

Agawam Historical Commission
Meeting held at the Captain Charles Leonard House
June 25, 2019

Chairman David Cecchi called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

Members Present: David Cecchi, Marilyn Curry, Charlotte Fields, Teresa Kozloski, Shelley Pass, Les Tingly

Members Not Present: Alice Smith

Approval of PVPC Section 106 Review of Small Cities/Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Housing Rehab Application.

D.Cecchi suggests that applications for properties determined by PVPC as not eligible for National Register could be passed from his desk and those properties that are eligible for National Register listing be presented in front of the Commission.
All members agree.

Davis Memorial Library -1924

The town law department reports that there are no existing restrictions as to the use of the property. It was suggested that the Commission work in partnership with the Historical Association to create a museum and archive.

T.Kozloski expressed concerns with partnering with the Association and would like the Commission to stand alone.

D.Cecchi notes that the Commission has no artifacts to display; the Association has an abundance of artifacts that could be exhibited.

The original artifacts and sculptures from the Davis Library are unaccounted for.

Sue Scantlon is the head of the Agawam Historical Association. The Association is currently in the process of inventorying their artifacts.

The Agawam Public Library has a well archived and documented collection.

L.Tingly could make a slideshow of un-displayed artifacts.

The Commission agreed to table further discussion until a tour of the Davis Library can be planned. D.Cecchi will try to arrange something.

1985 Inventory of Historic Structures Update Project

Shannon Walsh is still working diligently and there is nothing new since the May meeting. The new inventory is much more sophisticated and thorough.

A representative from Mass. Historical Commission came out and toured Mitneague to look at potential historic district borders. Also toured the Patch and Johnson's property on North West Street. He spoke to the owner's son in regards to creating a Rural Historic District that would include open land. There are portions of the open space that is protected.

Smith Family Cemetery

The Commission has not heard back about the headstone cleaning consultants.

L.Tingley saw a stockade fence leaning against the picket fence and questions whether they plan to inappropriately replace the fence. D.Cecchi plans to drive by and check it out.

Demolition Delay Ordinance

38 Historic structures have been demolished since the ordinance has been introduced to Agawam.

When the Demolition Delay Ordinance was first proposed it was created through compromise. A fair portion of the structures have been delayed, but none have been saved.

Both the builders of EastHampton Savings Bank and Dunkin Donuts worked with the town to create new buildings reminiscent of the ones they replaced.

The process of the current DDO was explained.

Many times homeowners dismantle the inside of a structure while they are waiting for their Public Hearing.

The Commission's job is to identify and protect the historical resources of the town, which includes the character of Agawam. Agawam's Ordinance is vague and open to interpretation.

Many DDO started similarly to that of Agawam but have evolved to be more effective.

D.Cecchi presented a draft for a Demolition Delay Ordinance that details the DDO process in a specific way that eliminates room for interpretation and supports the objectives of the Historical Commission.

Cecchi will meet with Mark Strange in the Planning Office and will also meet with the Building Inspector. Once the Commission is satisfied with the new Draft it will be sent to the Law Department for review and comment.

The Commission will formalize a list of properties identified as additions to the Inventory of Historic Resources.

The Commission is asked to read through the new Draft, mark it up and make notes. It will be discussed at a future meeting.

Currently, if a property is on the town inventory or the National Historic Registry there is no "flag" to inform the owner of the property's historic standing.

Amherst has a specific box on the Demolition Application for their Historical Commission.

Approval of Minutes of 28 May 2019 meeting

S.Pass made a motion to approve May 2019 minutes. M.Curry 2nd.
Approved by unanimous vote.

It was noted that more recent minutes have not been updated onto the town's website. D.Cecchi will make sure they are added.

Other Business

The CPA approved the restoration of two 1855 maps in the possession of the Agawam Historical Association. They have been restored, but are not currently on display. They are currently being housed at the FireHouse museum.

The Association is planning a map exhibit when the museum's renovations are complete and it can re-open.

C.Fields made a motion to close the meeting. L.Tingly 2nd.
Approved by unanimous vote.

Meeting adjourned 9:08pm

Next Meeting July 30