

The West Brookfield Historical Commission met on Monday, November 2, 2020 at 7:00 P.M. in the Lower Meeting Room in the Town Hall, following current Covid 19 distancing and masking restrictions. Attending were Dan Hamilton, Anne-Marie Nolan, Rob Lyon, Jesse Morrison, Louise Garwood, with Dick Rossman presiding.

OLD BUSINESS

Town Hall Maintenance: An oral review of the meeting held on Tuesday, October 6, 2020 with the Selectmen, the Historical Commission, and Bob Haveles of Architectural Insights. The Commission was encouraged to draft an article for the upcoming Special Town Meeting supporting the earmarking of funding to qualify for a MA State Historical Matching Grant application in the spring of 2021. The article was drafted with help from commission members and others and submitted to the BOS by the October 30, 2020 review deadline.

If the article is not placed on the warrant for the Special Town Meeting, or if so placed it does not pass, the Commission may collect 10 signatures on a petition to override the BOS and place the article on the next Town Meeting in 2021.

To aid the BOS in their comprehension of Mr. Haveles' "Existing Building Evaluation" submitted in March 2020, Dick has synthesized the information into a two page reference document showing types of repair or replacement categories with minimum and maximum estimate amounts. Dan will type up the handwritten document for review and distribution. It was noted that the Commission feels the Main Building repair and maintenance (including exterior painting) was the best focus for grant application, while the other categories of ADA Compliance, Front Steps repair, and Fire Department building repair and maintenance were best left to the BOS and Town budgeting.

Website: The website and the calendar of events are continuously updated as needed.

Treasurer's Report: Anne-Marie submitted a financial statement based on the recently provided accountings provided by the Town Accountant. It is hoped that the statements, including interest-bearing accounts, can be supplied to the Commission on a quarterly basis.

H.S. Scholarship: Anne-Marie will contact the school system in December and determine the specifics and scheduling of the 2021 scholarship application, likely dependent upon the Covid adjusted school class schedules.

Lucy Stone Nomination: Amy Dugas has completed the revised application, per the request of the State. The application was submitted during the last week of September 2020.

Old Indian Cemetery: the Fannins continued their work on the site on October 23, including placing clamps those headstones in repair. Dick will remove the clamps and coverings when appropriate. The Fannin's will continue their work next Spring.

Methodist Cemetery: The Fannins will contact MHC to determine if the Town's history of maintenance and budget inclusion will satisfy the ownership requirement for Historic Site application.

Demolition Delay Bylaw: Jesse will continue to attempt to contact Rebecah DeCoursey and arrange another meeting with BOS and the Building Inspector.

Master Plan Implementation: the process of meeting and discussion has been interrupted by the Covid shutdown. Dick is pursuing those involved for more information.

Library Programs: On site Programs have been cancelled due to the Covid Pandemic. There are no commission sponsored events for the immediate future.

Local Historical Memorials and Sites: Rob distributed his inventory of existing granite hitching posts within the central portion of the town, showing their current addresses. A revised version of this inventory will be distributed to commission members separately.

Working from a previous list likely created in the 1960s, Rob noted that many addresses had been changed, some streets omitted, and many posts on the early list were identified by property owner's name only, and some had disappeared. In the 1960s list there were 21 posts. In 2020, Rob has identified 18 granite posts. He acknowledged that some have been moved, and others are newly purchased and set in as decorative elements. Ownership of the hitching posts is unknown. Rob will contact MHC for any information they may have about this.

Dan will photograph the 2020 hitching posts, and Louise will include the photographs in an inventory spreadsheet with information on each post. This will eventually be included in a master inventory spreadsheet of Local Historical Memorials, Sites, and Objects.

Town Report: Dick distributed copies of the Town Report to Commission members.

New Office Keys: Dick distributed a new office key to Louise.

Boston Post Cane: Dick reported that the new plaque with the name of Anna Schultz had been mounted in the BPC display case. Dan attempted to photograph it in the case, but glass reflection made in unsatisfactory. Dan will contact the BOS and request to open the case for a better photograph.

Pynchon Mill Site: Dick reported that the latest newsletter from the Eastern Quabbin Land Trust gratefully acknowledged the Commission's donation towards the recent purchase of additional land at the site. Louise is drafting the graphics and information for 3 site specific signs.

NEW BUSINESS:

Rock House Nomination to the National Historical Register: Louise has created a first draft of the application for nomination and will continue its development, consulting with State officials and others who have had experience with the language and terminology required.

North Brookfield Historical Commission: Dan recently distributed the names of the newly restored Historical Commission for the Town of North Brookfield. Dick suggested sending them a greeting letter, welcoming them into the local historically focused community. The Commission members agreed.

Meeting adjourned ca. 8:05 P.M. The next meeting will be held on **Monday, December 7, 2020**, at 7:00 P.M. within the Town Hall. The Public is welcome.

Respectfully submitted, Dan Hamilton, Secretary