

Members Present: Phyllis Halpern (PH), Steve Wagner (SW), Mara Burnett (MB), Henry Stone (HS), Kathy Scadden (KS), Al Aydelotte (AA), Ford Curren (FC)
Staff Present: C. Zale (CZ)

Attendees: Ciaran Gavin, Tim Gavin, Adrienne Giske, Julie Hyde, Pete Hyde, Adam Hyde, Jacquelyn Jackson, Karen Sebastian, Jay Lavoie

Location: online

Recording location: <https://cloud.castus.tv/vod/weston/video/6436e66ffa34c7000897e154?page=HOME>

SW called meeting to order @ 7:01pm and read an open meeting law disclaimer from the Governor regarding open meetings.

Agenda Item:

Public Comments: No Public Comment

2. HC Business:

A. Eagle Scout Project at Chair Desk Factory – vote Anticipated

Ciaran Gavin presented a plan for his Eagle Scout project. His project plan is to clear out the overgrown area inside and around the remaining foundation of the old chair and desk factory behind Crescent Street and to add signage to the site. Ciaran discussed the historical importance of the factory site. He asked if the Commission would be willing to commit to maintain the signs at the site long term. He discussed creating the initial sign content and working with Associate Member FC to design the sign. The sign will be similar to the sign created for the Merriam Barn Site.

JT asked if the property was part of conservation land and if there was trail access nearby. Ciaran said the land was conservation land and Tim Gavin said there was a trail that ends by the foundation.

AA said this project would be a good start for the exploration of other factories that had existed in that area. The Commission discussed the location of the water wheel adjacent to the factory site. Ciaran reiterated that he is looking for the Commission to commit to maintaining the sign long term and assistance with the sign design. He said that he would be asking the Rotary Club for financial assistance. FC said this was a great idea and that he would be happy to help with the design. The Commission discussed the potential future maintenance of the sign.

JT made a motion to support Ciaran Gavin's Eagle Scout Project to clear the site, create a sign, and support his discussions with various Town groups to ensure the sign and site are cared for in the future. HS seconded, All in favor.

B. 487 Wellesley St protection – initial discussion – vote anticipated

SW said that Julie and Pete Hyde were interested in possibly obtaining a deed restriction for their property, the Danforth Blaney Farm, and wanted to speak with the Commission regarding the process. Julie Hyde discussed that the property is under Chapter 61A protections and they have come to the conclusion they can no longer maintain the property in order to age in place. She said they were reaching out to the Commission for help on determining the best route forward. Pete Hyde said that it was in the Town and their own interest to determine the value of the property and explore different options for its future.

HS said that the discussion is about both the barn and the house, but the barn is the most vulnerable part of the property.

JT asked if the land was under an agricultural restriction; the Hydys confirmed it was.

PH discussed the process of an appraisal to determine the value for a preservation deed restriction. AA said that this process requires careful thought because both the land and the buildings are important. SW said

working on getting the appraisal was an important first step and it could be paid for through a request from the CPC for funding. The Commission discussed the age and architecture of the house and barn. FC asked about the proximity to the schools and if the property could potentially be funded for agricultural education. Mr. Hyde discussed that he was interested in seeing if Land's Sake Farm would be able to manage the property and wondered if the Town would have interest in that. SW discussed forming a small group to work on this with the Hyde's and potential appraisers. MB and FC said they would be interested in working on this.

Adam Hyde appreciated hearing the Commission's discussion and looks forward to working with the Commission.

There was a discussion about the property abutting conservation land. JT made a motion to proceed with forming a small committee and the recommendation to assist with a potential preservation restriction at 487 Wellesley. AA seconded, HS recused himself, all others in favor.

C. Central Cemetery gates and wall project- discussion with DPW

Jacquelyn Jackson, DPW Parks and Cemeteries, introduced the project for work on the Central Cemetery front entrance and gate. Karen Sebastian, Landscape Architect, discussed the goals to restore the entry and maintain the historic details, while solving structural issues including stabilizing the stone columns. The intent is to reconstruct the columns and walls using existing materials, to remove invasive plants and rejuvenate the plantings on site.

Ms. Jackson shared photos of the existing landscape and deterioration of the columns and stone walls. She said that the gates are heavy and have pulled the pillars towards each other. Ms. Jackson shared photos of the rhododendrons that have become overgrown and the work that has been done to remove the invasive vines on site.

Ms. Sebastian discussed the process for repairing and restoring the site. This will start with a site survey and detailed documentation. There will be a Layout & Material Plan & a Structural Plan with bidding documents. The gate and all its parts will need to be carefully taken apart, repaired and repainted. The stones in the walls and columns including the bluestone caps will need to be disassembled, temporarily stored and reconstructed. She discussed the timeline of the project and the goals for the planting plan.

Ms. Jackson discussed some temporary measures that could be done such as repointing of the walls while this project is being developed.

AA asked about the funding source. SW noted that CPC funding had been allocated for repairing the walls and gates and asked the Commission if they were supportive of this project, that some of that funding could go towards design and then the Commission could go to the CPC for additional funding. Jason Lavoie, Town Engineer, said a structural engineer is on board for the work.

The Commission agreed that the temporary repairs were not worthwhile and were supportive of moving forward with the complete repair/ restoration project. There was a discussion of removing the gates and their storage. It was agreed that this is an opportunity to highlight an important historic place in town.

D. Rhododendron Garden – CPC - sponsorship discussion

CZ said she spoke with Leslie Glynn who said that the project had received CPC support so they did not need to meet again with the Historical Commission. SW said that TAG is sponsoring the Rhododendron garden. This proposal will be on the Warrant at Town Meeting.

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- E. Brooks School basement storage of artifacts - discussion PH noted that Pam Fox said that there was space available in the basement of St. Julia's for town-owned artifacts. PH requested that a small working group review the items stored in the Brooks School Basement to determine what can be culled. JT and FC said they could help with reviewing the items.
- F. Release \$78,390 in CPC funding for 71 Lexington St PDR (2018) - discussion KS reported she had reached out to the owners after the last meeting and had not heard back. KS suggested either returning the funding or waiting till the next meeting to see if the owners respond. PH said if the funding was returned, then later if the owners chose to pursue this in the future, the Commission would need to go before Town Meeting again. SW noted the change in value of real-estate from 2018 and 2023. KS requested keeping this item on the agenda for one more meeting. All agreed.
- G. Celebrate Weston – May 20th 11-3pm SW said the planning meeting was rescheduled, so there was no update.
- H. South Burying Ground Assessment-update SW said there was no update.
- I. Preservation Awards Discussion SW said that the previous preservation awards were well received and asked if the Commission thought it was worth pursuing again. HS suggested having members bring some ideas to the next meeting for discussion.
- J. Historic Marker- sign maker PH said that The Painted Lady Sign Co. in Lynn, MA hand paints signs and can follow the Historical Commission's specifications. She said that the cost would likely be more than Bob Leonard's prices so the marker application fee would need to be raised. More information on that will be forthcoming. PH asked the Commission if it makes sense to expand the marker program to more homes, not just pre-1945 ones. The Commission agreed to change the marker program so that buildings over 50 years old are eligible.
- K. Administrator's concerns CZ discussed potentially implementing a timer during initial determinations and hearings to keep the meeting and discussion on track. She said this is done during Planning Board meetings. The Commission felt this was good idea for both the commission members and applicants.
- 4. Treasurer's Report:** JT said the major spending item is in legal advertisements because there is no longer a local paper to advertise with (and costs for the Boston Globe are higher.)
- 5. Approval of minutes:** 8/23/22, 9/20/22, 10/18/22, 11/15/22, 12/13/22- MB moved to approve the minutes. KS seconded, all in favor.
- 6. Calendar** Next meetings: 4/4/2023, 5/2/2023.
- 7. Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned 8:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted: Christine Zale