

The West Brookfield Historical Commission met on Monday, January 4, 2021 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, BOS Executive Secretary Rebecca Acerra, and Heather Walker, with Dick Rossman presiding.

NEW BUSINESS PART 1

Chairman Dick Rossman acknowledged that the regularly scheduled meeting on December 7, 2020 was cancelled at the last minute due to extreme weather conditions and storm related power outages.

He then announced that Commission member Ron Bullock had tendered his resignation in a letter to the BOS on November 19. Dick then shared an acknowledgement letter from the BOS thanking Ron for his service and participation, which the remaining members heartily endorsed.

Secretary Dan Hamilton then announced that he too had resigned with a letter to the BOS and Chairman Rossman in late December due to increasing health issues. Dan expressed a desire to help with the transition of his current responsibilities to others, particularly the ownership, payment, and maintenance of the Commission website. Dan also expressed a willingness to serve as an associate member, without voting privileges or responsibilities if he was able to do so.

OLD BUSINESS

Website: The website and the calendar of events are continuously updated as needed. Dan stated the annual bill of Twelve Dollars and 18 cents (\$12.18) for the Service Provider (IONOS) and the Registration of the Domain Name (www.westbrookfield.org) would be billed to his credit card on January 11, 2021. He will submit an invoice reflecting that when it becomes available. Dan stated the need to transfer the ownership, payment, and maintenance to another individual, as required by law. Dan suggested that the maintenance might be done by an outside party, perhaps a professional or student in the area. Dan will assist in the transition.

Treasurer's Report: Anne-Marie submitted a financial statement.

H.S. Scholarship: Anne-Marie has received a letter from Quaboag High School asking to receive our application letter for 2021 by January 13, 2021. She will send that out and copy Commission members. Dan will post it on the website. The application due date is April 18, 2021 and the award ceremony is Wednesday June 2, 2021.

Lucy Stone Nomination: The Mass Historical Commission determined that the Lucy Stone Home Site was eligible for Historic Register Nomination in 2012. After extensive research and multiple revisions of the nomination including a name change to **Lucy Stone House Site**, the nomination was finally approved on December 9, 2020 and will now be sent to the National Park Service for review. Thanks to all who provided information and assistance and particularly to Amy Dugas for her consulting and preparation of the nomination.

Old Indian Cemetery: 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 circulate the recent revision to the Commission members for review and then to Rebecca Acerra, Executive Secretary of the BOS, who will review and advise the Commission as to the best procedure to place on the schedule for the next town meeting.

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: Louise created and distributed an updated master inventory spreadsheet of WEST BROOKFIELD HISTORICAL and CULTURAL SITES, OBJECTS ON PUBLIC PROPERTY, containing categories and locations, with photographs of the granite hitching posts as identified by Rob and photographed by Dan.

Pynchon Mill Site: Dick reported receiving a letter from the East 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.

Town Hall Maintenance: On December 15, at the Special Town Meeting, the Historical Commission sponsored Article 3 which authorized the town to allocate funding for repairs, maintenance, and to qualify for a state matching grant in the spring to support those efforts. The article required a simple majority to pass. Our efforts paid off, both the Selectmen & Advisory Board recommended approval. The vote to approve was unanimous! Thanks to everyone for their support!

The 2021 Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund grant application has been posted on their website with a deadline of March 19. The grants will be awarded in June of 2021. The application and Instructions documents for Round 27 of the MPPF Grant have been sent to Commission members.

Discussion was held concerning the priorities and estimated costs contained in the Architectural Insights, Inc. report previously submitted to the BOS. For the purposes of submitting a letter of recommendation to the BOS as to which items to include in the grant application, the commission members will review the list of items and communicate with Dick by this coming Thursday, January 7th.

Dick will also meet with Rebecca Acerra soon to discuss her participation in the grant application.

NEW BUSINESS PART 2:

Rock House Nomination to the National Historical Register:

Louise distributed a revision of the application for nomination by email to the Commission members. Review and discussion have been postponed to a future meeting.

New Member Nomination:

Dick asked new town resident Heather Walker if she would be interested in joining the Commission, and she expressed that she would be. A motion was made and unanimously passed for Dick to write the BOS a letter recommending that they appoint her to the Commission.

Zoom Meetings:

Discussion was held about the possibility of holding the next meeting via Zoom due to the increasing COVID-19 numbers in the town. It was agreed to set up our next meeting as a Zoom meeting. There are members who will need assistance setting up their participation. It is to be determined who will set the meeting and arrange the invitations by email to each participant.

Meeting adjourned ca. 8:50 P.M.

The next meeting will be held on **February 1, 2021** at 7:00 P.M. as a **Zoom meeting**.

Respectfully submitted, Dan Hamilton, Secretary