

**MINUTES:** Norwell Historical Commission, Special Meeting, Tuesday, September 7, 2021 (Remote Meeting)

**PRESENT:** Nancy McBride, Chairman, David DeGhetto, Anne Greene, Jim Kelliher, Alan Prouty, Janet Watson, Rachel Wollam, Kristin Ford

Nancy McBride, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:04. A motion was made seconded and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as revised. A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to accept the minutes of the August 4 as corrected.

### MONTHLY INVOICES

Alan had previously sent out the monthly bills for review prior to the meeting as follows:

| Name of Vendor:                                | Item/ Activity Description                              | Date of Invoice:  | Amount:           | Account Number:  |
|--|---|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. National Grid                               | Electrical Service for Jacobs Farmhouse – August 2021   | August 29, 2021   | \$27.60           | 81-000-7065-5780 |
| 2. Verizon                                     | Service to Jacobs Farmhouse – August 2021               | July 6, 2021      | \$56.34           | 81-000-7065-5780 |
| 3. R. E. Lyons                                 | Annual Fire Extinguisher Maintenance – Jacobs Farmhouse | August 14, 2021   | \$110.00          | 81-000-7065-5780 |
| 4. O'Donnell Landscape Service                 | Jacobs Farmhouse - Lawn and Shrubs - Trim & Maintenance | August 1, 2021    | \$3,125.00        | 81-000-7065-5780 |
| 5. Home Depot                                  | Jacobs Farmhouse Maintenance – Tarp & Line Procurement  | September 3, 2021 | \$85.45           | 81-000-7065-5780 |
|  |   |                   |                   |                  |
|  |   |                   |                   |                  |
| <b>Total of Billable Amounts Listed Above:</b> |   |                   | <b>\$3,404.39</b> |                  |

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to authorize Alan to submit the bills for payment. Alan reported that the rent for the Stetson Ford House has been received on time. To date no payments have been made by Cross Street Flower Farm. They reported that this is due to not receiving an invoice. The Town agreed to send an annual invoice.

### JACOBS FARMHOUSE UPDATE

Ted has spent an enormous amount of time cleaning out the Carriage Shed and Cider Room so work can begin. Larochelle Construction will arrive at the site on Wednesday, September 8 to start the project.

### STETSON FORD HOUSE

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David reported that the go ahead has been given by Ted to Wildlife Timber to complete the tree work (\$4800.) Janet commented that after touring the house for the first time she would like discussion of long term plans for the house. Alan Prouty had reported that several years ago a committee met and made recommendations. Janet stated that her impression after the visit was that the house required repairs and rehabilitation for which funding was not available and that perhaps the house should be sold to a private party with a preservation agreement. Very few town residents have ever seen the house and there is no access so in Janet's opinion there is little benefit to the town in owning the property. Another option might be to see if there can be access through trails for hiking as there may be access to the River. Nancy reported that there is already considerable property that is owned by the town and considered recreational in the area. David feels that the responsibility of the Historical Commission is preservation of the property which the Town is doing mainly through David's volunteer efforts. Approximately seven years ago Brian Pfeiffer evaluated the property to determine what work needed to be done and David has been systematically trying to get this done however the new financial arrangements make funding more limited before since rent cannot be rolled over more than one year. Janet clarified that her comments were in no way a criticism of David's efforts but instead an effort to evaluate whether the property was being put to the best use and whether there was sufficient funding to maintain it. Due to issues with the lot, it is possible that sale of the house to a private party may not be possible. Discussion was held about the amount of rent which is \$1750 monthly and has not been increased since 2010 when the tenants moved in. Anne suggested that we ask the tenants to make a new rental application and consider a new lease agreement with increased rental income. While the Commission can make a recommendation, the BOS would have the decision making authority. The discussion concluded with the decision to distribute the current lease agreement and the reports of Brian Pfeiffer and committee report to Commission members so that we can all be informed and have further discussions in the future.

#### **FORM B STATUS UPDATE**

As discussed at the last meeting there are a total of 214 houses 75 years and older which do not have Form Bs. The Commission decided to request CPC funds so that they could be done by a professional research organization. Since the last meeting Janet has contacted several potential contractors but got very little response. One sole contractor responded and would be interested in doing the work for \$250 per form. The Town of Hanover contracts with PAL (Public Archeology Laboratory) which charges \$300 per form however PAL did not respond to the NHC inquiry. David made a motion that we request CPC funds to complete 120 forms. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved. Janet agreed to complete the CPC application.

#### **HISTORICAL COMMISSION APPLICATION UPDATES**

Nancy and Kristin have been overseeing the process of reviewing permits for houses age 75 years and older. They have approved permits for partial demolition (additions or replacement of materials) if the alterations are not major or if the replacements are like materials. Two



applications are significant and require discussion this month. The owner of 135 Main St. applied for a permit to replace 19 windows with vinyl windows. It is not known if windows had been previously replaced. According to MACRIS, 135 Main St. is the James Sylvester Clapp house built circa 1826. Jim noted its prominent placement on the corner of Main St. and Prospect St.

The other permit is for 24 Bowker St. This house previously came before the Commission due to an application for a demolition permit but the owner did not follow through and sold the house. The new owners are applying for a permit to install vinyl siding on 3 sides of the house. No further information is available regarding which sides or type of siding and how it will be installed. Jim commented that installation of vinyl siding typically eliminates the trim and generally significantly alters historical features. According to MACRIS 24 Bowker St. is the Isaac Sears house thought to have been built between 1831 and 1857.

Motions were made, seconded and unanimously approved to determine both houses historically significance. Nancy and Kristin will obtain more information and if warranted, owners will be invited to discuss the projects at the next Commission meeting. Commission members were asked to drive by to see the houses before the next meeting.

#### **CPC Applications**

CPC is open to new applications from September 1 through October 15. The Commission will apply for \$36,000 for completion of 120 Form Bs. Janet will complete this application. Another application will be made for funding for the stonework and tree removal at the Cushing Tomb property. Gibraltar Stone has provided an estimate of \$7500 for the stonework and David is working on obtaining additional estimates for the tree work. David agreed to complete this application.

#### **JACOBS FARM NATIONAL REGISTER UPDATE**

Both the Commission and the Board of Selectmen have sent letters to the Mass Historical Commission supporting the continuation of the application process and the transfer to a professional hired, supervised and funded by the Mass Historical Commission so it is assumed that a professional researcher will be assigned to complete the work.

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 8:00PM.

**NEXT MEETING:** Monday, October 4 at 7:00PM. Kristin will ask to reserve the Osborne Room and a decision will be made about whether the meeting will be in person or remote in the coming weeks.