



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, May 12, 2022, Remote meeting 7:00 p.m.

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

Member(s) Absent: Richard Glenn

Public Present: N/A

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

1. Review- Minutes from January 13, 2022.

The minutes from the January 13, 2022, meeting were reviewed at the March meeting. No members had questions or changes to propose. No motion was made because only three members present who attended the January 13 meeting were at the March meeting.

At the May 12, 2022, meeting, members who were present at the January 13, 2022, meeting made a motion to accept the minutes from the January 13, 2022, meeting.

Motion: Roach made a motion to accept the minutes from the January 13, 2022, meeting. Walter seconded the motion made by Roach.

Poll: A poll was taken, and members voted to approve the minutes from the January 13, 2022, meeting.

2. Review- Minutes from April 14, 2022.

The minutes from the April 14, 2022, meeting were reviewed and accepted as written.

Motion: A motion was made by Panto to accept the minutes as written. Roach seconded the motion.

Poll: A poll was taken and the minutes from the April 14, 2022, meeting were approved.

3. CPC Update

Walter reported that there was not a status of any new developments to report to members of the Historical Commission for this meeting.

4. Discussion- Historic Plaque Program

Loukas reported that there was a high rate of plaque applications coming in for research by the members of the plaque program research team. Jenness added that it is common for the rate of the filing for historical plaque applications to spike when the spring like weather sets in.

Members discussed whether it was time to have another training session with David Russo taking place at the Free Public Library to better support him in the research of incoming plaques. Loukas said she would discuss this with Russo and ask if he felt he needed more support and thought that holding another training was a good idea.

HC members discussed that they would like to explore new ways to inform residents about the plaque program and let them know that having a historical plaque did not bind them to any special restrictions or ordinances.

Jenness agreed that she would let commission members know the next time City Manager announced they were looking for material to insert into the water bills and said she would submit an announcement about the plaque program to the city manager for consideration.

5. Discussion- Historic Preservation Awards

Loukas said there was discussion taking place regarding the Historic Preservation Awards round the time the pandemic hit in 2020. She said she thought this was a good time to discuss what an awards ceremony would look like coming back from the age of the pandemic. Loukas suggested an outdoor ceremony at the Commanders Mansion might be the safest and an enjoyable way to approach a ceremony considering Covid, and she wanted feedback and ideas from others present.

Jenness reported there was at least one or two nominations left over from the plans made in anticipation for the ceremony that was cancelled. Jenness reported she and Loukas worked back then to cut down the size of the pre-existing nomination packet and said they might be able to offer access to the nomination process using a form of app, thus eliminating paper forms that would need mailing or emailing for consideration.

Loukas said that September seemed like a good time to hold a ceremony and Jenness offered it worked well when they hold the monthly meeting the week before the ceremony to use the final meeting to make last minutes adjustments to the plans. The September meeting falls on September 15th (due to the Labor Day Holiday week), and so the ceremony would likely be scheduled for September 22, 2022.

Walter said he would be interested in making sure there was an opportunity to award developers whose building efforts result in restoration and/or repurpose of historic assets of the city. Loukas suggested that they review the nominations categories at the upcoming Historical Commission that is scheduled for June 9th. The discussion will continue to evolve at the meeting in June.

6. Announcement- Memorial Day Parade 2022

Loukas announced that Panto and his brother are entering a restored car from their collection in the Memorial Day Parade. She invited Panto to explain further.

Panto informed colleagues and staff that he and his brother restore classic automobiles in their spare time. This year they were able to enter one of their cars into the Memorial Day Parade for show.

The Panto brothers will drape a banner for the Watertown Historical Commission across the car. They hope to amplify commission presence in the city, reminding everyone of their continued efforts to call attention to the value, and protect both the buildings and neighborhoods that are historically and architecturally significant, and woven in o the fabric of the city.

Panto said the brothers are particularly honored to have the privilege of driving the parade route with a veteran of the US armed services who is from Watertown. The veteran will ride alongside the brothers in their restored classic on what is planned to be a day set aside to honor those who have protected and sacrificed for us all.