



ACTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes September 13, 2023, 7:30 pm

Town Hall, Room 126

Present: Bill Dickinson - Chair (BD), Bob Ferrara (BF), Bill Klauer (BK), Fran Arsenault - Select Board Liaison (FA), Barb Rhines - Cultural Resources Planner (BR)

Guests: Ken Dow (KD), Gina Gulseth and Emily Holtzman from SLR Consulting, Ed Pershouse, Derek Pershouse, Janet McGrath

Chair BD called the meeting to order at 7:34 PM.

I. Regular Business

1. Review of meeting minutes from August 9 – BF moved to approve the minutes of the August meeting and BK seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Residents concerns - none

3. Any ZBA/Planning Board projects on the CRL? – none reported.

4. Bridge project between Rail Trail and TTT at old Davis Road - no update

5. Status of converting CRL to MACRIS - BR noted that Marabella, the high school intern, has left for college. BR reviewed the “blessed list” tracking sheet which notes discrepancies and solutions for resolving the two lists. Marabella failed to include addresses for several photos, and BK supplied the addresses of all but two.

6. Under demo delay: 27 Martin St – no update.

7. Historical Plaque Applications: 328 Pope Rd. The consensus was that this is a very good application but also that the wording should be expanded, and a larger sign would thus be recommended in this case. BR will ask the sign production firm if they can produce a larger sign. BR will then follow up with the applicants.

504 Main St.

8. National Register application for Woodlawn Cemetery: BF shared an estimate to prepare a National Register Nomination application from PAL. The next step is to prepare a CPC request to fund a Cultural Resource Management firm to prepare this application. CPC requests are due in mid-November. BD thought the request would be in the range of \$20K. BR reviewed MACRIS

data on Woodlawn, including an extensive report to MHC indicating eligibility for the National Register. VB can provide advice on preparing CPC request at the next HC meeting.

9. Concord Road Historical Corridor update. BD attended the August 22 HDC meeting, The HDC endorsed the proposal that the HC proceed with a proposal for a fourth Historic District. The HDC will send a letter of support. BD will contact Kirsten to discuss and begin the process of reviewing the proposal with town officials and relevant Town committees. Ultimately the Select Board will have to vote to form a study committee.

10. Acton 250 Committee update – BF reported that Bob Allison of Suffolk University will be the first of the 250 Committee Speaker Series on September 21 in Room 204. There are also plans for an Acton Center Tour by Amy Cole on October 12, and another talk by Mary Fuhrer on November 13. A Merchandising and Publicity Subcommittee has just been formed.

11. Archeological By-Law implementation – Three Cultural Resource Management (CRM) consultants are now on the Town Planning Department's vendor list to perform the initial archaeological assessments mentioned in the archaeology bylaw. There has yet to be a test case for the new bylaw.

12. Update on Weatherbee Woods/Sterba Curtain Array. BF contacted former Draper Labs CEO Jim Shields, who shared some contacts that might know of any "cold war" historical connection. BK noted the radio towers were put up between 1962 and 1967 to aid ham radio operators.

II. New/Special Business

- 1. Proposed stone wall breach and repair – 533 & 549 Main Street.** Gina Gulseth and Emily Holtzman of SLR Consulting are doing an environmental investigation to provide access for test drilling in the area to the north. BD moved and BK seconded a motion "to permit the temporary removal of a section of the stone wall between 533 & 549 Main Street; the section should be replaced in the same location in as good or better condition". The motion passed unanimously. BD will forward a letter of support to SLR Consulting.
- 2. 46 Willow Street - demolition delay hearing.** The sketches filed with the building permit indicated that more than 25% of the rear facing façade would be altered, thus requiring this hearing. The owner of 46 Willow, Ed Pershouse, reviewed the plans and photos for this project, which will not be visible from the street. Neighbor Janet McGrath also indicated her support for this project. BF moved the Historical Commission *not* apply the demolition delay in this case, BK seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. BD will forward a letter to the Building Inspector.
- 3. Looking for new HC members** - BD will recommend Ken Dow for Historical Commission membership to the Acton Volunteer Coordinating Committee.
- 4. Open Meeting Law Training 9/19/23 at Town Hall** – BD encouraged all to attend.
- 5. Review Commissions CPC project status** – BD will respond on the Archaeological Bylaw and the Rail Trail Bridge CPC -funded projects.

III. Consent Items - None

Adjournment: BD moved and BK seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously at 9:36 PM.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting.

1. August 9, 2023 Historical Commissions minutes
2. SLR Consulting Memo ????
3. PAL estimate ?????