

HISTORIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE INFORMAL MINUTES  
March 28, 2017

The meeting convened at 2:04 PM. Matt Noble, the staff member assigned to the Historic Advisory Committee (HAC), was present. Members in attendance were Dan Hendrickson, Frances (Fran) Santini, Susan Dzyacky, Russ Carter, Katherine (KT) Cantlon and Suzanne Katt.

Jack Peterson, the town attorney, gave a brief presentation on the Sunshine Law and its application to HAC members. In a nutshell, he told us that the law prevents us from discussing, with each other, issues that may come before us for a vote.

Members had a general discussion about the letter that will be sent to owners of historic structures. Members believe it is important to tell the owners that no restrictions attach to the property if they apply for the plaque. Russ and Dan both like the idea of positioning the plaque recognition program as an honor bestowed by the town.

Susan asked about the committee's goals. A brainstorming session followed. The consensus was that for the time being, we would like to bestow as many plaques as possible to qualifying structures and in the process educate the public about the importance of our historic buildings. KT and Dan also believe it is very important to educate the public about the difference between the plaque recognition program and historic designation.

Susan talked about several strategies that may help to meet the goals. Certainly, alerting the media when we send letters and award plaques, but she also suggested tours of our historic structures and discussions at the Library regarding our plaque program. Russ spoke about all the hoopla that accompanied the presentation of the plaque for his home. He thinks it will help to educate the public if we can make bestowing a plaque an "event".

By unanimous voice vote, Susan was designated to write the letter that will be sent to historic structure owners. Fran mentioned that the last time letters were sent, a number of them were returned because they were sent to the physical address of the structure and not all owners live in the homes. KT suggested sending the letters to the owner at the address listed on the property tax website.

Matt and Fran told us that 15 plaques have been bestowed so far. Fran said she has the list that was used for the previous mailing and she would give it to us. Dan

suggested that we stagger the letters when we mail them. He believes it will be easier for the committee members to handle. If we mail to the first hundred names and the committee members each take 20 names, follow up with the owner will be manageable. KT thought this could be a good marketing opportunity as well. We can let the papers know we are sending out the first 100 letters.

Members agreed the letter should be on town stationery. Fran said she thinks it is important to hand address the envelopes because it is more personal. Dan said the envelopes can be divided up between the members to address. Suzanne said AJ and Fran would not be asked to do this.

There was also a discussion about the application for the plaque recognition program. Dan asked whether the plaque was awarded solely on the basis of the age of the structure, and if so, were all the questions on the application necessary? Matt, Fran and Russ said that the public records that give the age of the structure are sometimes wrong. Russ and Fran gave several examples. Matt said he thinks it is important for the town to have some documentation of the history of its historic structures and answers to the questions on the application help to provide that information.

Suzanne agreed to talk to Helen Bradfish about the progress of the historic designation for the Women's Club property and report to the committee at the next meeting.

Matt reported that the town has a new application for the plaque program from the owner of 839 Lagoon St. He said the property has two structures and he believes both qualify. He also said the owner is particularly proud of the original features in the front cottage.

Next meeting is Tuesday, April 25, 2017 at 2 PM

Meeting adjourned at 3:26 PM.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_