

Minutes
Watertown Historical Commission
Thursday,
March 10, 2016
Philip Pane Lower Hearing Room
7:00 p.m.

Historical Commission Members Present: David J. Russo, Marilynne K. Roach, Thomas Melone, J.B. Jones, Elise Loukas, Susan Steele,

Member(s) Absent: Donald S. Berg

Staff Present: Christopher J. Hayward, Susan C. Jenness

Russo chaired. The meeting opened at 7:00 p.m. with a description of the public hearing process for the Historical Commission (HC) by Russo.

1) Public Hearing Continuance - 35 Bacon St. - Request to demolish a detached garage. Proposed is a new construction 2 story town house without a garage. Gerard Mazzeo, applicant/owner

The garage of this structure which was to be reviewed by the Historical Commission in a public hearing was declared condemned by the Building Inspector Kenneth Thompson on March 4, 2016.

2) Minutes – February 11, 2016

The Minutes of February 11, 2016 were adopted by unanimous vote.

3) Old Business

a. March 7, 2016 site visit Branch Libraries with Mark Comeiro, Veteran Services Officer.

Joyce Kelley and Marilynne K. Roach of the Historical Society reviewed the Veteran's Cards found at the site. Mark Comeiro saved some records but observed many that could be disposed of.

The Historical Society has expressed that they will be looking to save any records being disposed of by the town that are housed in the library building.

Agent Hayward said that he would talk to Steven Magoon, Director to Community Planning and Development to report back to him what happened at the site visit.

b. 917 Belmont Street – Upkeep and Maintenance discussion based on language of Landmark Ordinance

Russo said he was anticipating some response in regard to fixing the post in the form of a written proposal.

The main focus at this point is what standard would be used regarding the repair work, in particular, the materials being used, if not “in like kind materials.”

Loukas urged the chair to make it a priority that the landmark agreement for this building get properly registered to ensure that the home is cared for and maintained as it was intended to be in the future.

It was also discussed that 77 Riverside has not be properly registered to date.

HC members agreed it was time to move forward on making sure these agreements were being properly registered in order to preserve the historical character of these pieces of Watertown’s history.

c. Neighborhood Photography Project.

Russo explained that while he was aware many HC members have been taking photographs of the town over the years, he was urging everyone to pick a specific part of town to photograph. From there he said, HC members could catalog their photos and give them to the town library to keep in perpetuity.

While discussing the project of photographing Watertown neighborhoods, Loukas mentioned the issue of houses being torn down for development and the threat that this practice poses to the historical integrity of any town. She mentioned that this issue has been coming up with more frequency with members of communities from outside of the town, as well as appearing in the media.

Specifically, she has had conversations and also read articles about the epidemic of the historical integrity of neighboring towns also being threatened by the increase in demolition in recent years. She asked HC members if they would be willing to discuss the possibility of forming multi-town coalitions in the future.

d. 2016 Preservation Awards discussion/planning

The preservation awards have been planned for either May 19th or 26th and will be held at the Commanders Mansion.

The Conservation Clerk will work with town staff to get a nomination form sent out by Notify me.

All nominations will be submitted to the Conservation Office no later than the Friday before the next Historical Commission meeting, which is Friday April 8th.

The clerk agreed to send out reminders to the HC to remind them of the closing date for nominations, and to look into booking the date at the Commanders Mansion.

Meeting adjourned by unanimous vote.