



MENDON
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

Dan Byer
Constance Beal
Kathleen Schofield
Kristina Campbell
Karen Meade
Debra Broe
historical@mendonma.gov

MEETING DATE	January 4, 2024 6pm
LOCATION	Hybrid Town Hall
STATUS	4/29/24

PRESENT: Dan Byer, Kathy Schofield, Kristina Campbell, Karen Meade, Debra Broe, Andrew Jenrich, Leesa Michael and Gabrielle Porciello.

Call to Order - Meeting opened 7:05pm

- The group introduced new members and open positions. The group unanimously elected Dan Byer as the new Chair for the Historical Commission. New members will consider open positions that need commission representation for the CPC (Community Preservation Committee) and the Local Historic District Committee. There is also a need for someone to fill the secretary role.
- New members should complete the Ethics Training, create a town email account and swear in with the Town Clerk Ellen Argo.

Old Business:

- The Commission discussed the annual budget process for the Commission and recommended leaving the amount unchanged. That budget is \$3,000.00 discretionary spending plus \$500 for postage. We are also due to turn in our annual report. Kathy and Dan will work on that and share with the group when complete.
- Dan suggested we reach out to the owner of 153 Hartford Ave East to see if they are still interested in being removed from the historic resource inventory list. As the owners are moving they may opt out of requesting a hearing.

New Business: Taft Public Library Carriage House

- The Commission met with representatives from the Taft Public Library to discuss the detached garage building, which is called the carriage house, and its future.
- Library members discussed the poor condition of the carriage house, which was being used for storage. They emptied it out and secured it due to safety concerns.

The Commission presented the historic background of the Carriage House and understood the safety issue it poses. They discussed the possibility of repurposing the building or salvaging materials before demolishing it. They also talked about the potential asbestos in the building and the need to secure or take it down. In order to follow the demolition process, the library representatives agreed to move through the permitting process and follow through with the hearing. That hearing will be scheduled for January 25, 2024. The Commission thanked the library reps for coming in and helping to clarify their concerns and explore any options that may be available.

The Commission will submit the paperwork on behalf of the town, schedule and post the hearing and send out notices to abutters.

- The Commission discussed potential meeting dates and times. It was suggested that Tuesdays were a good option for members. The third Tuesday of the month appears to work, but noted that the Lake task force meets at that time and may present an occasional conflict.



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New Member Orientation:

Kathy shared a few virtual workshops with new members to register for; discussing topics from Demolition Delay to Repurposing Materials when Demolition is the Only Option. These workshops will help to introduce the work of Historical Commissions and the challenges that we face.

Additional recommendations for the new members will be to sign onto the Masslistserv community where people and boards can ask questions and get advice from professionals in the field. The members were directed to the MACRIS inventory of Historic and Cultural Resources which includes the Town of Mendon.

Dan or Kathy will reach out to Jennifer Dougherty at Mass Historic and provide everyone's contact information so all can be included in their available resources and programs.

Additional websites to check out are: hope1842.org a website dedicated to Hopedale with a large section on Mendon history. Preservation Mendon is a great resource for deed searches on Mendon's historic properties.

Records Room Grant Update:

- The Commission updated the status of the records room at 13 Main Street and the MHC grant received to stabilize the building. They discussed the challenges of finding an architect to work on the project. They also talked about the potential for future use of the building and the overall challenges of preserving historic properties in the town.

Cape Road Demolition

- The Commission discussed a property demolition approved for 35 Cape Road several years ago. The property has changed hands and the new owner would like to demolish the structure. It was decided to add this demolition delay hearing to the January 25th agenda.
- The Commission reviewed future hopes to create a North Ave Historic District. Members of the Historical Society have been working on researching the historic properties on North Ave. A brief discussion of developing historic districts took place. Mendon has two area districts -the Village Center and the Washington Street District – along with two single property districts – the Taft Homestead and the Jotham Hayward Homestead Districts.
- The Commission reviewed information about the inventory list we use to determine eligibility for Demolition Delay and how that is reviewed each year.

Adjourn