographical focus. Field noted that at the last meeting he used two maps for his presentation; one organized by color to track ages of the structures; the second one organized to show where MACRIS forms already existed. The area has many old buildings but few Form Bs. Field was asked about the specific streets he identified and whether it was necessary to be specific. Field discussed there is a lot of new building taking place on and around Galen St. where there is a lot of 1950-60 and 70's and that could help to confirm a target area to pursue. Field urged members to create a target so that MHC would realize how organized and ready they were to use the funding wisely. Walter said he spoke to Russo earlier that day and he agreed this was a good area to start. Melone pointed out the large number of interesting buildings on either side of the Mass. Turnpike at the end of Galen Street. Loukas agreed they would need to identify a target geographic area by streets.

Field said that next month they could decide on a specific definition of how they would approach using the funds. Steele asked if there would be enough time given the short window of time they have now. Field said as a full-time employee immersed in the topic, he would be happy to get the leg work done and ensure they are meeting deadlines.

Loukas took a poll and all members agreed with Walter's idea to identify an area and figure out the metrics, while also considering use of Russo's raw data.

The working group of Walter, Loukas and Glenn is still in effect. Field will reach out as things progress in the process and ask them to participate in various tasks where needed.

5. Review and Acceptance

Review and Acceptance for Meeting and Filing Dates for the Historical Commission in 2023 Members of the HC reviewed the meeting dates for the year 2023. There were 2 options for the December meeting due to Chanukah. Steele discovered the earlier date conflicted with the first night of the holiday. Loukas suggested not scheduling a meeting in December, unless someone came forward to file an application and needed a public hearing on a night that was conducive to members of the HC and the applicant. Members agreed not to schedule a meeting to allow all members of the HC and the public to celebrate the monthly holiday of December and that a meeting will only be scheduled if needed that works for everybody.

Motion: Roach made a motion to accept the dates of the 2023 calendar except for the month of December where they would schedule a meeting if one was needed. Panto seconded the motion.

Roll Call: A roll call was taken, and all agreed with the motion made by Roach.

6. Agent Report

Field reported that he had not seen the follow up meeting to further the discussion about the Demolition Delay proposal on the City Council Agenda. Steele asked if that was because they were busier than normal, and Field explained it is very normal to wait a couple of months for such an item to go back on the agenda. He pointed out each Council member is involved in many other activities. He said he would keep them updated.

7. Discussion

Categories of Historic Preservation Award- Walter proposed revamping the nomination categories to shift the focus of the awards to mainly on preservation projects. Walter explained he attended one ceremony in the past and found it very confusing. Walter proposed keeping two of the categories (The Richard Mastrangelo Memorial Award and the Citizenship Award), he argued the case for converting the remaining five categories into three focuses on projects. He said the present categories made it difficult to understand why the awards were being given out by the Historical Commission.

Loukas said she was sorry Walter thinks the awards categories are confusing, she is confident that the public understand them. She spoke about her years as a member on the HC and her own personal experience participating in the whole process of the Historic Preservation Awards. She cited important highlights of awards that were given to citizens who had accomplished important work that highlighted the unique and special historic fabric of the history of Watertown.

Walter proposed framework was screen shared illustrating how Walter proposed keeping the awards for leadership and education with three categories to recognize projects initiated by homeowners, developers and public/non-profit entities.

Steele said she wanted to explore where they could go from this point, of what had been and what Walter was suggesting. Steele wondered if there were some ways to incorporate Walters' concept of the three project categories they could be added to the list of existing categories. Steele said she felt it was significant to note that people love being part of something celebrating the history of Watertown and its unique values. Panto agreed with Steele that it would be good to try to merge the two documents together. Glenn said he liked the idea of creating a hybrid plan that would merge the two sets of categories. He said he took to heart all that Loukas said about how important the Historic Preservation Awards have been to the residents over the years.

Loukas asked if everyone would be open to having the lists merged and then they could discuss it again at the next meeting. Loukas asked Jenness to merge the categories and put the item on the agenda for more discussion at the next meeting.

Steele asked what the status was about public meetings and how long they would continue to meet on Zoom. Field indicated that is legislation that was passed to allow meetings to take place remotely until at least April of 2023. He said he was aware that beyond that point, there are opportunities to hold hybrid meetings, allowing people who could not get to City Hall, a chance to participate online. He said he would keep the members informed.

Motion: Panto made a motion to close the meeting at 9:00 PM. Steele seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Loukas roll called members and they all agreed to close the meeting at 9:00 PM.