



ACTON HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes May 14, 2025, 7:30 pm

Town Hall, Room 126

Present: Bill Dickinson - Chair (BD), Victoria Beyer (VB), Ken Dow (KD), Barb Rhines - Cultural Resources Planner (BR), Fran Arsenault - Select Board Liaison (FA)

Guests: Anne Forbes (AF), Josh Kline (JK), Rayan Mohiuddin (RM), David Winders (DW), Linda Davis (LD), Greg Winter (GW), Raj Dudani (RD), Shikha Malhotra (SM)

Absent: Bob Ferrara (BF), Bill Klauer (BK)

Chair BD called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM.

I. Regular Business

1. Review of meeting minutes April 9 – VB moved to approve the minutes of the April 9 meeting. BD seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Residents' concerns –AF raised concern for proper naming of 17 Woodbury Lane in MACRIS for any future signage—Sorli vs Asa Parlin. Inventory form should be updated. Parlin Family History document provided by AF.

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

4. Bridge project between Rail Trail and TTT at old Davis Road – BD sent BR RFPs for structural engineers and another for landscape architects. BR will create a cover letter for BD to attach and send out with the RFPs.

5. Status of reconciling CRL to MACRIS (barn captures): BR is interviewing interns.

6. Under demo delay: none.

7. Historical Plaque Applications: 207 Central St. requested a plaque. BD moved to make sign changes consistent with MACRIS ACT.377 applicant request for name; VB seconded with the motion passing unanimously. The sign will read: Lyman Mead c. 1870 with placement at left side of house.

8. Consultant for National Register Application for Woodlawn Cemetery: BD reviewed

application so BR can draft an RFP for the Forest Cemetery in North Acton. The Committee has recommended several CRM/Archaeology firms who should receive the RFP.

9. Concord Road Historical Corridor update: no update.

10. Acton 250 Committee update: BD spoke with BF with no updates. On April 16 there was a party honoring the Acton Minute Men at the Discovery Museum. The Acton 250 Committee will be offering events less frequently, likely just one per quarter through the coming year, through July 4th. Refer to <https://www.actonma.gov/250>.

11. Historic marker sign maker search. The HC still has to review the sample Asa Parlin/17 Woodbury Lane house sign. Electronic samples will be provided. Tabled until next meeting.

12. Process for initiating demolition delay hearings. Per the By Law, Demolition Delay hearings must be triggered by an application from the owner to the Building Department for a Demolition Permit. Owners are encouraged to come before the HC to informally discuss their project during the design process and inquire if a Demolition Delay Hearing is required. The HC website should be updated to more fully explain the process.

13. Underground Railroad Site Outreach. The HC approved BR letter to send to the property owners of the Underground Railroad sites asking if the owner would have an interest in a historic marker on the property. Letters were sent out by BR. 4 responses of interest have been received: 162 Great Road, 144 Great Road, 15 Barker Road and 41 Estabrook Road.

II. New/Special Business:

1. 8:00PM Demolition Delay Hearing—457 Massachusetts Ave.: Josh Kline from Stonefield Engineering and Design presented a Site Plan for his client—Primrose Schools. Plan shows the removal of the 1850's Greek Revival Home and Barn. The property is being designed to have a children's school which will have a 2 story building with elevator, playground and a 40 space parking lot. The school is planned to be licensed for 177 children max. Topography and access are challenges.

A walk through was done by BD, VB and KD on 5/8. The home and barn are visible from Mass. Ave. the 1200 sq-ft home was seen as in good condition based on its age. The recommendation was to preserve and re-use.

Letters submitted:

HDC David Hann—Feels strongly, the dwelling should be preserved and re-used. The property should be reviewed to ensure no other solution is possible other than demolition.

Joe Will—States that Doli Atamian used to live there who he thinks had a significant role with the schools.

Anne Forbes—opposition email giving the history of the Greek Revival cottages in Acton and how they are being lost. 457 Mass Ave was reviewed prior for a different project where the house would have been preserved and re-used.

Comments by Residents in attendance:

RM and DW would like the home to be preserved.

LD would like the home preserved and suggested a past selectman had lived there.

VB moved for an 18 month Demolition Delay at 457 Mass Ave. BD seconded and the motion passed unanimously. BD will inform applicant and Building Department.

2. 9:00PM Demolition Delay Hearing—54 Great Road: CR

RD and SM previously met with the AHC on 2/12 and have since hired a Structural Engineer to evaluate the structures. A report was provided. They are engaging an architect at this time.

A walk through was done by BD, VB and KD on 5/8. Based on review of the report and the walk-through, the AHC felt the home could be repaired and was otherwise in good condition based on age of building. Most of the damage was seen in the rear wall/ foundation of the home. The barn saw more issues with its foundation and structure.

Letters submitted:

HDC David Hann—2 architect members found the report unconvincing for demolition. Feels strongly, the dwelling could be preserved and re-used. The property should be thoroughly rehabilitated not demolished.

Anne Forbes—opposition email giving the history, gateway to the later 19th century development of Great Road with its proximity to the railroad and prison.

Comments by Residents in attendance:

GW voiced support for new housing in Acton. He had previously viewed the property and felt it was in failing condition.

BD moved for an 18 month Demolition Delay at 54 Great Road. VB seconded and the motion passed unanimously. BD will inform applicant and Building Department.

3. Is Demolition Delay Hearing required for 149 Central Street, 416 Great Road, 65 Maple Street? After review of proposed drawings by the HC, it was determined that Demolition Delay Hearing is not required for any of these structures.

III. Consent Items - None

Adjournment: VB moved, and BF seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously at 10:00PM.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting.

- Minutes of the April 9, 2025 meeting of the Acton Historical Commission
- Parlin Family History—Anne Forbes Provided 051425
- Anne Forbes Email-- Proposed demolition of 457 Mass. Ave. and 54 Great Road
 - MACRIS ACT.176_457 Mass. Avenue
 - MACRIS ACT.L_54 Great Road
- Joe Will Email—Regarding 457 Mass. Ave.
- David Honn HDC Letter re 54 Great Rd & 457 Mass. Ave
- 207 Central St Marker App w MACRIS ACT.322