

Agawam Historical Commission

Meeting held at the Captain Charles Leonard House

March 26, 2019

Chairman David Cecchi called the meeting to order at 7:04pm

Members Present: David Cecchi, Marilyn Curry, Charlotte Fields, Teresa Kozloski, Shelley Pass, Alice Smith

Others Present: Henry Kozloski, Taylor Newton

Approval of Minutes of February 26, 2019 meeting:

Teresa Kozloski proposed an amendment to February 2019 Draft of minutes. Marilyn Curry made a motion to approve the minutes in their amended form. 2nd Shelley Pass: Passed by unanimous vote.

Discussion of 1985 Inventory of Historic Structures Project:

Chris Golba is the cemetery commissioner and is responsible for Agawam's cemetery maintenance.

Taylor Newton addressed the commission in regard to locating unmarked graves. Newton suggests the use of ground penetrating radar. He also noted that a Genealogy group meets at the Agawam Senior Center and is open to the Public.

Area Form- Old Burying Ground Federal Hill: Shannon Walsh would like to submit the Federal Hill Cemetery to the historical register, as soon as possible, with the intent to apply for National registry status in the future.

A.Smith: Do we still have to pay the fees because it is Public Property?

D.Cecchi: Yes. If Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) approves eligibility for the National Register we would need to hire a consultant to prepare a nomination form. . First step is submitting to MHC.

S.Pass: Is it possible to add a google satellite map view from above, to see the landscape of the area, in addition to the Locus map?

D.Cecchi: Will ask Shannon Walsh

D.Cecchi entertained a motion to submit the Old Burying Ground on Federal Hill to Mass Historical.Motion by Marilyn Curry, 2nd Shelley Pass. Passed by unanimous vote.

Shannon Walsh has been working on the Area Form for North Agawam. The issue of creating a Historic District has come up. North Agawam is largely zoned business. Currently, all structures within a Historic area must be catalogued and there is not enough room in the budget to include all of geographical North Agawam.

Shannon Walsh had been inquiring about the boundaries for a Historic District. It was decided that it would be the Mittineague area, encompassing the oldest portion of North Agawam.

On April 11 at 7:00pm the West Springfield Historical Commission will be meeting, located at 55 Altamont Ave in West Springfield, to discuss whether or not they would like to jointly create a Mittineague Historic District that would encompass the North Agawam and West Springfield areas.

David Cecchi and Shannon Walsh will be in attendance and others are welcome to join.

Designating an area as a National Register Historic District will not stop demolitions. There are other options for preservation including, the creation of a Conservation District or Establishing a Local Historic District. A Local Historic District could prevent demolition. A Local Historic District has jurisdiction over everything you can see from the street. It is the most restrictive in terms of preservation. In order to create a LHD you need a majority vote of property owners in the District to pass it.

The Discussion of Feeding Hills Center, 491 North West Street, and Maple Grove Cemetery has been postponed to the following meeting to allow members time to complete reading the Area Form drafts that have been provided.

Discussion: Demolition Delay Ordinance:

D.Cecchi has been doing extensive research on the Demolition Delay Ordinance of other Cities and Towns, including Boston, Hopkinton, Brookline, Beverly and many others that have wording that would be beneficial to Agawam's Demolition Delay Ordinance.

Brookline's includes an entire section on mitigation, which includes the stipulation that the structure must be documented if it is approved for demolition. The owner must provide photographic documentation of the site and preserve architectural features.

Most language covers only the exterior of a structure. D.Cecchi will draft a revised ordinance to submit for approval.

Other Business:

27 Walnut Street: D.Cecchi spoke with the town attorney in regards to Chuck Calabrese, the property owner. Calabrese was contacted and has allowed the Commission access to 59 High Street, another of his Historic properties, on April 1, 2019 at 5:30pm. There is the opportunity that High Street could be preserved. In regards to 59 High Street, an issue has arisen whereas the property was listed as address number 57 as opposed to 59.

A Zoning Board of Appeals hearing for 59 High Street has been set for May 13, 2019 at 6:30pm. It will take place at the Agawam Public Library.

Taylor Newton remarked on 844 Main Street, the location of Granny's Place which was destroyed by a fire in 2017. He was impressed with the erection of an identical structure that does not take away from Agawam's Historic feel. Newton suggested that the Commission present the owner with an award honoring them for their rebuild. Newton also proposed that the School Street Barn be utilized for agricultural education.

Next Meeting: April 30, 2019 at 7:00pm

Meeting adjourned 8:43pm

Respectfully submitted
Charlotte Fields
Agawam Historical Commission