

Newburyport Historical Commission
Minutes of the June 3, 2010 Meeting

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Linda Smiley, Tom Kolterjahn, Ned McGrath, Stephen Feige, Leah McGavern and Margaret Welch.

3. Guests

Whittier Bridge

Representatives from Massachusetts Department of Transportation discussed the plans to replace the Whittier Bridge and make improvements to the highway, which has an insufficient number of lanes and substandard acceleration and deceleration lanes at the Route 110 exit. The bridge was described as being near the end of its economic life and not worth saving. Four types of bridge designs are being considered: box girder, cable stay, single extradosed and network tied arch. The builder's plaques and State seal are the historic elements of the bridge that would be saved. Under section 106 of the National Preservation Act negative impacts to the historic structures must be first identified and assessed, and then avoided, minimized or mitigated. The commission members were asked how the removal of the bridge should be mitigated. The NHC has voted bridge to be historically significant at the May 6, 2010 meeting. Linda Smiley read a portion of a letter dated May 5, 2010 from Brona Simon, State Historic Preservation Officer, to Lucy Garliauskas at the Federal Highway Administration:

The Whittier Bridge is included in MHC's *Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth* and is individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. In 2006 the MHC and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) concurred with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (Mass DOT; then Massachusetts Highway Department/MHD) concerning its individual eligibility. It is one of only three highway bridges in the Commonwealth that meet the criteria for listing.

Tom Kolterjahn said more must be done than simply saving the plaques and seal. It was recommended that a representative of NHC be involved with the design selection process. A part of the mitigation will include a photographic record of the bridge. The group said the name of the bridge would be retained. Stephen Feige asked that HABS standards be used. A memorandum of agreement will stipulate that members of the historical commissions in Newburyport, Salisbury and Amesbury will be shown the plans and consulted during the project. The NHC will be the contact for historic information. Mayor Holaday said Whittier was an important local historical figure who should be honored with an interpretive area. Bill Harris said a small memorial area should be created in Moseley Pines and the granite facing stones from the existing bridge should be inscribed with Whittier's poems. He also said the three towns should recycle granite from the bridge along their waterfronts. Dick Chase said he would like the interpretive site to include the history of transportation in the area. He asked about the possibility of having a trail along the river to Plum Island. The DOT has looked into the

possibility having a riverwalk under the structure, but there are constraints due to the location of the drinking water supply. It might be possible to link Moseley Pines with Maudslayi State Park with bicycle and pedestrian trails as a part of the project. A feasibility study will be done to look at the possibility of pedestrian and bicycle crossing of the river.

4. Advisory Review

Arrowhead Farm

Dick Chase submitted copies of a draft preservation restriction for review and comment by the Commission. The CPC must have an appraisal of the restriction before deciding if funds could be awarded. The preservation restriction would run with the deed. Mr. Chase will delete the sections referencing to ten taxpayers and the NHC acting as docents.

5. Demolition Applications

19 Eagle Street

Vanessa Traniello and Erik Kaminski

The applicants are proposing to construct a second story over an one-floor addition on their 1924 four-square house. Tom Kolterjahn said the shape of the original structure would be lost and Linda Smiley said the house would be enormous in comparison to its neighbors. Leah McGavern said the modest size houses on Eagle Street contribute to the streetscape. It might be possible for the addition to be handled differently to maintain the integrity of the original house. Stephen Feige said that while the addition would change the house so it would no longer look like a four square, he does not think it is a good example of the style nor is historically significant. Ned McGrath moved that the house is historically significant based on its age. Tom Kolterjahn seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Stephen Feige voting in opposition. Commission members will visit the site individually before the next meeting.

8 Harrison Street

Philip Giunta

Bruce Taylor, architect, appeared for the applicant. The owner would like to take advantage of the views of Joppa by moving the living quarters to the third floor and adding an elevator. As a result, the third floor would be stretched and would not maintain its Federal proportions. Tom Kolterjahn said the foundation and the framing of the first two floors of the house are intact. Linda Smiley said the proposed house would be offensive and its enormous size would be greater than any other house in the area. Tom Kolterjahn said it was determined at a previous site visit that enough of the fabric remains in the structure to make it historically significant. Ned McGrath moved that the house is historically significant. Linda Smiley seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. A site visit will take place on Saturday, June 5 at 9:00 a.m.

6. Minutes

Tom Kolterjahn moved to approve the minutes of the May 20, 2010 meeting. Margaret Welch seconded the motion. The motion approved with Linda Smiley and Leah McGavern abstaining.

7. New Business

Election of Officers

- Linda Smiley nominated Margaret Welch for the position of secretary. Tom Kolterjahn seconded the nomination. The nomination was unanimously approved.
- Tom Kolterjahn nominated Linda Smiley for the position of chair. Leah McGavern seconded the nomination. The nomination was unanimously approved.
- Linda Smiley nominated Tom Kolterjahn for the position of vice chair. Leah McGavern seconded the nomination. The nomination was unanimously approved.
- Linda Smiley nominated Leah McGavern for the position of treasurer. Tom Kolterjahn seconded the nomination. The nomination was unanimously approved.

Ferry Road Sidewalk

A letter was received from Stantec requesting a file search for a sidewalk on Ferry Road. A response will be sent stating the sidewalk would not adversely impact any historic resources.

Saint Anna's Chapel

Margaret Welch will contact Bill Hobbie about the church's application for funding from the Essex National Historical Commission. NHC holds a preservation restriction on the chapel.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.