

## **Newburyport Historical Commission**

February 8, 2024

Online Meeting

Minutes

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

Chair Glenn Richards called an online meeting of the Newburyport Historical Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

### **2. Roll Call**

In attendance were members Biff Bouse, Marc Cendron, Christopher Fay, Joe Morgan, Glenn Richards and Chris Sawtelle and alternate members Allen Marquis (voting) and Ed Noymer (non-voting). Andrew Bernhardt was absent. Also in attendance were Planning Director Andy Port, Planner Katelyn Sullivan and note taker Gretchen Joy.

### **3. General Business**

#### **a) Review of Proposed Telecommunications Facility**

##### **30 Pleasant Street**

Aimee Gunnerson said EBI Consulting represents the First Religious Society of Newburyport, which leases its steeple for telecommunications facilities. She said EBI had recommended that the proposed installations be approved, as they would be structurally safe and would not negatively impact the aesthetics of the steeple. MHC had determined the proposal would have no adverse impact on the historical resource, contingent upon NHC review.

Allison Conwell represented AT&T Mobility, which is proposing to modify its existing facility. Three of the six existing antennas would be replaced in the same size and location.

Kristen White and Chuck Webberly represented Dish Wireless, which is proposing to install its antennae in the section of the steeple below the AT&T equipment, which is currently vacant. This area had previously been leased by Verizon. The proposed installation would be similar to that used by Verizon. The antennas would be located in the center of each window, approximately six inches from the glass. Ground equipment would be installed at the rear of the church that would not be visible from Pleasant Street.

The Commission members asked questions about signage and lighting. Rob Authier of the First Religious Society said signs that warn workers about radiation would be placed in such a way that they would not be visible from the exterior of the steeple. Lark Madden, also from the First Religious Society, confirmed that the steeple is illuminated from the exterior and there is no interior lighting. Both the Dish and AT&T antennas would be white and would not be lighted.

Glenn Richards moved that the proposed installation of telecommunication equipment by AT&T Mobility would have no adverse impact on the historical values of the property at 30 Pleasant Street. Marc Cendron seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 7-0 vote (Biff Bouse, yes; Marc Cendron, yes; Christopher Fay, yes; Allen Marquis, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Glenn Richards, yes; Chris Sawtelle, yes).

Christopher Fay moved that the proposed installation of telecommunications equipment by Dish Wireless would have no adverse impact on the historical values of the property at 30 Pleasant Street. Biff Bouse seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 7-0 vote (Biff Bouse, yes; Marc Cendron, yes; Christopher Fay, yes; Allen Marquis, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Glenn Richards, yes; Chris Sawtelle, yes).

#### **4) Review of Community Preservation Act Applications**

##### **a) The Perkins Art and Research Center Phase II**

Marc Cendron disclosed that he is the Chair of Collections Department at the Museum of Old Newbury. Museum Bethany Groff Dorau described the second phase of the project to renovate the Perkins Mint building into an archival storage and research center. In the first phase of the project, structural improvements were made to the building. The floor joists were sistered, cracked or compromised members were supported, the electrical system was evaluated and its components were replaced as needed, the masonry was stabilized and repointed and the windows were repaired and their sills were replaced.

In the second phase, a storage system will be added to the first floor of the building, along with seating and work areas. On the second floor, shelving for books and manuscripts will be installed. In addition, the folding doors to the Perkins Center are to be rebuilt, the stairs to the second story are to be stabilized and interior security panels will be fabricated for the first-floor windows. An assistant will be hired to train and supervise volunteers, which will allow for regular research hours to be open to the community.

Joe Morgan explained that the preservation of documents and artifacts meets the criteria for CPA funding.

Biff Bouse moved to submit a letter of support for CPA funding for the Perkins Art and Research Center Phase II. Allen Marquis seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 7-0 vote (Biff Bouse, yes; Marc Cendron, yes; Christopher Fay, yes; Allen Marquis, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Glenn Richards, yes; Chris Sawtelle, yes).

##### **b) Rehabilitation of the Firefighters Memorial**

Kenneth Parseghian and Jeff Cutter presented the plans to rehabilitate the memorial to fallen firefighters in the Oak Hill Cemetery. The memorial is located at the Parker Street entrance to the cemetery. The project would include the addition of a retaining wall around the front of the memorial to prevent with erosion, the creation of a walkway from the steps to the stone to promote accessibility and the replacement of the existing landscape materials. The plans were reviewed by the Board of the Oak Hill Cemetery and revised according to comments received.

Biff Bouse moved that the Firefighters Memorial is locally significant historic resource. Chris Sawtelle seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 7-0 vote (Biff Bouse, yes; Marc Cendron, yes; Christopher Fay, yes; Allen Marquis, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Glenn Richards, yes; Chris Sawtelle, yes).

Christopher Fay moved to submit a letter of support for CPA funding for the Firefighters Memorial. Marc Cendron seconded the motion. The motion was approved by

a 7-0 vote (Biff Bouse, yes; Marc Cendron, yes; Christopher Fay, yes; Allen Marquis, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Glenn Richards, yes; Chris Sawtelle, yes).

**5) FY 25 CPA Historic Resources Projects**

Biff Bouse reviewed the six applications for CPA funding in the historic preservation category. Katelyn Sullivan said the application for the restoration of the Bartlett Mall swan fountain is to be withdrawn, as the plans for the Mall as a whole are on hold. Joe Morgan questioned the need for an additional \$141,800, when the CPC had approved \$126,000 for the restoration of the fountain in 2021. Andy Port said his understanding is that the cost of the project has risen significantly. The funds committed in the earlier grant cycle have not been used. It is expected the applicant would either return the funds or request an extension for their use.

**6. Updates from the Chair**

Glenn Richards said he sent an email to Jeff Roelofs about the preservation restriction for the Old Gaol, which has been in progress for five years. Mr. Roelofs responded he and Chuck Griffin are now working with Jared Eigerman on the document.

**7. Minutes**

Biff Bouse moved to approve the minutes of the January 25 meeting. Allen Marquis seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Biff Bouse, yes; Marc Cendron, abstain; Christopher Fay, yes; Allen Marquis, abstain; Joe Morgan, abstain; Glenn Richards, yes; Chris Sawtelle, yes).

**8. Adjournment**

Marc Cendron moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 p.m. Joe Morgan seconded the motion. The motion was approved by an 8-0 vote (Biff Bouse, yes; Marc Cendron, yes; Christopher Fay, yes; Allen Marquis, yes; Joe Morgan, yes; Ed Noymer, yes; Glenn Richards, yes; Chris Sawtelle, yes).