

# Newburyport Historical Commission

## Minutes of the 1 March 2012 Meeting

### **1. Call to Order**

The regularly scheduled meeting the Newburyport Historical Commission was called to order at 7:31 in the City Council Chambers, City Hall. Present: Steve Dodge, Tom Kolterjahn, Linda Smiley, Bill Todd, and Margaret Welch. Absent: Ned McGrath.

### **2. Demolition Applications**

*7 Harding Avenue (Adam Robitallo, applicant)* – The NHC voted that the house was not historically significant.

### **3. Guests**

Peter Canny, the project manager for the proposed MVRTA Transit Facility, gave an update on the project. Andy Port and Geordie Vining also attended. The facility will extend from the east side of Titcomb Street towards 47 Merrimac (the Walsingham Gallery building). No bridge over Titcomb Street is now planned.

Two buildings must be demolished in the current plan, 1 Titcomb Street and 9-11 Titcomb Street. The 21 February memo re: the historical integrity of these structures according to National Register standards was discussed; the memo concluded that the structures lacked integrity. NHC member Welch noted that the 9-11 address should be clarified as a new residence now is known as 11 Titcomb. Mr. Canny said that the project team wished to avoid 106 compliance. The NHC concurred that the properties are not eligible for the National Register. NHC members noted that the area was in a National Register District and that demolition application would be required for the two buildings to be demolished. Members noted that they wished to comment on the height and mass of the transit facility, particularly in relationship to the Walsingham Gallery building.

Mr. Port also discussed photos of garages and a drawing of a possible façade of the transit facility seen from the Titcomb Street corner. He emphasized that the new structure would give the street a more pedestrian-friendly streetscape, replacing a large parking lot.

The NHC voted to write a letter concluding that the NHC did not view the buildings as NR eligible; the letter would also note that the buildings remained subject to local ordinances such as the demolition delay ordinance.

#### **4. Community Preservation Committee**

Geordie Vining presented the plan to rehabilitate the North section of War Memorial Stadium. BH+A architect Tom Scarletta did a feasibility study and studied six or seven options. The surface was badly spalling. Both designs removed some seating because the size was no longer needed. A plaza would be created between the school and stadium. One scenario would allow widening of the field while the other scenario kept the current bowl shape.

Members agreed that removing portions of the seating was appropriate and that the project was eligible for CPC funding.

Andy Port presented the project to rehabilitate the Inn Street fountain and staircases. He said that the fountain design was not definite but that the granite blocks may be reused. Members agreed that opening up the turret staircases would improve the view to the back of the State Street buildings.

#### **5. Guests**

Pieter Harford, project manager for the Sewage Wastewater Plant, updated the NHC on the archaeological assessment report. The NHC agreed to approve the recommendations in the report to the MHC.

*Meeting ended 8:45.*