

Newburyport Historical Commission
Minutes of the May 20, 2010 Meeting

1. Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission was called to order by Acting Chair Tom Kolterjahn at 7:35 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Tom Kolterjahn, Ned McGrath, Stephen Feige and Margaret Welch.

3. Advisory Review

223 High Street

Emily Wentworth provided an overview of an application that is before the Planning Board. The project involves an 1867 American Gothic house that sits back from High Street with the land behind it sloping to the Nock Middle School. The land had been gifted to the City but in 1981 the City Council disclaimed the rights to the land. The gift stipulated that in the event the City did not want the land, private restrictions would be put in place. These restrictions are due to expire next year. A plan has been submitted to the Planning Board for a subdivision with four additional house lots on the property in exchange for some public benefit. Two types of open space would be a part of the subdivision. There would be access to the lower part of the land for 99 years for playing fields for the school. A homeowners association would hold the second open space. Ned McGrath said he does not believe the project benefits the public. Tom Kolterjahn said the graceful curve of driveway that allows you to see house would be lost. Margaret Welch said it would be beneficial to have a preservation restriction on the property, but it would be at the cost of the historic viewscape. Stephen Feige said the original concept of the property has already been lost and adding more houses will not cause further harm. A Planning Board hearing will take place on June 2. A draft letter to the Planning Board will be prepared stating the Commission would be willing to hold the preservation restriction but has some reservations about the plans. Tom Kolterjahn moved to consider the matter at the next meeting after the letter has been drafted. Stephen Feige seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

4. Correspondence

Six letters about Arrowhead Farm were received. Ned McGrath pointed out that the letters are supportive of agriculture and Arrowhead Farm, not necessarily historic preservation and the use of CPA funding for a preservation restriction on the property. Two members of the public spoke about Arrowhead Farm. One described Mr. Chase's role in the establishment of Maudslay State Park. An Arrowhead Farm employee discussed agricultural techniques used at the farm and its CSA program.

A letter was received from MHC stating the Whittier Bridge is in its inventory and is one of only three bridges in the state that would be individually eligible for listing on the national register.

5. Minutes

May 20, 2010

Stephen Feige moved to approve the minutes of the May 6, 2010 meeting. Margaret Welch seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.