

The West Brookfield Historical Commission met on Wednesday, February 6, 2019 at 7:00 P.M. in the Commission Office in the Town Hall. Attending were Jesse Morrison, Dan Hamilton, Anne-Marie Nolan, Dick Rossman presided. Dan Hamilton agreed to take minutes for this meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Website- Dan confirmed that the new Scholarship Application and information was available on the website. He also noted that he has paid the domain name renewal fee to GoDaddy.com and will submit the bill at the next meeting. He noted that Doug Sumner had contacted him about renewing the annual hosting service at a discounted rate. Doug was asked to submit an invoice to the Commission at the PO Box address. As of this meeting, the delivered mail had not included his invoice. Perhaps it is being held in the Selectman's Office. Dick will inquire. Dick reported that *Browse the Brookfields* had reported to him that the majority of their website traffic was coming through the link on our Commission website.

Treasurer's Report- Anne-Marie provided a written report to commission members.

H.S. Scholarship- Dick submitted copies of two newspaper articles announcing the High School Scholarship information and application availability. Anne-Marie and Louise were thanked for their submitting the information to the papers. Anne-Marie reported that she had held meetings with counselors at both Quabbin and Quaboag Regional High Schools and provided information. Both schools are posting scholarship information on their websites.

Lucy Stone- Still waiting for a response from MHC. It was reported that the nearby solar farm development application was in progress and pending approvals. It was noted that Ruth B. Ginsburg, Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court was the sponsor of the new ship *Lucy Stone*, a Fleet Replenishment Oiler being built by General Dynamics in San Diego, and due to be commissioned sometime after 2020.

Old Indian Cemetery- Phase 3 work by Fannin-Lehner will resume in the spring.

Methodist Cemetery- Work by Fannin-Lehner will resume in the Spring.

Collapsed Structure- Dick reported that he had asked about the Town's interest in the property at last week's Selectman's Meeting, repeating the Commission's suggestion of use as a Town Park honoring Jedediah Foster and Lucy Stone. Dick was informed that the Selectmen had previously communicated to the Bank that the Town was not interested in the property. The Bank will hold an auction to sell the property. Dick has asked the Selectmen to notify the Commission as to the date of the auction.

Town Hall Maintenance- Dick and Dan reported on their meeting with the Selectmen last week, where Dick and Dan shared the information gained from attending the recent MPPF workshop held by the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund in Williamsburg. The following points were included:

- The first priority is having an architect do a building assessment. There is a cost for this which is not eligible for inclusion in the MPPF Matching Funds Grant. *Architectural Insights* of Palmer, MA, who did the restoration of the Town Hall, have been contacted and have agreed to provide an assessment of the work needed and the costs involved for the sum of \$2800.
- Exterior painting should be included as part of a project along with granite repair, railing replacement, door replacement, and possible interior storm windows for single pane sash.

- exterior painting is only eligible for the matching fund grant if it is historically accurate as to color. We have the paint analysis from the previous work in 2001 which complied at that time, so this greatly simplifies the paperwork needed.
- the required position of the Local Project Coordinator can be a volunteer.
- At the time of MPPF Grant Application, the Town must show 50% of the total project cost as cash in hand and another 25% available for cash-flow purposes. The latter can be a line of credit. The architect determines the cost of each portion of the project and the total cost.
- The Chair of the Selectmen is the applicant for the matching funds grant.
- The State has a total of \$800,000 for this round of grants.

After discussion, the Selectmen decided to not apply for the MPPF matching funds grant this year. The application deadline in April was too soon to satisfy the requirements. It was agreed that it would be better to apply next year, giving the Town time to prepare. It was agreed that the first step of an architect's assessment should be done and that funding sources will be explored to make that possible. The Selectmen said that they hoped to identify the sources and authorize the assessment by their next scheduled meeting on February 12, 2019. The need for discussion with the Building Inspector was also acknowledged, in order to clarify any potential issues with zoning requirements. It was suggested by the Selectmen that the Commission sponsor a warrant for the next town meeting in order to initiate the process of gathering funding for the matching grant application as well as Town Hall Maintenance.

Rebekah DeCoursey has shared with the commission that the Warrant Articles for the Town Meeting are due on Friday March 8, 2019. Jesse Morrison offered to assist Dan and Rebekah in the grant writing process, and perhaps the creation of a Warrant Article.

Demolition Delay Bylaw- Rebekah recommended in an email that the next step in the Demolition Delay Bylaw process should be a public hearing, done by the Historical Commission or the Board of Selectmen. The need to advertise a hearing two weeks prior to a hearing was acknowledged. To meet the Warrant deadline of March 8, the ad would need to be placed on February 11, 2019. Further discussion, clarification, and approval by the Planning Commission and the Board of Selectmen is needed to proceed.

Library Programs- It was noted that Rob Lyon needed to submit an invoice for his upcoming Library Program on February 19. Dick will notify him and request it. A motion was made and unanimously approved to authorize a payment of \$278 (one half of \$545) from the England Fund to Judith Kalaora of **History at Play** for her presentation of "*Tinseltown Inventor -The Most Beautiful Woman in the World - Hedy Lamarr*". The presentation cost is shared with the Quaboag Historical Society. The program is scheduled for Thursday, May 23, 2019 at 3:00 P.M. at the Merriam-Gilbert Public Library.

Master Plan Implementation- Dick reported that at the recent meeting of the MPI committee, he presented a map of the Historic District of West Brookfield. There was discussion as to whether the Town Center Zoning District would completely overlap or not. A request was made for a written description of the Town Center and Dick shared a possible draft, asking commission members for any other suggestions.

Quaboag Plantation Trail- The Commission has been invited to join the Brookfield Historical Commission Meeting on Thursday, March 14, 2019 at 6:30 P.M. in the building next to the Merrick Public Library in Brookfield to discuss the trail.

The England Fund- Dick has sent a thank you letter to the Fund administrators, acknowledging their recent gift of \$7,500.

NEW BUSINESS

Deb Blodgett has expressed an interest in becoming a member of the Historical Commission. A motion was made and unanimously carried to send a letter to the Board of Selectmen to request her appointment to the Commission. Dick will do so.

History on the Road- We are waiting for a response from the Elementary School as to our proposal.

2018 Town Report Article- for the Historical Commission has been submitted to the Town by Dick Rossman.

Commission Business Cards- It was suggested and agreed that the Commission should have business cards. Dan will submit a design for approval and production, which will include the Town Seal, the Commission name, address, phone, website, and meeting times.

Future Library Program Suggestions- A brief discussion was held on future library program suggestions. Upcoming national anniversaries such as the Nineteenth Amendment, the Completion of the Cross-Country Railroad, and others were mentioned as possible subjects. We will continue the discussion.

Meeting adjourned ca. 8:30 P.M. Next meeting March 6, 2019, at 7:00 P.M. Historical Commission Office, Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted, Dan Hamilton, Acting Secretary