



TOWN OF NORWELL
Norwell Town Offices, Room 112
345 Main Street
Norwell, Massachusetts 02061
(781) 659-8000

Norwell Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

September 12, 2022

The meeting was called to order by Chair Nancy McBride at 5:31 PM. Present were Vice Chair Anne Greene, Treasurer Alan Prouty, and members James Kelliher, David DeGhetto, Rachel Wollam, and Laurie Detwiler. Lilly Cleveland was unable to attend. Also in attendance were Select Board Chair Bruce Graham, Facilities Director Ted Nichols, and CPC Administrator Kristin Ford. The meeting was held in the Local History room of the Norwell Library.

AGENDA

Motion by Ms. McBride to open the meeting. Seconded by Mr. DeGhetto and unanimously voted

Ms. McBride added discussions about CPA applications and Form B updates to the agenda.

Motion by Ms. Wollam to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Mr. DeGhetto and unanimously voted.

MINUTES

Tabled.

Motion by Mr. DeGhetto to table approval of the August 8 and 22, 2022 meeting minutes. Seconded by Ms. Wollam and unanimously voted.

TREASURER'S REPORT AND BILLS

None

Maintenance and Repair Schedule - Jacobs Farmhouse and Stetson Ford House

Mr. Nichols and Select Board Chair Bruce Graham have assembled a schedule of current and near-future maintenance and repairs for the Jacobs Farmhouse and Stetson Ford House. On the Jacobs property, ongoing renovations to the Farmhouse, Carriage Shed, and interior painting of the apartment are to be completed shortly; future renovations include window repairs in both buildings and boiler, chimney line, and hot water heater replacement in the apartment. Yellow cedar shingles for the farmhouse arrived last week; there has been an increase in the cost of roofing materials which the contractor claims to be absorbing.

Pending work at Stetson-Ford includes structural and foundation work (sills, joists, and beams), moving on to replacement of rotted shingles, painting/trim, and roof/gutter preservative treatment.

Mr. Graham advised that he and another resident were undertaking a "thoughtful consideration" of selling the Jacobs Farmhouse to a private party out of concern about the ongoing costs to the

Town, and was seeking the 10 year projected maintenance costs so an informed decision could be made. The surrounding fields would not be sold in the scenario he envisioned, and the house, though privately owned, would be subject to the appropriate restrictions to preserve the structure and street vista.

Mr. Kelliher noted that it was public bidding requirements drove up maintenance costs for the Town, and Ms. Detwiler advised that Hingham addresses this issue by breaking maintenance tasks up into small jobs beneath the public bid threshold. Ms. McBride noted that the current project was clearing up a backlog of deferred maintenance; once this was done, the Town could lower costs by following Hingham's approach, which would be far preferable to giving up the farmhouse.

Mr. Nichols noted that about \$244,000 of the \$439,000 contract for the renovations had been paid out, and requested that the Commission release an additional \$140,107.00 be paid out to the contractor based on his and the architect's review of the work completed to date. Ms. Ford noted that the request will also be subject to CPC review and approval. Mr. DeGhetto was not comfortable approving this payment without more details but Mr. Kelliher was comfortable relying on Mr. Nichols' review. The Commission also approved a payment for architectural services associated with the project.

Motion by Ms. Detwiler to approve a \$140,107.06 payment to LaRochelle Construction to bring the account current. Seconded by Ms. Wollam and approved 6-0-1, Mr. DeGhetto having abstained.

Motion by Ms. Detwiler to approve a \$960.00 to payment to TVA for architectural services associated with the Jacobs Farmhouse. Seconded by Mr. Prouty and unanimously voted.

Jacobs Farmhouse Update

Ms. Ford inquired about the rental apartment counting towards the Town's Subsidized Housing Inventory. This would require a deed restriction as well as significant work to bring the apartment into ADA compliance.

All present discussed a possible January 1 target for apartment occupancy, and when to start advertising its availability.

Signage

Ms. Greene noted that the Commission had approved funding to purchase new signs for the Jacobs Farmhouse and Norwell Village Historic Area. Ms. Detwiler will review the proposed language so the signs can be ordered.

James Library Preservation Awards

Ms. Wollam has been in contact with the James Library, and will finalize with Norwell Spotlight TV as to when they can cover the presentation.

NEW BUSINESS

42 Central Street

The Building Department transferred the demolition permit for the property from previous owner Melissa McNamara to Unicorn Realty in May. Ms. McBride's recollection is that the

Commission had permitted Ms. McNamara to take down the property based on the specific plan she presented, and thinks the new owner would be bound to follow the same plan. Ms. Ford believes the permit was contingent upon final drawings being submitted to the Commission for approval. Ms. McBride will notify the Building Department of these conditions and try to contact the new owner.

Cushing Tomb Update

CPC approved \$12,000 in funding to reset the granite block boundary and refresh the landscaping around the Cushing Temple. Some tree work may also be needed.

Form B Update

CPC also approved funding for a vendor to complete an estimated 70 additional Massachusetts Historical Commission Form Bs to complete the Town's state-required inventory of historic properties. The Commission needs to hire the vendor.

CPA Articles

A CPC member questioned discrepancies between Mr. Nichols' accounting of renovation fund expenditures and CPC's own figures. CPC Admin Kristin Ford has provided a more detailed accounting that she believes will resolve the issue. Mr. Nichols' numbers were based on numbers from the fiscal-year budget and not spending since inception.

The deadline for FY 23 CPC grant applications is October 14. All present discussed potential projects. Ms. McBride asked Mr. Nichols to think about small projects at the Jacobs Farmhouse that would not be subject to public bidding requirements.

ACTION ITEMS

Ms. Wollam will finalize James Library Preservation coverage with Norwell Spotlight TV

Ms. McBride will notify the Building Department of the conditions to the demolition permit for 42 Central and try to contact the new owner.

Mr. Nichols will think of small projects at the Jacobs Farmhouse that would not be subject to public bidding requirements.

The Commission will hire a vendor for Form B rewrite

NEXT MEETING

October 3, 2022 – Norwell Town Library, 5:30 PM

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. DeGhetto to adjourn at 7:05 PM. Seconded by Ms. Detwiler and unanimously voted.

I hereby certify that the above minutes were presented and approved by a majority vote of the Norwell Historical Commission on _____.

Nancy McBride, Chair

