

Braintree Historical Commission
Minutes
December 5, 2011
Town Hall – Johnson Chambers

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

Absent: Paul Carr

Also Present: Joan Carroll, Director of Braintree High School Art Department
Christine Stickney, Director of Planning and Community Development

Meeting convened at 7 PM

Old Thayer Library:

Ms. Carroll attended the meeting upon the suggestion of staff and direction from Mayor Sullivan due to her concern for the Library building and how it may be used in the future. Ms. Carroll expressed her desire to participate in efforts for the re-use of the Old Thayer Library given it would be a great cultural resource for the Town and various groups. She had met with Mayor Sullivan who directed her to staff and the Commission who are working with the building. Ms. Mees explained that the BHC has been focused on securing the building from weather and further deterioration – primarily on the exterior. A grant from MHC had been obtained and there was a public meeting to begin discussion on how the building should be used but the BHC is taking their direction from the Mayor. Members suggested that the Mayor will be making the ultimate decision on the use. Ms. Carroll will speak with Mayor Sullivan.

Meeting with Mayor Sullivan:

Christine noted the Mayor had a school committee meeting and that she had sent an email after the November meeting expressing that members would be glad to come in on a Friday to meet but no response has been provided. Ms. Mees and Ms. Nedelman Herbst suggested that staff reach out again about meeting during the day – it is important that the Commission be aware of the Mayor's desire prior to efforts to submit a bylaw.

Historic Preservation Agreements:

Christine had asked that this item appear on an agenda for discussion. The CPA committee is funding more historical projects that are both Town and non-profit that will require placement of a preservation restriction on their titles. Questions as to who should hold the restrictions will need direction. The first ones that will be forthcoming soon are with the All Souls Church and the Highland School projects. The Mass Historical Commission has provided information that these restriction could have a term rather be required in perpetuity when it involves funding rather than projects that acquire. Members discussed this issue and what they would recommend to the CPA committee if asked is a perpetual restriction – Mr. Frazier **MOTION** to recommend to the CPA that all historical preservation restrictions be in perpetuity, seconded by Mr. Varraso – unanimously voted (4:0). Christine asked if the Braintree Historical Society may be able to assume the Town monitoring and Ron Frazier noted two concerns relative to both the society and the commission. First the Society has a lot issues on-going and given their current state of affairs he is not sure they could, secondly what happens if there is a change with the Mayor and the BHC was eliminated – how could they perform the monitoring. Members asked about other CPA projects in other Towns. Staff will do more research on the issue for the next meeting.

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Historical Significance discussion: Elizabeth Mees asked that this be tabled for a future meeting.

Union School roof project:

Christine and Al Varraso reported that the contractor was ready to go a week ago but with the Christmas tree sales are ongoing so they asked the contractor to postpone until after Christmas.

Old Thayer Library:

Christine reported that she has been calling Mass Historical to get the Town's contract and expressed her concern with the delays and the deadline of 6/30/12 for work to be completed. She has spoken with the Mayor about the issue. Elizabeth offered to assist in trying to determine what the issue is holding up the issuance of the contract and if needed could meet on a Friday for a resolution.

Other:

Members asked about the Historical Mural and when it is to be hung in Town Hall – Christine will inquire with the Mayor's office.

Historical survey – Christine noted that the NOI was submitted to MHC and the full application is due in February. Ron Frazier had brought copies of past inventory information that he will lend to the office to be scanned to assist in this new project. Christine noted she will need direction from the BHC as to the scope of the project in order to complete the application. The matter will be put over to next meeting.

Members urged Christine to seek assistance from local colleges as to internships and also the local high schools – National Honor Society – community requirements.

Administrative:

Kate Nedelman Herbst **MOTION** to accept the minutes of 11/15/11 as amended by R. Frazier, seconded by Al Varraso – unanimously voted.

Kate Nedelman Herbst **MOTION** to accept the minutes of 9/12/11, seconded by Ron Frazier – unanimously voted.

Members agreed to establish the following 2012 Meeting dates for the Commission – all meetings at Johnson Chambers (7PM): January 9, 2012, February 6th, March 5th, April 2nd, May 7th and June 4th. Summer meetings will be discussed at a later meeting.

Ron Frazier **MOTION** to adjourn, seconded by Kate Herbst Nedelman – unanimously voted.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45PM

Respectfully submitted

Christine Stickney, Director
Planning & Community Development Office