

**SWAMPSCOTT HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**MEETING LOCATION:** Virtual Meeting

Thursday, September 1, 2022

6:30 pm

<b><u>MEMBERS PRESENT:</u></b>	Kim Barry, Brad Graham, Ryan Judkins, Jonathan Leamon, Justina Oliver, Nancy Schultz, Richard Smith
<b><u>MEMBERS ABSENT:</u></b>	Jean Reardon
<b><u>OTHERS PRESENT:</u></b>	Franceska O'Reilly (applicant for HC)
<b><u>1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:</u></b>	N. Schultz called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.
<b><u>2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 4, 2022</u></b>	J. Oliver moved to approve the August 4, 2022 minutes as amended; B. Graham seconded.
<b><u>3. TREASURER'S REPORT – R. JUDKINS</u></b>	No updates since our last meeting. All balances/information in August 4, 2022 minutes.
<b><u>OLD BUSINESS</u></b>	
<b><u>4. PRESERVATION BYLAW APPLICATION UPDATES</u></b> a. Updates on Inventory of Stanley School – J. Leamon  b. Update on 35 Pitman Rd. – J. Oliver	Max Kasper responded to J. Leamon's email regarding weathervane atop cupola and other items that the HC is retaining. They are currently being stored at the Middle School and can be moved to the archives at 86 Burrill St. <b>J. Leamon to follow up with M. Kasper to move items and ensure that all listed items have been removed.</b>  J. Oliver reached out to Meeghan O'Neil after our last meeting. Affordable Housing does not have a September meeting scheduled so nothing has progressed. They usually meet around the first of the month.

	<p>Bruce Paradise reached out...their demo permits are getting lined up. Inventory, etc.[not clear what this means?] <b>J. Oliver will circle back with Bruce Paradise and see what's happening with Habitat for Humanity and the Affordable Trust funding. She has recommended that they ask for the full available amount to facilitate land purchase.</b></p> <p>J. Oliver spoke with a reporter from the Lynn Item who wants to write an article regarding public awareness that two houses are getting demolished in order to construct Elm Place development.</p>
<p><u>5. HISTORIC INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE</u></p> <p>a. <u>Update on Lilac Garden Sign in memory of Lou Gallo – K. Barry, J. Oliver</u></p> <p>b. <u>Update on White Court Sign – J. Leamon</u></p>	<p>K. Barry spoke with Carol at Vacker. Quote from Carol of \$1199 includes sign, frame, post, design layout and shipping. It was suggested that we package the Blythswood sign to save shipping cost. She needs to see the layout of the sign in order to price it out...we can get a full quote. Lilac sign is 18 x 24...Blythswood sign is 24 x 36. Costs have gone up. J. Oliver and K. Barry working on content for web page. Swampscott Historical Society wants to contribute toward the cost of the Lilac sign and co-sponsor it.</p> <p>R. Smith joined the meeting at 6:55 pm.</p> <p>We need to finalize the amount that the Historical Society and Conservation Commission are putting toward the interpretive signs, so that we can vote on the total cost. \$800 or ½ of total cost??? They might need to vote on funding...will check with M. Galazka.</p> <p>Email cost numbers to R. Judkins and N. Schultz so that they can put on the agenda for next month.</p> <p>We will package up shipping costs for both signs.</p> <p>Lilac Garden sign must be approved by Historic District Commission. Blythswood sign does not; not a local historic district.</p> <p>Toni Bandrowitz has been traveling and had not reviewed the White Court signs as of the date of this meeting. <b>J. Leamon will reach out once</b></p>

	<p><b>again for Toni’s comments on behalf of the Conservation Commission.</b></p>
<p><u>6. TRAILS &amp; SAILS: ESSEX NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA (SEPT 24, 2022) – UPDATE ON STAFFING OF TOWN HALL FOR EXHIBIT AND OLMSTED DISTRICT TOURS (RICHARD); PUBLICITY FOR EVENT.</u></p>	<p>J. Oliver and K. Barry</p> <p>K. Barry used J. Oliver’s write up from the last meeting. Links on Rails &amp; Trails website are live; they post to two separate SHC events.</p> <p><b>R. Smith would like to use the conference room on the first floor (rear of building) for a presentation on Olmsted. J. Leamon and N. Schultz, J. Oliver and K Barry will handle tours and exhibit at Thomson House. J. Oliver will be sure the building is open and available. Walking tour (in the event of bad weather)...sign on the door...weather dependent.</b></p>
<p><u>7. EXHIBIT UPDATE – TOWN HALL</u></p> <p>a. <u>170th – J. Leamon, N. Schultz</u></p> <p>b. <u>Next Exhibit: Indigenous People’s Month (Nov.); to be set up in built-in case in Town Hall foyer by October 15. This will be presented as a continuation of Swampscott’s 170<sup>th</sup>.</u></p>	<p>The consensus of the HC is to continue the 170<sup>th</sup> exhibition for a while. There are still funds available from the festival grant. N. Schultz and R. Judkins are exploring the potential to use some of the remaining funds for a speaker (expert) on Native American Heritage which will tie-in with the 170<sup>th</sup> as well as the upcoming observance of Indigenous People’s Month (November).</p> <p>A number of concerns were raised by HC members regarding the observance of Indigenous People’s Month, starting October 15. When initially proposed by the Town Administration, the thought was to use Town artifacts supplemented by Native American material that Danielle Strauss is willing to loan to the exhibit from a shop that her family once owned in New Hampshire. J. Leamon requested photographs, in advance, along with the provenance of any items where it is available, in order to facilitate appropriate wording on the tombstones (exhibit markers) and ensure the separation of artifacts from souvenirs. In addition, J. Leamon spoke with Mary Cassidy of the Historical Society on August 22 regarding potential artifacts in their possession. The information in the Historical Society appears to be limited to occasional reenactments that have been held, possibly around Black Will’s Cliff and Lincoln House Point, but all much more</p>

recent than the Native American history of Swampscott.

Several important concerns were raised by various members of the HC: (1) the potential to inadvertently display sacred objects, such as certain ceremonial feathers and other items that are never exhibited in public or at least not without the proper explanation by an expert who is knowledgeable about these matters, (2) the need to separate genuine artifacts from “trinkets” to ensure the authenticity of the exhibit, also requiring an expert or extensive research on the part of the HC, (3) the potential of a quickly-assembled exhibit to insult, rather than honor, the Indigenous history of our town. Real-life examples of this exist locally, where members of Massachusetts’ Wampanoag community say Plimoth Plantation (now called Plimoth Patuxet) has not lived up to its promise of creating a “bi-cultural museum.” Camille Madison, a member of the Aquinnah Wampanoag Tribe on Martha’s Vineyard commented that “We don’t want to engage with them until they can find a way to respect Indigenous knowledge and experience.”

Based on this additional knowledge the Historical Commission unanimously agreed to recommend the following: (1) Engage a well-respected speaker on Indigenous Culture and History and offer a stipend (with approval by the Mass Cultural Commission) for this year’s upcoming observance. (2) Utilize that expert and others for best practices on Native American artifacts to develop a display, potentially including items on loan from D. Strauss’ collection, for November, 2023 observance of Indigenous People’s month, opening around October 15, 2023. **The Nahant Library has an exhibit that we can view. K. Barry will also follow up with the Peabody Essex Museum. A letter with this recommendation will be composed by the HC and sent to Town Administration.**

**N. Schultz, J. Oliver and R. Judkins will discuss additional options for spending grant funds remaining from the 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary.**

<p>c. <u>Following 170<sup>th</sup> and Indigenous People exhibit, hotels, lodging and people associated with the industry.</u></p> <p>d. <u>Fishing Industry in Swampscott – set timing.</u></p> <p>e. <u>Maintenance/staffing – report out on timers.</u></p>	<p>K. Barry reminded HC members to track volunteer exhibit time for grant, e.g. tombstone writing, exhibit setup, etc. Grant effective July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023.</p> <p>Programmable timer (via iphone) did not work so we will need to purchase standard timers for the exhibit lights. HC members have approved of disposal of all display case boxes/packing material currently located in Town Hall basement corridor, per request of the Fire Department, since our exhibits are intended to be continuous into perpetuity.</p> <p>J. Oliver has some recommendations for exhibit murals in the “new” section of the building. These will be deferred until our next meeting.</p>
<p>8. <u>53 PURITAN RD.</u></p>	<p>N. Schultz met with Stephen Cummings, Building Commissioner 9/1/22. J. Leamon also met with Mr. Cummings on 8/18/22, shortly after the demolition and reconstruction. J. Oliver’s 2/8/2019 letter from the HC to the homeowner approved 14 linear feet of garage to be removed, subject to the homeowner returning to the HC with full plans including exterior treatment. Over one recent weekend the homeowner tore down the entire hangar garage. It is now 20 ft. high instead of the original 15 ft. high. The Building Commissioner has asked them to go before the Zoning Board. They would need to retroactively approve, and must submit the request 3 weeks prior to the meeting.</p> <p>What options does the HC have? 10% fine is an option. Based on previous meetings and a similar issue with the home, the HC is in favor of a 10% fine on the value of the home and the garage, since both were demolished fully (garage) or partially (home) without a demolition permit.</p> <p>In Salem, the Historical Commission got the Town Counsel to change the delay of demolition from 9 months to 2 years. Through our shared drive, we can have access to all agenda items that go before the Zoning Board. N. Schultz will work with the Zoning Board toward developing a reliable way to manage the process. We need to have a close relationship with the Zoning</p>

Board. Air table gives R. Smith access to this material for the Historic District Commission.

The garage is on property line, per R. Smith...so there have been issues with it in the past. The abutter to the left has expressed many concerns over the years, and the abutter to the right has also recently expressed concerns. We believe the fine should be earmarked for Historic Preservation.

There is one prior instance of a fine imposed for demolition, relating to Red Rock Bistro; now known as Mission on the Bay. The fine/agreement required the construction of bollards on the sidewalk, at a cost of around \$9,000.

**B. Graham suggests we all read the bylaws and not jump into this. N. Schultz will invite the Building Commissioner to meet with us.**

**R. Judkins suggests we send an email to the zoning board now, and reach out to Town Counsel as well, in order to preserve our rights.**

**J. Oliver will circulate copy of bylaws.**

<p><u>9. HISTORICAL COMMISSION STAFFING AND OFFICERS AND MEETING FORMAT (ZOOM OR IN PERSON)</u></p>	<p>N. Schultz had a call from a member of the Select Board. None of the appointments to the Historical Commission have been officially made, yet all of the dates have been extended. N. Schultz recommended that all current members of the HC be reappointed which was agreed upon by this Select Board member. We have one opening to fill, and currently 3 applicants. In this way, we will have continuity, since our Fiscal Year began July 1, 2022. R. Judkins suggested that we move forward. N. Schultz proposed we vote a slate of officers as opposed to individual votes to expedite.</p> <p><b>R. Judkins nominated N. Schultz for Chair, J. Leamon for Vice Chair and R. Judkins for Treasurer. Seconded by K. Barry.</b></p> <p><b>N. Schultz nominated B. Graham for Secretary; seconded by J. Leamon</b></p> <p><b>Moved and Voted to approve the slate as presented by R. Judkins. Seconded by K. Barry.</b></p> <p><b>New slate of officers unanimously approved.</b></p>
<p><u>NEW BUSINESS</u></p>	
<p><u>10. FACEBOOK PAGE ADMINISTRATION</u></p>	<p>N. Schultz asked K. Barry, R. Judkins and J. Oliver to recommend the best policy and purpose for the HC Facebook page.</p> <p>J. Oliver provided some history. The business page was started by the Chair who preceded her. K. Barry started the Facebook History Group. Initially, only we could post to the business page. People can comment on our posts. Our mission was to bring the history of town out into the public.</p> <p>R. Judkins joined a couple of years ago. He articulated a need for a place to chat about Swampscott history, use photos and build greater community through the use of photos. At the time, we discussed whether it should be public or private. We agreed to keep it public.</p> <p>Discussion ensued regarding people who may have been removed, and the reasons behind that.</p>

K. Barry described the group intent (as of 2020) as a dialogue of the greater community of Swampscott and its neighbors. This could include people who used to live in Swampscott, as well as other interested parties. Nobody is excluded from becoming a member. Anyone can join. The “approval” setting is designed to review posts *only*. Once an approver accepts an initial post, that member can post going forward without approval. Typical members are from Swampscott, Lynn, Marblehead, Nahant, Salem, i.e. the surrounding area. Few people have been removed, e.g. person who lives in Oregon. K. Barry tries to avoid bots or spammers; to avoid “make money ads...” If you let everyone post, you get a Swampscott Nest...i.e. businesses...people are meant to be connected to the greater Swampscott area. Swampscott Nest is more of a chat “free-for-all” in terms of subject matter; it does not have a specific focus.

How far and wide do we want our group to be? Approve for posting; first post only. If you post to promote a business, it won't be approved. K. Barry's understanding was anyone in the area who is interested in Swampscott may be included. People who are inactive might also be removed from the site. New members will identify the town they are from. Last year people were put through and later had to be blocked. K. Barry is conscious of trolling, and wants to avoid that.

**HC members should visit the Facebook page. Look through it. What is your connection to the town?**

**We are not monitoring membership...only posts. What is your connection to the town. Posts should be related to Swampscott history. Moderators will remove posts that don't meet these requirements.**

**Consensus-on a trial basis: Leave the settings as they are. For first post, request permission to post. Assist with removing posts that are not germane; try it out for a month or 2.**



	<b>K. Barry will change initial question with current settings.</b>
<u>11. COLLECTIONS POLICY/ARCHIVES</u>	<p>Many thanks to B. Graham for composing two letters relating to current and new collections/donations. They are timely because of a new donation from Tarn Stephanos to be received shortly by J. Leamon. N. Schultz feels we can use the letters now and B. Graham will continue to work on the collections policy.</p> <p><b>R. Judkins moved to approve the letters that B. Graham wrote, seconded by J. Leamon.</b></p> <p><b>Unanimously approved.</b></p>
<u>12. RESTARTING PLAQUE PROGRAM</u>	<p>Michelle Barden is almost done with all of the plaques. N. Schultz will get them within the next few days...we will have completed our entire list.</p> <p>R. Smith needed to leave the meeting at 8:45 p.m.</p> <p>Michelle will want to charge \$85 per plaque, unless we want a special wrap/packing...wax paper wrap is OK.</p> <p>Research of property is \$350, so total cost is \$435. Charge \$450? Goal is to break even without a loss, so the HC agreed on \$450. We are closing in on the completion of all of the original orders. Kudos to N. Schultz for bringing closure on this! Let's get final plaques delivered.</p>
	Motion to adjourn by B. Graham; seconded by R. Judkins. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.
<u>Next meeting: Thursday, October 6, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.</u>	HC agreed by consensus to continue to meet on Zoom until current rules expire.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Leamon, Secretary  
Swampscott Historical Commission