

The West Brookfield Historical Commission met on Wednesday, April 3, 2019 at 7:00 P.M. in the Commission office in the Town Hall. Attending were Ron Bullock, Jesse Morrison, Anne-Marie Nolan, Louise Garwood, Rob Lyon, Dan Hamilton, with Dick Rossman presiding. Dan Hamilton agreed to take minutes for this meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dick announced that he had invited a representative from the White Christmas committee to join the Commission's booth at the upcoming Asparagus Festival in order to recruit and encourage more members from the public to be involved with White Christmas.

Jesse announced that Rebekah DeCoursey will not be able to attend further Commission meetings as the time conflicts with her duties as part of the town government in Ware.

OLD BUSINESS

Website: there are no changes to report. The flyer for the upcoming Library Program about Hedy Lamarr on May 23rd will be posted when created later this month.

Treasurer's Report: Anne-Marie provided a written report.

The Treasurer noted again that interest earned on any of the accounts for the past several years is not yet available from the town treasurer or the town accountant.

H.S. Scholarship: Three applications have been received from Quaboag, no applications received via the website or email. Copies of each application and essay have been made and distributed to Commission Members. Evaluation and further discussion will be held at the next Commission meeting in May, with the award to be announced in June.

Lucy Stone Nomination: Amy Dugas will continue to work on the nomination and address the new requests from MHS.

Old Indian Cemetery: Phase 3 physical work by Fannin-Lehner will resume in the spring. The Fannins reported that the documentation for Phase 3 has been completed. Dick reported that recent storms had resulted in branches down and he will contact Mike Seery, Cemetery Commissioner, regarding clean-up.

Methodist Cemetery: The Fannins were in West Brookfield for several days, researching the records for information on the cemetery. They met with Commission members Dick and Dan, reviewed Commission office records, and researched in the Brookfield Library and in Ware.

Dan assisted by researching and providing relevant land deed documents for the properties, including deeds showing that land for the church had been given by Seth and Eunice Eaton Eddy in 1823 and the land for the cemetery had been given by their son Titus Eddy in 1836. The latter deed clarifies that the cemetery with its earliest surviving marker of 1812 had originally been a family cemetery. It was also found that there is no deed or document assigning ownership of the cemetery to the town of West Brookfield, although contemporary plans and deeds so state. The Town Reports show that the Historical Commission began maintenance and restoration in 1973. Jesse stated that the property might be subject to *Adverse Possession* (acquiring legal ownership based on continuous possession for twenty years.)

Collapsed Structure: Dick will attend the next meeting of the Planning Committee on Monday, April 9, and will discuss with them the possibility of the town purchasing the land and developing parking facilities and the Commission's former proposal to use the land as a memorial park for Jedediah Foster and Lucy Stone. This usage would support the Planning Committee's goal of increasing parkland and trails in the area.

Town Hall Maintenance: We have not yet heard from Bob Haveles of Architectural Insights as to his schedule for building assessment. Dick will contact him for more information.

Demolition Delay Bylaw: It was reported that the Selectmen have turned down the inclusion of the bylaw in the upcoming town warrant. Discussion was held on how best to continue the process of development and implementation of the bylaw, as the priority is felt to be an important one.

Master Plan Implementation: Dick reported that the Planning Committee would use the borders of the Historical Village Center District with the inclusion of the 2006 extension as the boundaries of their Master Plan. Louise showed samples of her map of the area with the border and areas outlined. She will continue to develop the map and have it ready for distribution and display by the Commission at the upcoming Asparagus Festival.

Quaboag Plantation Trail: Commission members Dick, Dan, and Anne-Marie met with the Brookfield Historical Commission on March 14th and began discussion on the development of the trail. The next step will be to walk the trail itself and evaluate needed routing, cleanup, notices and permissions, signage, and maintenance. Due to weather and wet conditions, the walk date will be determined at their next meeting on April 10th.

Library Programs: The library with support from the Historical Commission and the Quaboag Historical Society will present Rob Lyon's program on 19th Century Music in June. Rob will provide us with the date later, with the cost to the Commission and the funding account yet to be determined.

The Commission will also support the library's summer reading program on the space program and the fifty-year anniversary of the landing on the moon by sharing in the presentation of Judith Kalaora's *History at Play* production of "CHALLENGER - Soaring with Christa McAuliffe" on Monday, July 29th, 2019 at 3:00 P.M.

Dan will work with the library and the QHS to create flyers for each of these presentations.

Business Cards: Cards are now available in the Commission Office.

History on the Road: As there has been no response from the Elementary School after repeated attempts to contact various levels of the administration, the immediate plans for this program have been put on hold.

Cannons within Pine Grove Cemetery: A motion was voted unanimously to authorize Rob Lyon to contact the National Cannon Registry and obtain information about registering and protecting the cannons. Rob shared a letter that he had written to the Cemetery Commission in 2011 regarding the cannons and their historical value, with details about the cannons themselves.

Asparagus Festival: To be Held on Saturday, May 18th. The Commission will offer a table with historical information, brochures, maps, books for sale, and local resources. Ron and Dick will get the tent, table,

and easel to the Common on the morning of the event. Louise will design the display board with photos and information. Perhaps the masterplan map could be displayed. Dan will try to get a photo of the old Methodist Cemetery. Perhaps information on the demolition delay bylaw process could be available.

NEW BUSINESS

Minutes Amended: The Minutes of the Commission Meeting held on March 6, 2019 were amended to correct the date of Rob Lyon's Ice-skating program under Library Programs. The correct event date was March 19th, not April 19.

Financial Motions: A motion was unanimously passed to pay Dan Hamilton the sum of \$22.98 from the Town Account as reimbursement for the payment to Vistaprint for 500 business cards for the Commission.

A motion was unanimously passed to pay History at Play the amount of \$222.50 from the England Account as partial payment for the Christa McAuliffe library program presentation on July 29th.

Ayers Memorial: Reviewing and coordinating the landscaping work around the memorial with the current owners, utilizing the Ayers memorial fund if needed. Louise will visit the site and recommend specific plantings. Recent storm damage in the area with downed trees and branches was acknowledged. Louise will connect with Jim Daily of the Highway Department for any needed coordination in clean-up.

Membership: Rob announced he has not yet received his confirmation as a Commission Member from the Selectmen. Dick will follow up and check with Deb Blodgett.

Archivist: Dan reported that he is in the process of connecting with an historical archivist specialist in the area and will explore the possibility of a program outlining the methods and options for collection preservation to be presented to the area historical commissions, societies, libraries, and general public.

Franklin Marker: Dick reported he had received a request exploring the possibility of establishing an individual's memorial with a fund for plantings and signage around the Franklin Marker. After discussion, it was decided not to proceed in this manner as it was beyond the mandate of the Commission and would set an unwanted precedent. Currently, the annual plantings are set and maintained by a town resident volunteer.

Fort Gilbert Marker Sign: Dick reported that he was contacted by the Massachusetts Dept. of Transportation notifying him that the sign was owned by DOT and was scheduled to be removed and restored by Daedalus Inc. within the next several weeks. Dick stated the Commission had done this work in 2011, not knowing of the DOT ownership. After discussion, it was decided not to issue a press release concerning the new work unless warranted by neighborhood inquiries.

Office Supplies: Acknowledging the need for additional supplies such as folders, binders, labels, and an organization system to review and re-organize the Commission Office existing records and collections. The current method used at the Brookfield Library was acknowledged as an example and will be explored further. Members will reflect on the needs and a list will be created for future purchase.

Meeting adjourned ca. 8:49 P.M. Next meeting Wednesday, May 1, 2019, at 7:00 P.M. Historical Commission Office, Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted, Dan Hamilton, acting Secretary