

Braintree Historical Commission  
Minutes  
**Monday, June 4, 2018**  
Fletcher Hall – Braintree Town Hall

**Present:** Elizabeth Mees (Chair) Kate Nedelman-Herbst  
Ron Frazier

**Absent:** Santina Giannino

**Also Present:** Rayna Rubin, potential candidate for member  
Derek Manning, CPA Project Manager  
Christine Stickney, Director of Planning and Community Development

Meeting convened at 7:05 PM

**New Business:**

Ms. Rayna Rubin attended the meeting as a potential candidate for membership to the Historical Commission. Ms. Rubin provided her background as a planner and employment as well as her interest to become more involved in the community. Mayor Sullivan had reached out to her after her submission of qualifications through the Town's talent bank. The BHC members each introduced themselves and provided their background information. Elizabeth Mees outlined the BHC responsibilities and their recent activities. Ms. Rubin thanked the members and agreed to sit through the remainder of the meeting to observe.

Chairman Mees noticed the next matter is sitting jointly with the Commission on Disability and members needed to go to Johnson Chambers (same building different room) to where they were meeting.

**Joint Meeting Commission on Disability:**

7:15PM – The BHC attended the Commission on Disability (COD) meeting. Members of both committees made introductions and then Christine Stickney provided a background on the project for the Old Thayer Library and Town Hall relative to universal access and what has now brought the two groups together for a joint meeting. Using a conceptual plan developed by Bargmann + Hendrie Architects to show the earthen berm connecting the two buildings that has universal accessibility via 1:20 sloped walkways and stairs, Christine remind some of the original members that both boards had previously met on the design. She explained the point of concern today appears to be the COD need to have more direct access from accessible parking spaces to the building interior. After hearing this need from Kristin Zechello our ADA Coordinator, Christine contacted the architects and asked them to investigate what could be done and they returned with an enclosed weatherized mechanical lift that could be installed outside both buildings. Both committees were provided specifications on the lifts and the projected cost of each a few years back was approximately 120k for each. Lynne Vaillancourt explained why the COD desired lifts that many patients need this type of access and residents who maybe visually impaired. Discussion turned to the sloped walkways, areas of rest along with a gradual retaining wall along the side that aides the public. Christine commented that in the best of worlds we could accommodate the ultimate design but all parties have to understand the mission and the stakeholders involved to resolve a variety concerns; ADA accessibility to both buildings, removal of the ramp to prevent flooding in the lower level of Town Hall, prevent cut through traffic from Central Ave to Washington Street during peak periods, to provide separation of motor vehicles from events occurring on the site. The current design was our best effort to accommodate stakeholders and issues. Christine commented at some point the financial cost needs to be looked at as what the Town can afford. Kristen Zechello commented that the COD would like to have both the berm and the two lifts on the buildings it

would be the best accommodation for their residents. Lynn Vaillancourt, COD Vice Chair, commented that Crystal Evan-Pradhan was not present but wanted to ask about the lifts if there was room for companions in the lift with wheelchairs as to their size and also asked the operating button if it had to be held to operate because some users do not have endurance to hold down. Elizabeth Mees noted the specifications addressed both those questions and provide those accommodations. Lauren McGrath commented as a former park ranger the Town should go for the all the way with the design it would be better in the long term to all users. Kristen asked what are the next steps and Christine noted that the CPA is looking for a Letter of Support for submission with the application. Kristen commented that the COD would also like to see handicap spaces near the back close to the ramps and entrance to Old Thayer Library. Mary Russo (?) asked how do you access the rear of the Old Thayer Library and would it be more cost effective to demolish the building – Christine noted demolition is not an option because it is listed for protection on the Nation Register. Using the concept plan she showed the access route into Old Thayer and there was a follow-up question as to safety protection such as a fence along this portion and it was pointed out on the plans. Christine noted these are concept plans and as they are developed the detail specifications will address the COD additional concerns. Staff will keep both committees updated on the status of the project – all thanked each other and the BHC returned to Fletcher Hall – left at 8:10 PM

**Demolition Delay Proposal:** Members were provided with the following handouts; a list of communities that have passed demolition delay ordinances, a list from the assessors of structures of a certain age and the quantities and an email from the Inspectional Services as to the numbers of demolitions over the last five years. Members discussed the outcome of the last meeting with the Council subcommittee and their disappointment with how the meeting went. Christine shared the email she received from the Town Council Clerk relative to a date/time for the continued public hearing – it appears this will not be forthcoming very soon. Ron Frazier stressed that we need to have something in place as soon as possible – we are losing too many historical resources with no documentation.

**Elm Street Cemetery:** Derek Manning was present at the meeting and said that they have 50% of the fabrication of the wrought iron fence done and there is still fabrication to be finished. In addition they ran into issues with the galvanizing and had resort to another process and were waiting to see the outcome of that process. Elizabeth Mees asked about the masonry. Derek reported that 100% of cutting, mortar and reconstruction has been accomplished they are moving to the cleaning and repointing. There was a discussion on the change from Portland mortar to masonry cement, Elizabeth noted not as strong and Derek concurred also commenting it is the craftsman technique – a change order of \$6500 plus or minus to the total cost. Ron Frazier commented the Town should notify the Historical Society that they should not be doing any tours or events in the cemetery until the project is 100% complete – let Dave Crispin know as well.

**Union School:** Christine reported on the progress of the plans and that now some detailed items such as lighting, signage for the school etc. needs to be decided on. Elizabeth Mees commented on the outside material and suggested a spectra analysis as to the original clapboard may reveal the original paint color of the building. Christine will ask the architect about this item.

**Administrative:** Ron Frazier **MOTION** to accept the minutes of 5/7/18, seconded by Kate Nedelman Herbst – unanimously voted. Kate Nedelman Herbst **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting, second by Ron Frazier – unanimously voted. Meeting ended at 8:25PM

Respectfully submitted - Christine Stickney, Director of Planning and Community Development