

ASHFIELD HISTORICAL COMMISSION
THURSDAY, MAY 23, 2013
7:30 PM
AMENDED AND ACCEPTED 6.27.2013

PRESENT:

Steve Gougeon, Mollie Babize, Nancy Garvin,
Gerard McGovern, Tristan Romer not present.

Meeting called to order 7:45 pm

MINUTES

...of April 25, 2013 accepted with some corrections.

OSRP REVISIONS

Maps of the Open Space and Recreation Plan are hanging in the town hall.
Mollie will follow up with Alan Rice on the issues identified at the April meeting.

INVENTORY OF PEOPLE ON THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Terms of all members except Tristan are up in June. Mollie and Nancy volunteered to extend their terms one year to stagger the renewal dates. We need to recruit new members; think about possible candidates. Some discussion on the role of the Historical Society (focused more on people and objects of historical importance) vs. the state-mandated role of the Historical Commission (more focused on historic buildings and landscapes).

In recent years, members have celebrated Ashfield's history with tours of old barns, timber frame structures, mill sites and other landmarks throughout town. We need to update the inventory of historic buildings, particularly those on the walking tour of the Ashfield Plain Historic District.

DEMOLITION DELAY BYLAW

Steve confirmed that Chris Skelly of the MA Historical Commission will be present at our June 27th meeting, scheduled for 7:00 pm at Town Hall. This will be a purely informational Powerpoint presentation with plenty of time to ask questions. The presentation takes about 90 minutes. Skelly will invite the public from surrounding communities via the MHC e-newsletter, but he doesn't expect many will attend. Steve has reserved the hall for that night, and Mary FitzGibbon will speak with Select Board if we need their permission. All Ashfield boards and the public will be invited. Mollie will draft a notice for the Ashfield News and get it to them by the deadline (5/25) for the June issue.

WALKING TOUR/ HISTORIC ANNIVERSARIES

Anticipating the 200th anniversary of the Town Hall, Nancy mentioned the urgency of getting the update to the walking tour completed soon. She has been working on new owners, and Mollie will format a new brochure. Nancy will provide a list of the buildings needing new photos; Steve or Gerard might provide?

The May 2013 Town Meeting approved a \$500 budget for costs related to the anniversary celebrations.

To set a date in summer 2014 for a celebration, Nancy will check when the first service was held in the building. We will work with the Town Hall committee and the Historical Society. Stuart Harris has created a long list of things that need to be repaired on the steeple, which was reconstructed 27 years ago. A celebration would raise awareness of this historic landmark, and could help raise funds for additional repairs/renovations.

Some of the ideas raised in past meetings for the celebration:

- Stake out original footprint of the church up on Norton Hill

- Organize a public walk of the moving route (Nancy has orthophoto of the route); talk about what it involved; arrange a showing of the film Harry Keramides did about the move
- Create a display to be mounted in Town Hall, which could include
 - A drawing of the capstan that was used to move the building
 - Elevations and floor plans of the original building
 - Photographs from the Howes Brothers (via Historical Society)
 - A list of events that have been held over 250 years, and the people involved (dinners and speeches, dances, basketball games, other significant events); Nancy will develop a list of all the events that have taken place in the building over time
- Host a tour of the building; point out where original pews were from marks in the floor, the line of the balcony evident in the first floor ceiling, the post and beam structure apparent in the top level;
- Have a town-wide dinner/dance that evokes the early town dinners; feature local fare
- Perhaps impersonate some of the original speakers at the Academy dinners, or Norton and Curtis who organized the events, or include readings of letters/diaries from various eras

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting will be Thursday, June 27, 2013. Agenda: Chris Skelly will provide a powerpoint presentation on demolition delay bylaws, and lead a discussion of the pros and cons of such a bylaw for Ashfield.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm

Respectfully submitted by Mollie Babize