

**Braintree Historical Commission  
Meeting Minutes – Virtual ZOOM  
Monday, April 4, 2022 at 7:00 PM**

Approved: June 27, 2022

**Members Present:**

Ronald F. Frazier, Acting-Chair  
Santina Giannino, Member  
Kate Nedelman Herbst, Member  
Rayna Rubin, Member

**Staff Present:**

Melissa SantucciRozzi, Director – PCD

**Members Absent:**

Robert S. Harris, Member

**APPROVED**

**Remote Meeting Provisions**

*Due to the COVID19 Pandemic remote meetings have replaced physical meetings per the Governor's Order on March 3/12/20 as most recently amended. Said order suspended the provisions of the Open Meeting Law to promote public health and social distancing. This meeting was not conducted in an open, publicly-accessible space. Public access to the meeting and deliberations were achieved by adequate, alternative means that allowed the public to follow the proceeding in a third-party communication technology known as ZOOM that is readily accessible to the public by the internet and the telephone.*

**Call the Meeting to Order**

At 7:00 PM, Acting-Chair Frazier called the Meeting to order via Zoom. Acting-Chair Ronald Frazier requested Director Melissa SantucciRozzi conduct a Roll Call vote for Attendance:

Member Frazier – Here;  
Member Giannino – Here;  
Member Herbst – Here;  
Member Rubin – Here;

The Director wished to let the record show Member Harris was not in attendance. Four (4) members were present for a quorum at 7:00 PM.

**Project Updates:**

**Great Oak Tree**

Director SantucciRozzi advises that back in the fall there were some concerns and desires to do some maintenance to the Great Oak tree at the center island of Tenney and Washington Park Roads. We secured the services of Bartlett Tree, and the proposal was shared with the Commission some while back. As most of you may have seen or heard, there was work done to the Great Oak tree. There were some questions from the neighborhood and some people in the community. There was a lot of dialogue back and forth from Mr. Rappaport from Bartlett Tree. The Director has provided those emails to the Commission. The Director wants to assure the Commission and any residents tuning in this evening that this was done, in fact, by a qualified arborist. A report and an assessment were made of the tree, and there was periodic check-in throughout the entire day and direction provided to the folks that were trimming the tree, one of them also being an arborist. Some people don't like how it looks, but the reality is that the tree is very old and a lot of maintenance was needed.

The Director did get some calls from people that live in the area, and frankly, some of them were upset and some were of the opinion that an arborist wasn't involved and someone was hacking down this tree. Some people aren't happy with it. However, the tree has been trimmed, and everything that was dead and anything that could cause the tree to further deteriorate has been removed. Now that the dead part is gone, the healthy part can take the nutrients and continue to re-establish itself. Vice Chair Frazier states that he has seen it, and it does look pretty hideous. Member Giannino agrees. Vice Chair Frazier is wondering if it is worth trying to save at this point and whether there is anything that will make that tree look decent again. The Director advises that the arborist seems to think that it will re-establish. They have also recommended that every six months the tree gets its medicine. The Director suggests that we let the arborist do the treatment in the spring, which was part of the original scope. The Director does have a bill for \$1800 which covers the cost of trimming, which she hasn't paid yet but wanted to show to the Commission. She advises that a police detail was necessary, and we have paid for that. The Director suggests doing the spring treatment, at a minimum. Then, if we want to get some further information from the arborist or have him do a more detailed report we can do that, recognizing that there will be costs associated with this treatment every six months. That cost will need to be incorporated into a budget. The Director defaults to the Commission Members and their concerns and opinions, and she can proceed from there with any direction provided this evening.

Member Giannino shares a picture she has taken and advises that the Gardener's Guild, of which she is a member, asks why the tree would have been trimmed in that manner. The way the branches were cut they will not grow back. It looks scary, as only one side has actual real branches and the other side has branches cut really close to the trunk. The Director advises that this tree was not in the best of situations. She states that the department did get the report from Mr. Rappaport, and this was what they suggested be done. The Director will ask Mr. Rappaport why they didn't cut some branches closer. Member Giannino mentions that the original estimate was \$2600; the Director advises that the invoice was \$1800 because they haven't done the treatment yet, which will be invoiced once that is done. Member Giannino points out that there is an electrical line that has a piece of the tree hanging on it. Vice Chair Frazier expresses that we may need to face the fact that, if the arborist cannot predict that the tree is going to look anywhere near decent in the future, it is going to have to go whether people like it or not. The Director will ask the arborist this. Member Rubin suggests we give the tree a little time. Vice Chair Frazier's memory is that the tree has been cared for over the years, but maybe not annually or semi-annually. The Director confirms that she will ask the arborist: (1) about the way the branches were cut; (2) about the electrical line; (3) about the expectation for recovery or regrowth possibility and timeframe; (4) ideal maintenance and budget.

Member Herbst agrees with the discussion.

Councilor Meredith Boericke thanks the Historical Commission and the Director for their attention to this issue. The Councilor has also heard from a lot of residents. She mentions that it is a little shocking when you see it, but it will be helpful to have an explanation to provide. Councilor Boericke asks, if there is any other major work to be done, that we have a notification to the residents. Councilor Boericke clarifies that she would hope for a notification if the tree had to come down.

### **Project Updates:**

#### ***Elm Street Cemetery Phase III (TCO 22-010) Bid Documents***

Director SantucciRozzi advises that included in your meeting materials was a finalized version of the Bid Documents. It is being reviewed by our Financial Department and will probably get advertised within two weeks.

Hopefully, we get some good bids, and we can award that contract and get the work done. It's the season to do it, and hopefully it can be completed over the summer and into the fall, depending on how long it's going to take. The Director asks if there are any questions on the bid documents.

Vice Chair Frazier confirms that we have kept pretty well on top of this situation.

## **Project Updates:**

### ***2020 Historic Inventory (TCO 20-058)***

Director SantucciRozzi advises that the CPC Manager, Liz Manning, located and reviewed files on this matter. She also had a chance to speak with Derek Manning, who was on this before he left the town to pursue other employment. Ms. Manning provided a memo to the Historic Commission and highlighted some points. First, the grant that we got in 2020 has lapsed. That money is gone; it was a fall funding round. There is another funding round in the fall, if we would like to pursue that grant again. There was \$30,000 appropriated under the Council Order, so that money is in place. Of the \$30,000, \$15,000 was to be reimbursed by the grant. Ms. Manning thinks that doing the survey with this budget is going to be difficult. She will reach out to local consultants in this field to get a better understanding of pricing. The CPC Manager has outlined some next steps which include: (1) re-advertising the project with existing scope and budget; (2) the Commission may consider serving fewer points, if costs have escalated since 2020; (3) the Commission may consider requesting additional funds from the CPC based on any changes in pricing. The Director advises that pricing has gone up on several projects, and we've had to go back to CPC for additional money. Director SantucciRozzi will default to the Commission. The Director suggests setting up a meeting with two members of the Commission (as we cannot have a quorum) and the CPC Manager.

Vice Chair Frazier advises that it is important to keep in mind that this is a state mandated thing that we are supposed to be doing. Whatever we have to do to move this along, in whatever form that takes, should be done.

The Director suggests that we try to get some more realistic pricing and then evaluate what we have in place for funding. Then we can come up with some ideas of the additional funds needed, whether that be going for the fall grant or going back to CPC. The Director will report back next month with a plan.

Vice Chair Frazier advises that there are a couple of things he wanted to mention. He refers to the fire station and a lot of big talk about doing stuff there. He thinks we have to remind them that they have to come to the Commission for that. He also noticed that Thayer Academy put some permanent signs in, and we were never advised about that. Vice Chair Frazier doesn't have a major problem with the signs, but they didn't come to the Commission for approval to do that. The Director advises that she has gone over to Thayer, and she wasn't sure which signs Vice Chair Frazier was referring to. Vice Chair Frazier refers to signs right on the corner of Washington and Central, and he reiterates that anything done that is permanent on the property has to be approved by the Commission. Director SantucciRozzi will reach out to Thayer on this matter; she advises that Thayer has reached out to her in regarding the process for taking down some homes. The Director asked Thayer to put together a narrative detailing what it is they would like to demolish with the history of that particular structure for our review. She has provided all of the references and ordinance to the Demolition Delay, but she hasn't heard back from them.

Regarding the fire station, the Director advises that the fire station is going through a value engineering exercise. Things have slowed down a bit on this matter so that they can get a more realistic plan in place with a more realistic budget. They are well aware that they need a Certificate of Appropriateness.

The Director explains that she did have some drawings in the fall related to schematics. She has made several suggestions. They were anticipating doing some permitting in the spring both at the Zoning Board of Appeals and at the Historical Commission. That is not currently happening, and we haven't seen any updated drawings.

Vice Chair Frazier advises that the Town has been doing repairs on the Gallivan House so that the firemen can sleep there. However, a number of firemen have brought a grievance against the Town because they don't want to be detached from the fire house itself. The Director advises that the plan for during construction was going to be trailers that were also detached from the fire station. She advises that we are all trying to be fiscally responsible and save money wherever we can. Using the Gallivan House to sleep and eat was something that was going to save thousands of dollars of costs for the trailers. They are well aware of the requirements; they need to go to Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Historical Commission. The Director has made that very clear; she has provided them with all of the applications and the ordinances.

Member Giannino asks what the preliminary plans showed. Are they putting on an addition or are they just renovating what is existing? The Director advises that there is a small addition on the Tenney Road side. From what the Director had seen, the outside looked really good. She has advised them to prepared to talk about materials; they should provide some samples. The Historical Commission will be tuned into shingles, appropriate colors and real brick.

Vice Chair Frazier advises that years ago they came to the Historical Commission. They had a slate roof on the fire station, and they came to the Commission with some other type of shingles that are on their roof now.

Director SantucciRozzi clarifies that the addition is going to face Tenney Road, and it is going to have smaller bays (perhaps to fit the SUV's).

Vice Chair Frazier refers to the Director's comments about Thayer taking down some houses. The Director thinks the houses are located on Washington Street. However, there is one brown house on Central that is essentially falling apart. The Director advises that Thayer has a parking problem. There is a discussion about houses and potential development along Central and on Washington. Vice Chair Frazier advises that the Commission does not have purview over how the landscaping is done. He refers to when the Entertainment Center was built and how it was supposed to all be beautifully landscaped so that you didn't see any cars.

## **Administrative Business**

### ***In-Person Meetings***

Director SantucciRozzi advises that legislature extended the time for boards and commissions to meet virtually until July 15, 2022. It was supposed to end on April 22, 2022. Some of the Boards are meeting in person, and some are not. The Director will defer to the members on whether they would like to continue remotely or switch to in person. Member Giannino, Member Herbst and Member Rubin prefer to continue meeting remotely. Member Rubin thinks if there was to be a large presentation then in person might be better. Vice Chair Frazier totally agrees that it is very difficult to make a presentation on Zoom. The Director confirms that the May meeting will be held remotely, and this matter will be kept on the agenda. If there is something large on the agenda, we can work around that.

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**Administrative Business**

***Commission Vacancies (2 Members)***

Director SantucciRozzi notes that there was a gentleman in front of Ways and Means for an appointment. The Director asked the Mayor's office to reach back out to him; however, that was months ago. The Director is still in pursuit of an architect. The Director will discuss this matter with the Mayor and suggest we do a Press Release. She doesn't like Boards not having the right number of members. There is discussion between the Director and Member Herbst with regard to Brendan McCarthy as a potential candidate. It is determined that the Mayor's Office needs to be back in touch with him.

***Adjournment***

Member Herbst **Motion** to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Member Giannino. All in favor by Vote:

Acting-Chair Frazier – Yes

Member Herbst – Yes

Member Giannino – Yes

Member Rubin – Yes

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Quinlan, Planning and Community Development