

CONCORD HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Public Meeting Minutes
January 31, 2019, 7:00 P.M.
First Floor Hearing Room, 141 Keyes Road

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk's Office, Concord's Historical Commission held a public meeting in the First Floor Hearing Room at 141 Keyes Road, Concord, MA 01742 at 7:00 P.M.

Commission Members Present: Diann Strausberg, Melissa Saalfield, Andrew Koh

Staff: Heather Gill, Senior Planner

Others: Alice Kaufman, Select Board Liaison
Marcia Rasmussen, DPLM
Michael Capizzi, 11 Wood Street

Ms. Strausberg called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Historical Commission Charge Amendments and the Wheeler Harrington House

Marcia Rasmussen met with the Commission and explained that she met with the Town Manager to discuss the amendments to the Commission's charge. Ms. Rasmussen stated that she will have their final recommendations to the Commission for their next meeting. The Commission discussed their role in regards to the Wheeler Harrington House, and formalizing a process to approve tenant project plans annually. The Commission discussed the need to have a joint meeting with the Natural Resources Commission to discuss what the design charrette for the property's future use should look like.

Preservation Restriction Review for 317 Garfield Road

Ms. Gill summarized the project history. Ms. Gill explained that last year, the Commission was asked to make a formal recommendation to the ZBA regarding a Special Permit application for 317 Garfield Road. Project Background: The applicant submitted an application to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a Special Permit to divide the property into two lots, one for each dwelling. There are two dwellings (main house and carriage house) located on the property, both of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The owner of the property is seeking a Special Permit to divide the lot into two lots, while at the same time preserving the two historically significant structures. In January 2017, the Commission recommended approval of the Special Permit with the conditions that the granting of the Special Permit is contingent on the execution of the Preservation Restriction, for both of the lots created; the Historical Commission and/or its staff is allowed to photograph the exterior of the property to document the existing conditions [in order to have reference for future inspections]; and the Historical Commission and/or staff is allowed access to the property to conduct annual inspections, as required by the Preservation Restriction. The Commission discussed the proposed preservation restriction, drafted by the owner's attorney. Ms. Strausberg asked if Town Counsel had reviewed the restriction. Ms. Gill stated that she will contact the Town Manager, and let him know that the Commission has requested that Town Counsel review the restriction. Ms. Saalfield moved to accept the preservation restriction for 317 Garfield Road with the condition that Town Counsel reviews it prior to the Select Board acceptance. Mr. Koh seconded the motion and all others voted in favor. The motion passed (3-0). The Commission discussed taking photographs of the property and drafting the baseline documents for the restriction.

Section 106 review – Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Phase 2B

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Ms. Gill explained that the Commission is being asked to review the Determination of No Adverse Effect and submit any written comments on the project, as required under the Section 106 Review process. Ms. Gill stated that Phase 2B of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail that spans Concord and Acton, will expend federal funding, and therefore requires review under Section 106. The project is proposing to construct a 12 foot wide paved bicycle path with 2 feet of graded stone dust shoulders, all within the railroad right-of-way. The project also includes the construction of two new bridges to carry the rail trail over Route 2 and the Nashoba Brook, and a wildlife crossing culvert under Route 2. The project area does not include any local historic districts or properties listed on the National Register in the Town of Concord. There are a few properties adjacent to the rail trail along Commonwealth Ave that are identified in the Concord Junction Architectural Inventory Form. These properties include late 1800's and early 1900's single family dwellings across from the prison. The trail will run adjacent to the Wright-Holden Farmhouse (located in Acton), however, the construction of the trail is unlikely to alter the character or integrity of the structure. The Wight-Holden House is potentially eligible for listing on the National Register. All work will take place within the existing railroad right of way. None of the inventoried properties will be physically impacted by the trail or bridge construction. Archeological sites identified at the beginning of this project were surveyed in 2009, and during a subsequent site examination of the prison worker housing midden and prison cemetery. Michael Capizzi provided a brief history on the Wright Holden Farmhouse. Ms. Rasmussen reviewed the bridge design, and stated that it will be designed to preserve the stonework from the former train bridge. Ms. Saalfield moved to agree that there will be no adverse effects and issue no comments on the proposed project. Mr. Koh seconded the motion and all others voted in favor. The motion passed (3-0).

Discussion: Preservation Restrictions and Annual Inspections

No discussion.

Discussion: Archeology in Concord

The Commission reviewed and discussed the Natural Resources Department's request to create a pollinator meadow at Barrett Farm in the remains of the foundation walls of the original farm stand. Mr. Koh summarized the McGrath Farm archaeology project and the history of the original farm stand. Ms. Rasmussen explained what a pollinator meadow is, and the types of plantings involved. Mr. Koh recommended that someone be onsite during the pulling of the plant material, to identify any artifacts found. Ms. Strausberg asked if the wildflowers are all removed if a full archaeological investigation is warranted in the future. Ms. Rasmussen stated that could be done if necessary. The Commission agreed that the foundation should not be removed and that someone should be present during the plant excavation.

Mr. Koh summarized a proposed project at Walden Woods. Mr. Koh explained that there were structures owned by prior slaves, but the location of the structures are not known. The Commission discussed their support of the project.

Ms. Strausberg reminded the Commission that Mr. Koh's term is coming to an end, and the Commission is still seeking an archaeologist.

Minutes

The Commission asked that the minutes are placed on the next meeting agenda.

Potential New Member

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Michael Capizzi summarized his history and interest in serving on the Commission.

Ms. Saalfield moved to adjourn. Mr. Koh seconded the motion and all others voted in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

Minutes Approved: April 25, 2019

Respectfully submitted by:

Heather Gill
Senior Planner