

The West Brookfield Historical Commission met on Wednesday, May 4, 2016 at 7:00 P.M. in the Commission Office in the Town Hall. Attending were: Ron Bullock, Dave FitzGerald, Louise Garwood, Anne-Marie Nolan and Barbara Rossman. Dick Rossman presided. We were joined for the first part of the meeting by Dave Cameron.

The first part of the meeting was a presentation by Dave Cameron on the Corset Factory, which is on Pleasant St. near where he lives. The building was once the location of a thriving business in the nineteenth century, but has not been used for many years and is currently just used for storage by its owner, a Mr. Nickerson from Brookfield. Dave has done much research on the building and sees many opportunities for it being re-purposed to constructive use again. Among the possibilities: a museum and teaching space, with perhaps solar panels on the roof, oriented toward ecological subjects not currently taught to young people in the public schools, a place for workshops which could be used by young people, or bicycle repair facilities to attract bicyclists to the area. Dave has approached Cynthia Henshaw of EQLT with these ideas and is also seeking the Commission's support. The members present agreed that the ideas sounded good, but it will be a challenge to put them into reality.

OLD BUSINESS

Website- Ron reported that Ben has posted Jeff Robbins' article on the website. Dave may write something about the 300th Church Anniversary (October 2017) for "Upcoming Events".

Maps- Nothing to report.

Indian Trail/ Pynchon Grist Mill Site- Since permission was not given to use Burrington Rd., it was decided the route of the trail will be along Wickaboag Valley Rd. to Lake St.

Scenic Road Signs- The signs have not been completed yet, but will be installed when they are ready.

Franklin Marker- Dick has been in touch with MassDOT, expressing the hope that the marker may be re-installed in time for up-coming events (Asparagus Festival) on the Common.

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

Brochures- Louise has had the Lucy Stone and Old Indian Cemetery brochures printed, and the \$313.00 bill was submitted for payment. It was voted to print more of the Foster Hill and Walking Tour brochures, also, the cost to be paid from the remaining balance of the Town Account and from the Historic Donations Account.

H.S. Scholarship- An application was received from Tyler Pierce, but it did not include the required 2nd letter of recommendation. Although the applicant was given an additional opportunity to provide it, it was not done by the deadline, and hence the scholarship will not be awarded this year. Some time was spent re-writing portions of the application form to be used in future years, to make it more specific.

Old Indian Cemetery- The Fannins have indicated they will resume work as soon as the weather is favorable.

Lucy Stone Site- Dick has been in contact with the Trustees' new superintendent for our area about what their plans will be for the Site. There is a brochure produced a few years ago by the Trustees which may provide some guidance.

Methodist Cemetery- Work still in progress.

Library Programs- The programs by Rob Lyon on 4/7 and Vincent Kordack on 4/19 were held as scheduled, and reportedly were excellent.

NEW BUSINESS

The Commission will have a table at the Asparagus Festival, to be manned by members. Decisions were made about what to include- brochures, books (History of West Brookfield), obituary, town reports, poster, etc.

Dick submitted an article to be put before Town Meeting to request funding for the demolition of the collapsed barn at the property at the Foster Hill Rd./E. Main St. intersection.

Meeting adjourned ca. 9:00 P.M. Next meeting June 8, 2016 at 7:00 P.M., Historical Commission Office, Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave FitzGerald, Secretary