

Braintree Historical Commission
Minutes
Monday, October 7, 2019
Johnson Chambers – Braintree Town Hall

Present: Elizabeth Mees (Chair) Santina Giannino Robert S. Harris
 Ronald F. Frazier Rayna Rubin Kate Nedelman-Herbst

Absent:

Also Present: Julaine McInnis, Chief Financial and Operations Officer, Thayer Academy
 Paul McNeely, Eck McNeely
 Paul Pantano, Director of Plant and Facilities, Thayer Academy
 Mary Frazier, Curator, Braintree Historical Society

Louise Quinlan, Planning and Community Development

7:03 PM Meeting convened.

New Business:

Discussion Thayer Academy representatives – Business Agent & Facilities Manager regarding long term projects & improved communication:

Chairwoman Mees acknowledges that representatives of Thayer Academy are here and confirms that they are in receipt of the letter from the Historical Commission sent in September. The Historical Commission had some questions and wanted to ask Thayer to explain their upcoming plans so that the Historical Commission can start to plan their work. The following individuals are here representing Thayer Academy: Julaine McInnis, Chief Financial and Operations Officer, Thayer Academy, Paul McNeely, Eck McNeely and Paul Pantano, Director of Plant and Facilities, Thayer Academy.

Ms. McInnis advises that upcoming plans are minimal and in the early design phase. The number one priority is looking at drainage issues over next couple of months. Paul McNeely, Eck McNeely, explains they are looking at placing a canopy on the main side of the Frothingham building to protect the stairs that go down into the lower level. They are currently reviewing designs and prices. Once that gets more formalized, they will bring it to the committee for discussion. Ms. McInnis states there are too many floods in that building that were pretty significant. The Music Department was completely offline for weeks. That is what they are focusing on now.

Long term down the road, there is a campaign going on. They have finished two parts are of the campaign: (1) the Glover Building; and (2) they did work at the South Athletic Campus with a land lease and developer who did the ice rink. Ms. McInnis advises that they need to update the playing fields on the South Athletic Campus, as they were not installed correctly, so that they can put the fields back online. The last piece of Thayer's campaign is updating the Middle School, which will depend on fundraising. However, the middle school is not in the Historic District. This is down the road. Mr. McNeely's firm (Eck McNeely) designed the development phase, but they are at least six months away from final design phase.

Ms. McInnis advises that they are started a Master Plan Committee, which Paul McNeely is facilitating. Mr. McNeely advises that they are looking at the entire campus from a Master Plan standpoint. They are looking at needs and how to satisfy those needs. They are just beginning that process. Mr. McNeely asks

if the Middle School property is part of historical district. He is advised that it is not. Mr. McNeely advises that they will bring anything forward from the master plan that effects the campus.

Chairwoman Mees states the committee's goal is to work with Thayer, but at the same time their charge is to have an eye towards historical nature of that district, not necessarily to petrify what is in place. Chairwoman Mees thinks there has been a lot of success with projects that have been done. The Commission's goal is to work with Thayer, but it is important to know what Thayer is thinking, as early on as possible. Chairwoman Mees discusses the latest project related to the bump out of stairs at Glover Hall, and she mentions that the goal is to be involved in projects as early as possible so that the Historical Commission can forestall any concerns such that Thayer will need to reappear.

Rayna Rubin states if they are working on a Master Plan, it might be suggested to run some aspects by Historical Commission to get some feedback before the Master Plan is finalized. Mr. McNeely acknowledges this idea. Ron Frazier states the other point made at the last meeting was that it is great to hear from the architect, but it is also nice to see people from the school itself that are there on a daily basis.

Chairwoman Mees advises that the Commission appreciates Thayer representatives attending our meeting tonight, and she would like to keep the good working relationship going.

Ms. McInnis states the Master Plan is to improve the arrival experience, with new signage (directional and way-finding). Chairwoman Mees states, not only is Thayer in a Historic District, but it is a gateway to the downtown area, so the Town is conscious of appearance. Chairwoman Mees states a good appearance contributes to the campus and makes the entryway to Braintree more appealing. Ms. McInnis states anything that comes out of the Master Plan won't happen until the next fiscal year. Mr. McNeely advises that they will keep the Historical Commission posted on work with the Master Plan.

New Business Continued:

Thayer House Roof Replacement Project:

Chairwoman Mees states that Director Stickney has indicated that we need a vote for Certificate of Appropriateness and that we should review the Town Solicitor opinion. Chairwoman Mees indicates that Braintree Historical Society was going to bring some sample materials to show the Commission.

Mary Frazier, Curator, representing Braintree Historical Society, states they are merely replacing the roof. They are not changing anything. The roof is deteriorating, as it was last replaced in 1987; at that time, they removed asbestos. At this time, they are taking off the shingles and felt. The only change is with the cedar. Instead of being Western Redwood, it is now going to be Alaskan Yellow Cedar, which is less expensive. They are going to repoint the chimney, replace cracked bricks and put all new flashing. They are just replacing what is already there and not doing anything new. Rayna Rubin confirms that it is with the same materials, and Mrs. Frazier states essentially the same materials, nothing is new and nothing is changed. The roof wore out.

Kate Nedelman-Herbst mentions, from a quick scan of Attorney Goldrosen's note, it looks like a Certificate of Appropriateness is not required. Ron Frazier advises that Director Stickney felt the roof replacement did require a Certificate of Appropriateness; however, the Town Solicitor felt it didn't. Chairwoman Mees states, while we implicitly trust the Historical Society, any other applicant would need to provide samples. Chairwoman Mees is concerned no materials are presented to reinforce that the new materials will exactly match the existing. Mrs. Frazier states color will be different because existing roof has been weathered for 37 years. It will age over time like any wooden roof wood.

Mrs. Frazier, Curator, explains that part of the roof will be funded by a grant from Mass Historical Commission; Braintree Historical Society had to present everything that would be done, with all measurements, to Mass Historical Commission. They did not show them physical materials but explained what was being used.

Mrs. Frazier, Curator, explains that it was approved by Mass Historical Commission because the materials being used are historically, basically the same as what is being removed, which was the same as what was originally there, Eastern Cedar. In 1987, the Eastern Cedar was replaced by the Western Redwood Cedar because it was less expensive, and now the Alaskan Yellow Cedar is less expensive. Chairwoman Mees confirms with Mrs. Frazier, Curator, that there are three items: replacing cedar roof, replacing flashing and repointing (putting a cap on) chimney.

Kate Nedelman-Herbst clarifies that "altered" is defined to include: rebuilt, reconstructed, restored or removed. Ms. Nedelman-Herbst's question is whether anything is being restored. Mrs. Frazier, Curator, explains that the bricks have worn away, the flashing (being lead) is getting soft and leaking. Basically, the materials are just what they had before. Mrs. Frazier, Curator, explains that only 10 bricks will be replaced on the two chimneys, and they will match the mortar with what is existing. Kate Nedelman-Herbst explains that it is not a question about approval, it is the question of whether legally a Certificate of Appropriateness is required. Mrs. Frazier, Curator, states it is not altered, but it is restored. Kate Nedelman-Herbst clarifies that "restored" is part of the legal definition of "altered" and she suggests in abundance of caution, we should make a motion.

Chairwoman Mees would defer to legal counsel on the Commission.

Kate Nedelman-Herbst states we need to be careful with whether Mr. Harris is speaking as a member of Historical Commission or as a representative of Historical Society. Mr. Harris states, as a new member of the Historical Commission he read the regulations, and his interpretation is that this issue did not need a Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Harris's understanding is that staff had presented this issue to legal council had said it did not require a Certificate.

Rayna Rubin asks if the concern is a delay. Chairwoman Mees feels pretty certain that everyone on the Commission will approve, and according to Mr. Goldrosen and Kate's interpretation "altered" includes "restoration" even though no change is being made. Kate Nedelman-Herbst states the entire opinion is regarding the roof. Kate Nedelman-Herbst's opinion that when discussing the chimney it is being restored and falling under the definition of altered, under Chapter 40C, Section 5. Chairwoman Mees states it is not that the BHC does not agree with the work, but she explains that a public hearing is needed for a Certificate of Appropriateness, and as a government commission, the BHC needs to follow statute. Kate Nedelman-Herbst states that Attorney Goldrosen's opinion is that the replacement is an alteration, which then reverts back to the definition in Mass. General Laws.

Robert Harris explains that the contract with state is signed, contract with contractor is signed, and December 10th is the deadline for completion of the entire project.

There is discussion regarding the requirements of advertising legal notices for Public Hearings. Chairwoman Mees feels that, even though the contract is signed, the contractor will not be beginning work immediately. Kate Nedelman-Herbst explains that Attorney Goldrosen's opinion is not clear, and is skirting the issue of alteration. Chairwoman Mees feels that the first paragraph states it is exempt.

Rayna Rubin does not want to hold the Society up, as we are going to approve it.

Chairwoman Mees suggests that Mrs. Frazier, Curator, provide a letter to the Historical Commission stating the three items that are the Scope of Work, there will be no change in color and it is a **replacement** roof with selective **replacement** of portions of the chimney using the exact same materials.

Kate Nedelman-Herbst asks if the Historical Society has provided information to Planning Department and Building Inspector, to establish that the exemption applies. Mr. Harris states it is the contractor's responsibility to provide information to the Building Inspector and to pull the permits. Chairwoman Mees explains that the Commission need's confirmation from the owner (the Historical Society) related to the three items. Kate Nedelman-Herbst states that we need the letter before a determination is made.

Mrs. Frazier, Curator, will provide a letter addressed to the Historical Commission care of the Planning and Community Development Department. Kate Nedelman-Herbst thinks we have voted by proxy in the past. Director Stickney can forward the letter by email, and members can respond back. Chairwoman Mees states we want to be very careful about the language. Mrs. Frazier, Curator, is provided copy of Attorney Goldrosen's email.

New Business:

1006 Liberty Street:

Chairwoman Mees saw an article in the paper regarding 1006 Liberty Street, which is the area at Grove and Liberty that is being developed. Behind that area is one of the oldest houses in Braintree from 1693, and the news article stated that the developer is looking to have the house moved. What Chairwoman Mees did not see a recognition that it should fall under a Demolition Delay. It is MHC 05 added to the MHC List in 1967 and identified as the Nash-Penniman House.

Old Business (Project Updates):

Project Update: Gallivan House – project completion:

Robert Harris provides an update and copies of the Preservation Restriction Agreement signed and registered with Norfolk County Registry of Deeds. This took 6 ½ year. Three copies are provided to the department for the Planning Board, Historic Commission, and Community Preservation Committee. This is done. Mr. Harris advises that there was a hold on last 5% of the payment for the replacement of the roof on the Gallivan House, and Director Stickney has put that through for payment. Director Stickney indicated to Mr. Harris that the Preservation Commission was open to considering applications for additional funds. Mr. Harris advises that they are putting together a proposal that would focus on the exterior of the Gallivan House, the doctor's offices and garage. What would be left for the Historical Society to fundraise for is the bulk of the first floor and all of second floor. Mr. Harris mentions that Derek Manning told him that Community Preservation does fund some affordable housing restoration. The Historical Society will look at whether it makes sense to apply for funds to restore the second floor, and add a handicap entrance so that the first and second floor can be shut-off from each other. They have embarked upon a fundraising effort. Thayer roof will cost about \$61,000; state funds and private funds have been received for that. The problem with water intrusion in the southwest corner of the basement has been resolved, and Thayer house is done. The next issue is French House and Gallivan House. Ron Frazier questions if it would be eligible for affordable housing because it is not owned by the Town. It is owned by a private institution.

Project Update: Town Hall – doors status report:

Andrew Marron from the Mayor's office advised Director Stickney that the installation is scheduled for week of November 4th. Chairwoman Mees thanks the board members for their efforts in this regard.

Project Update: Elm Street Cemetery – topper fence:

Director Stickney advised Chairwoman Mees that both project management and construction contracts are in place. The contractor, L&L Contracting, submitted shop drawings, which have been approved by the architect. The next step is for the contractor to create the mock-up section of fencing. Chairwoman Mees offers a thank you to this commission, as she drove by Elm Street Cemetery this week and it looks good. Chairwoman Mees advises that the town has cleaned up landscaping. Santina Giannino states they have done a beautiful job. Ron Frazier hopes that we are going to have the topper fence before end of year.

Project Update: Other matters –

Historical Inventory Project – Director Stickney is trying to put together another application for historic inventory like Braintree Square/Elm Street. Chairwoman Mees advises that Ron Frazier has a binder that was worked on in the 1990's. Director Stickney is asking to put this on December Agenda for discussion. Ron Frazier was going to dispose of all his old records, as he was a Historical Commission member before it was part of Planning and Town Government. Each Commission was an entity unto itself. Mr. Frazier was going through records from 20 years back, and found there was a survey of South Braintree already done. The binder was at the Historical Society. Ron Frazier thinks this may alter slightly the area that we want to survey because the objective is to survey the entire Town of Braintree ultimately. If this area has already been done, then we need to expand the area or move it into a different area. Ron Frazier provided Christine filings that show what was done. She does not have the last proposal that was done for Braintree Square area, as the files are missing. Ron Frazier's binder was from 1995 and 1996. It has a lot of the area, but not the same area we were looking at. Rayna Rubin asks if this is electronic. It is not, but would be a good project for an intern. Ron Frazier states the binder is on loan from the Historical Society. There is an inventory from Claire Dempsey on work that was done at the time.

Administrative: Discussion - November Meeting 11/4/19 (election 11/5):

Chairwoman Mees advises that the Historical Commission's next meeting is the night before the election and the question is do we want to reschedule the meeting or wait for the December meeting. Kate Nedelman-Herbst mentions that Christine also notes she is unavailable and suggests not holding the meeting unless we need to if something comes up in the next week or two.

Administrative: Approval of Minutes: 9/9/19:

Ron Frazier highlights his suggested corrections to the minutes from the September 9, 2019 meeting. Santina Giannino made a **MOTION** to accept the minutes for September 9, 2019, as amended; seconded by Rayna Rubin; all in favor.

Administrative: Vote: 2020 Schedule of meetings (handout):

The Historical Commission reviews the suggested 2020 meeting dates. Chairwoman Mees reminds the members that the Commission typically does not meet in July or August. Ron Frazier made a **MOTION** to accept the 2020 Historical Commission meeting dates; seconded by Kate Nedelman-Herbst; all in favor.

Ron Frazier made a **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Santina Giannino; unanimously voted.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Louise Quinlan, Planning & Community Development