

Ashfield Historical Commission
Meeting
Thursday, March 25, 2010

Present: Steve Gougeon, Mollie Babize, Gerard McGovern, Nancy Garvin.

Meeting commenced at 7:25 pm

Minutes

Minutes of 25 February 2010 were approved, with corrections as noted by Nancy.

Spruce Corner School house:

No date set yet for this work. Gerard said all work would be done by hand without machinery, so could be done independently of the necessary grading. Mollie suggested grading be done first, to ensure that run-off is directed away from the building before the stonework is done.

WMECO pole replacement

Nancy brought a document sent to the Conservation Commission (Lester Garvin, chair) from the UMass archeological services stating there were no Native American sites located near the two poles being replaced in Ashfield. Most of the sites with Native American interest were located in Amherst.

Barn Tour

Discussion focused on possible barns to include in a tour this spring/summer. One idea is to concentrate on barns in the center of town, which could make this a walking tour. Suggestions included Pete Howes' barn at the corner of Liliput and Rt.112, the Whitney barn (site of first silo in town?), the barn behind the Inn at Norton Hill, the Page barn on Main St (Thomas White property), the Pacosa/Cain barn on South Street, Tom Carter's barn on Main Street, Bill Perlman's on Suburban Drive. There may not be enough range in age to interest Jack Sobon. Gerard and Steve will take photos of possible village center barns and send them, along with a map showing their locations, to Jack to get his opinion. Other ideas included the Mislak barn on Baptist Corner, the Ranney house (near the Plain Cemetery on Baptist Corner), several suggestions along West Road and out in Apple Valley.

Walking Tour

Nancy brought examples of brochures from other communities with historic districts, and suggested we could greatly improve on the layout of Ashfield's. Ours needs updating in any case, and a better design is in order!

Other Neighborhood Tours

The Commission is still enthused about hosting occasional tours of the various neighborhoods in Ashfield, with information about key buildings, families and anecdotes. Schoolhouses in particular would be of interest, and how the areas were named. However, this project will wait until after the barn tour. Nancy said she is completing a history of the Cape Street area

Community Preservation Act

No members of any other commission or board showed up to discuss strategies for educating the community on the CPA. Mollie handed out informational sheets prepared by the Highland Communities Initiative, and mentioned the Board of Assessors has begun to

discuss the implications should the CPA pass in Ashfield. They had heard from the Goshen assessors, and were waiting to speak with an assessor from Conway.

Nancy and Steve sit on the Agricultural Commission, and will bring it up at their next meeting April 13th. Mollie will write a letter to the Planning Board saying the Historical Commission is in favor of passing the CPA, and urging the Planning Board to move forward (since the initial impetus came from them). She suggested creating a list of potential projects that would qualify for CPA funding once passed.

Stone Bridge

Now that Route 112 has been designated a Scenic Byway, there may be funds to help restore and stabilize this bridge, which is within the Byway district. Pat Smith, planner with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, has information on potential grants; however, Nancy reported the deadline was March 15th, so we would need to wait until next year to apply.

Next meeting:

The Commission will meet again Thursday, April 29, 2010, 7:30 pm

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Mollie Babize.