



ACTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes December 14, 2022, 7:30 pm

Town Hall, Room 126

Present: Bill Dickinson - Chair (BD), Bob Ferrara (BF), Bill Klauer (BK), Alissa Nicol - Clerk (AN), Victoria Beyer (VB), Fran Arsenault - Select Board Liaison (FA), Barb Rhines (BR)

Guests: Anne Forbes (AF), Lou and Daphne Baldoumas of Rainbow Builders, Dennis Dale - Landscape Architect for 53 River Historic Park (DD) and Andy Magee (AM) Project Manager for dam removal project, Andrew Zucker of 6 Point Builders (AZ), Patrick Hearn (PH) - Agricultural Commission

Absent:

Chair BD called the meeting to order at 7:33 PM.

I. Regular Business

1) Review of meeting minutes from October 12th – Meeting minutes from the AHC's October th meeting were reviewed; BF moved and BK seconded a motion to approve the minutes; the minutes were approved unanimously by a vote of 3-0.

2) Citizen concerns: none

3) Any ZBA/Planning Board projects on the CRL?: none

4) Bridge project between Rail Trail and TTT at old Davis Road update: no update

5) Archaeological By-Law Update: BF noted that Attorney General sent comments, BR noted that AG requested the start date and a reference to future building permit be removed, BF is working to line up cultural resource management firms so contract can be negotiated in timely manner when by law is triggered by project proposal, asked BR to work together to review purchasing process with Town staff and pre-approve vendors (PAL and others)

6) 53 River Street Update (8:30 PM) - AM noted grant funding received, permitting process is progressing, MOA between MA Historical Commission (MHC), Acton Historical Commission (AHC), and Town of Acton drafted; DD shared park plans (see presentation “53 River Street/Park & Dam Removal” by Dale Design, Inc. Project Scope includes dam removal, ecological restoration of riparian environment, permitting, accessible recreational park, historic site monitor and document; potential for Friends group to take on interpretive elements (panels, seating/storytelling area, etc); close communication with archaeology team regarding salvaged materials and on site historic archaeological discoveries, to be specified in plan set; historic elements (stone, timbers, machinery parts, etc) will be salvaged reused on site (not for contractor sale); AM noted that we need to comply with MHC’s findings, grading and plantings need Conservation Commission approval, pathways to meet ADA standards; MOA specifies procedures for Construction Period Monitoring, Historical Documentation, Data Recovery, Interpretation (see presentation, “Memorandum of Agreement”), any finds will halt work in the discovery area, determination to be made about documentation, curation, potential required mitigation, report to be accepted by MHC; US Army Corp of Engineers (ACOE) Section 404 Permit pending, AM asks for letter to ACOE from AHC supporting Draft MOA; BD moves and BF seconds to support Draft MOA (friendly amendment to include AHC “approval” of interpretive panels created by Town), motion passes unanimously

7) Status of converting CRL to MACRIS - BR discovered a need for additional reconciliation of homes in Historic Districts that are not on CRL (ex 75 River)

8) Demo Delay status: 27 Martin Street - no update

9) Historical Marker Requests: 713 Main St, 12 Wheeler Ln, 198 Central St, 189 Main St, 41 Maple St, 140 River Street, 7 Pope Road; BD notes that discussion of streamlining process (i.e. not consulting with HDC on placement) needs to be concluded, FA shared that sign made by new sign maker, Meg Nichols, was delivered to 198 Central, owners were pleased and sign is already up; VB reviewed 7 Pope Rd application, ask for text is too lengthy, commissioners agree on “East Acton Post Office, c 1875” VB reviewed 140 River St application, commissioners agree on “Albin and Linnea Johnson, c 1902”

II. New/Special Business

- 1) 8:00 – Demolition Delay hearing for 4 Nashoba Road** - BD opened hearing at 8:04, LB noted no historically valuable features remain in existing home, subdivided lot with two homes proposed on two conforming lots, minimized tree removal, donated two granite posts to Conservation Commission, Craftsman style homes with farmers porches to be built; commissioners noted no historic features on site walk, LB noted home was built in 1880s, but no elements remain, BD moves to not institute a demo delay, VB seconds, motion passes unanimously, FA asks builder to consider not building identical homes, perhaps different siding or other building materials differences between 2 homes

- 2) **CPC application for Robbins Parcel addition to Woodlawn Cemetery form** - AF has Inventory Forms, will bring to January meeting
- 3) **Scenic Road application stone removal, 317 Pope Road** - AZ states that there is no entry into newly created lot, lot is in Concord, driveway will be off Pope Road, opening in stone wall is proposed beyond small existing opening to save tree, asking for 20 foot opening to ensure adequate sight line, would like to replace stone wall with material removed, commissioners have no issue with removal of section, BD requests continuous stone wall with opening for driveway, dry appearance, will send comments to Planning Board
- 4) **Scenic Road stone wall adjustment, 247 Pope Road** - BD describes project as existing driveway, subdivision planned, widening driveway to 12 feet, removal of ~30 feet of wall for fire truck access, planning for curving of stone wall; commissioners concur that curved wall is not appropriate for scenic road, BD will send comments to Planning Board
- 5) **Open Space and Recreation Plan update** - AN is rep and will take commissioners' comments to liaison meeting in January, BD asks that no historical or cultural features be destroyed in pursuit of other goals, cognizant of Arch bylaw, anything 15K sq ft high sensitive, 1 acre moderate sensitive, recognize they exist and document arch resources
- 6) **Agricultural Commission to discuss Morrison Farm** - looking to get CR (conservation restriction or APR (agricultural preservation restriction)) in place for protection of land, community support for community gardens and walking trails, building use? Plan to start Friends of Morrison Farm LLC for funding, get buildings in useable condition, raise funds to pay for CR, 4 historic buildings - 1930s farmhouse, garage, henhouse, and barn (used for storage by Town); proposing sealing house as artifact, also garage and henhouse, barn needs repairs; BD suggests future use of house, sealing should be interim step, buildings should be preserved, commissioners support protection and preservation, AN notes that if building is on State Register of Historic Places, it would be eligible for Mass Preservation Project Fund; potential for collaboration between AHC, Ag Commission, and Cemetery Commission to create Historic District, AF suggests bringing ACHC back into conversation for possible housing project, PH will return at January meeting
- 7) **HC member to join 250 Committee** - BF is representing Pine Hawk, BK is representing Acton Historical Society, AN volunteers to be a rep for AHC

III. Consent Items - None

Adjournment

VB moved and BD seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 10:52 PM.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

October 12th, 2022 minutes, Historic Plaque applications for 140 River Street and 7 Pope Road, 53 River St Historic Park Presentation, MOA Presentation, MACRIS Area Form for Morrison Farm