

**Braintree Historical Commission**

Minutes

**April 4, 2011**

Thayer Public Library

Present: Elizabeth Mees (Chair) Ron Frazier Al Varraso  
Paul Carr Kate Nedelman Herbst

Also present: Christine Stickney, Director of Planning & Community Development.

Meeting convened at 7:02 PM

Historic Significance Criteria discussion:

Elizabeth Mees explained to the members absent from the last meeting the discussion on establishing degrees of significance. Ron Frazier noted MHC considers anything 50 years and older significant however age should not be the only criteria. Ron expressed his opinion that CPA funds should not be used for religious institutions. Paul Carr questioned what happens if an event occurs on the site of a church noting the pending application of the First Congregational Church. Elizabeth Mees stated it is important that the committee have modifiers and be able to explain how they will be implemented in the decision making of what is or is not significant. Christine asked for clarification if this is just for CPA projects or anything requiring a degree of historic significance. Elizabeth noted it would be for anything. Ron Frazier felt age should be one criterion, Paul Carr felt location in a local historic district should be another. Elizabeth noted we need a baseline in order to substantiate our decisions. Ron Frazier wants staff to obtain information from other communities to bring back to the committee for discussion on the next agenda on 5/2/11.

CPA Applications requesting FY 12 CPA funds:

Christine provided members with a memo dated 3/28/11 that explained the requirements of the CPA statute and the projects that submitted applications for funding in the FY2012 round. The projects included: Old Thayer Library (\$200,000.), Vital Historic Records (\$40,000-Town Clerk), All Souls Church (\$87,000 - 102,000) & John Adams Memorial Plaza (\$35,000 - First Congregational Church). She noted that all of the projects with the exception of the John Adams Memorial have provided documentation or received a vote already from the Historical Commission and can go straight to the CPA. Additional information is expected from the First Congregational including a modified request of more funds. Christine noted she anticipates the CPA will be seeking legal advice from the Town Solicitor as to the use of CPA funds in relation to religious institutions. Paul Carr noted that the Town has a "branding" program for signage relative to locations that have had an event. Elizabeth Mees noted that when the time comes regarding any discussion on the First Congregational application that she may need to recuse herself. Christine reminded the members of their appointment with the CPA committee for three projects on April 11<sup>th</sup> – she will post a meeting notice for the BHC.

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Updates:

- 1) Old Thayer Library – Christine reported that the application was made to MHC for funding under the Mass Preservation Project Fund (MPPF) and that the Town’s match of \$200,000. is the application before the CPA. Paul Carr wanted to discuss a concern he had with the exterior proposal at the rear of the building to attain universal accessibility. Using a diagram he noted his concern that the addition is not the full height of the original building. He also questioned if windows in the rear are originals or additions over the year. Paul would like to see the addition be the full height. Elizabeth Mees noted that a building on the National Register when dealing with new construction is suppose to not impact the character of the original building - she noted some concerns she had with the proposal for the restrooms and issues of accessibility. Christine informed members that the current application under MPPF is only the roof, chimneys, downspouts/gutters and some masonry work now – that additional funding would need to be sought for other exterior improvements – so there would be time to look at this closer.
- 2) Union/Legion School – Al Varraso noted that recent rain storms have caused leaks in the roof and something needs to be done as soon as possible.
- 3) Gallivan House/LHD amendment – Christine reported that just today she received some information from Mr. Fahey at the BH Society relative to the original local historic district study committee that should help with our request. Paul Carr stressed the urgency for getting this into the local historic district asap.
- 4) Historic Inventory – Elizabeth has the map she will bring to the presentation and members agreed they would try and attend as well on 4/4/11. Christine asked for clarification of the scope of services. Members said that a scope would have a consultant look at all the structures within the mapped area, determine if over 50 years plus, they determine a price per structure that it would cost to have a Form B inventory form – she will try and get this out soon.

Elm Street Cemetery:

Members noted their difficulty with reading the plan on-line and wondered if it could be printed. Al Varraso suggested calling Blue Hills Vo-tech to see if they would print up a few copies for us.

Barbara Donahoe made a suggestion to do a presentation during October 2011 – archeology month about the Elm Street Cemetery Preservation plan. Christine asked members if this is of any interest – and members agreed – yes but also asked Christine to ask Barbara about a walk though the cemetery and a little presentation on a Saturday morning – if she would be agreeable to do – Christine will discuss it with her.

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Administrative Matters:

Al Varraso **MOTION** to accept the minutes of 1/3/11, seconded by Kate Nedelman Herbst – unanimously voted.

Ron Frazier **MOTION** to accept the minutes of 2/7/11, seconded by Kate Nedelman Herbst – unanimously voted.

Ron Frazier **MOTION** to accept the minutes of 3/7/11, seconded by Al Varraso – unanimously voted.

**Department Budget:**

Christine asked if the Chair and any members interested in attending to show their support for the department's budget – we are before the Town Council Ways and Means on May 10, 2011 at 6:30PM – Town Hall.

Al Varraso **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Kate Nedelman Herbst – unanimously voted.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15PM

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Stickney, Director  
Planning and Community Development