

Acton Historical Commission
Meeting Minutes – March 14, 2012
7:30 p.m., Acton Town Hall, Rm. 126

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AHC Members Present: Bill Dickinson (BD), Victoria Beyer (VB), Brad Maxwell (BM), Jim Chiarelli (JC) and David Clough (DC), the Commission's liaison to the Board of Selectmen

1. BD, serving as chair, called the meeting to order. Minutes for the Commission's February 2012 meeting were reviewed and approved.
2. VB reported on the historical projects for which CPC funding was and was not approved this year. Funding was approved for, among other things, renovation of library windows and mechanisms for the clocks at Town Hall, but was not approved for this year for the South Acton Train Station landscaping and for a revolving loan fund for historical structures in the Town's historic districts that require repairs.
3. BD updated the Commission regarding the process for selecting an architect to perform the first phase of work at 17 Woodbury Lane. The selection committee chose and interviewed two finalists from those who responded to the RFQ. The committee then selected one architect with significant experience in restoring historic structures and recommended this architect to the Town Manager for approval.
4. The Commission then discussed the status of the inventory forms for the three historic cemeteries. Bill Klauer (BK) is working with Dean Charter to prepare an RFP for the inventory form work.

[The meeting was temporarily adjourned at 8:00 p.m. for the public hearing on 52 Great Road (see attached); meeting resumed at 8:25 p.m.]

5. Next, the Commission turned its attention to recent correspondence.
 - a. BK responded to the inquiry regarding the status of the Wright Holden Farmhouse.
 - b. The Massachusetts Historical Commission informed the Commission that the Cultural Resource List (CRL) updates completed by Diane Sergeij. ^{it received}
 - c. The Acton Historical Society wrote to ask the Commission to endorse their Patriots' Day activities, and the Commission unanimously voted to do so.
 - d. The Commission received a letter from the Massachusetts Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission asking for information about any events that Acton has planned to commemorate the 150th anniversary. The Commission nominated BK to respond to the letter.
6. Discussion then returned to the demolition permit application for 52 Great Road. The Commission observed that the house still retains the style and history for which it was listed on the CRL, and that it remains a viable building, though perhaps better suited to a commercial use instead of the current residential use. If the applicant was so inclined, the Commission noted that it may be able to assist with suggesting names of other interested parties or developers who may consider purchasing the house and putting it to a higher and better use. The Commission

Acton Historical Commission

Public Hearing re: Demolition Permit Application for 52 Great Road

March 14, 2012, 8:00 p.m.

Acton Town Hall, Rm. 126

AHC Members Present: Bill Dickinson (BD), Victoria Beyer (VB), Brad Maxwell (BM), Jim Chiarelli (JC) and David Clough (DC), the Commission's liaison to the Board of Selectmen

Members of the Public Present: John Wagner (on behalf of the applicant), Rosiland Carr, Elaine Doyle and Brad Graham

1. BD served as chair and called the hearing to order promptly at 8:00 p.m., and explained the Commission's hearing process to John Wagner, son of the applicant who appeared on his behalf. The demolition application was referred to the Commission because 52 Great Road is included on the Town's Cultural Resource List (CRL).
2. In response to questions from the Commission, Mr. Wagner stated that the application contemplates a demolition of the entire structure at 52 Great Road, as well as others under common ownership on adjacent lots that are not subject to the CRL. The properties have not been marketed, nor are there any particular reuses planned at present. Mr. Wagner stated that the applicant applied for the demolition permit in order to keep his development options open for the future. The building has not been updated, and retaining it as a residential building would trigger the need to perform such upgrades. The applicant feels that the continued residential use is a burden that he no longer wishes to bear, and it is incompatible with the modern uses of surrounding properties on Great Road.
3. The hearing was closed at 8:25 p.m.