



ACTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes October 11, 2023, 7:30 pm

Town Hall, Room 126

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

Guests: Ken Dow (KD), Chris Chan-Tse of Gold Beech Construction, David Bamforth, owner 115 River St.

Absent: None

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

I. Regular Business

- 1. Review of meeting minutes from September 13** – BD moved to approve the minutes of the September 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 reported that all the intern's photos of barns and other outbuildings not listed in the CRL have been identified.
- 6. Under demo delay: 27 Martin St** – Demo delay will expire on November 11, 2023.
- 7. Historical Plaque Applications: 328 Pope Rd.** BR followed up and requested more information and is waiting on a response. The consensus last meeting 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. FA noted that Susan and David attended a recent Select Board meeting to discuss a Conservation Restriction for much of their land.
- 504 Main St.** The Acton Woman's Club asked for a plaque. The date is 1829 for this very historic building. VB moved and RF seconded a motion to propose to the HDC that plaque could

be located on the brick between the first and second stories and aligned with the rightmost shutters on the front of the building. The motion passed unanimously.

8. National Register application for Woodlawn Cemetery: BK noted that National Register recognition provides additional protection and makes state and federal funding available. BK will discuss proposed National Register and Historic District with Cemetery Commissioners. KD offered to begin preparation of a CPC request to fund a Cultural Resource Management firm to prepare this application. CPC requests are due in mid-November. BF will send KD PAL's estimate to prepare a National Register Nomination application. BF will send KD PAL's estimate to prepare a National Register Nomination application.

9. Concord Road Historical Corridor update. BD met with Town Planner Kristen Guichard on creating a historical district covering Woodlawn cemetery, Morrison Farm and other historic elements along Concord Road. Kristen felt a new ribbon historic district along Concord Road protecting the buildings would work best with a Conservation Restriction (CR) on the entirety of Morrison Farm. Woodlawn Cemetery is already under the jurisdiction of the Cemetery Commission. Protecting land with a Historic District is not typical. The Agricultural Commission is already working on a CR for the Morrison Farm. As suggested by Kristen, BD will continue discussing the idea with the town agencies. Next contacts will be Cory York and Mike Gendron.

10. Acton 250 Committee update – BF and KB reported that September 21 inaugural 250 Committee Series lecture by Bob Allison of Suffolk University was a huge hit. There was SRO crowd of 133 people in Room 204, plus another 36 on Zoom. There are also plans for an Acton Center Tour by Amy Cole on October 12, and another lecture coming on November 13 in Room 204 by Mary Fuhrer on everyday life in Acton in the 1770s. More to come!

11. Archeological By-Law implementation – BR reported that there was almost a test case for the bylaw, but it fell short of the thresholds so there has yet to be a test case for the new bylaw. BF noted that information about bylaw should be posted on the HC website <https://www.acton-ma.gov/102/Historical-Commission>. He will work with BR to accomplish this.

12. Update on Weatherbee Woods/Sterba Curtain Array. – Nothing new.

II. New/Special Business

1. Discussion on proposed renovations at 115 River Street. Chris Chan-Tse of Gold Beech Construction presented a preliminary plan of modifications to the house at 115 River Street. David Bamforth, owner of the parcel which includes 115 River Street also contributed to the discussion. BK noted the house was built between 1990-1910 and was a former mill office for the large mill which produced piano stools and chair but burned down in 1966. The house plan included an 8' height addition, allowing the second floor to be more usable for a family, likely the operations manager for the property's classic car storage business. BK and other HC members thought the plan was too much a "developer box" and did not preserve enough of the character of River St, and the mill area. All supported the idea of an expanded house there. BD offered several useful suggestions and invited Chris and David back to any future HC meeting when they wished more discussion on this application.

- 2. Review potential CPC and MHC grant application opportunities.** The HC does not plan to apply this year but may next year as Woodlawn and Concord Road HD plans progress.
- 3. Looking for new HC members** – KD is meeting with the Acton Volunteer Coordinating Committee tomorrow.

III. Consent Items - None

Adjournment: BK moved and VB seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously at 9:12 PM.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting.

1. September 13, 2023 Historical Commissions minutes
2. 115 River St Historic Com Presentation
3. 504 Main St Acton Woman's Club Marker application