



Municipal Building – Town of Franklin
355 East Central Street
Franklin, MA 02038

Town of Franklin, Massachusetts Historical Commission

Meeting Minutes September 15, 2009

Attending:

Commissioners:

Del Arnold
Dianne Brunner
Alan Earls
Mona Ghiringhelli
Debbie Pellegrini
Alice Vendetti

Visiting:

Owen Acton

Meeting Minutes

The Commission approved the last meeting's minutes from 8/18/09.

Commission members are welcome to check the Commission's mail box at the Town Offices, and to notify Commission members of any timely issues before the next meeting.

Finances

Nothing new to report.



Refurbishing the Museum (80 West Central St.)

Debbie reported on museum progress. The windows have been ordered: this was to take 13 weeks, which is unacceptable. They were supposed to have been ready 10 weeks from signing of contract at end of Aug.

A lot of sills were found to be rotted so they are fixing. In the opening they cut to elevator they found small problems. The big issue was the decorative seal we chose for the floor. People designing it found it to be too intricate. Debbie met with Jeff, they agreed perhaps better to use the town seal. She wants a vote from the Historical Commission to see if we want it. She moved to use the town seal instead of the Bicentennial design, Del seconded, all voted in favor.

Downstairs, a lot of the electrical work is done. The HVAC is coming along.

Volunteer painters (from the Commission or elsewhere) are a possibility to stretch the budget. The grates in floor were all rusted: the contractor will put in new ones.

David Roche has marked the floor where the displays will go, and where the lighting will be placed above.

In the main display room, the ceiling above the drop ceiling was peeling.

We will have to decide on colors in a few weeks.

There may be \$78K set aside in a contingency fund to meet expenses for unforeseen repairs.

Status of Old Museum

Owen Acton attended the meeting came in to meeting (not on agenda). His property abuts the old museum. He reports that the town only mows sporadically and didn't repair his lawn after they put in the pump house. He is concerned about it getting even worse after we move out. After speaking to the Parks and Rec Dept., the DPW, and the Historical Commission, he feels that no one is exclusively in charge of the site.

Del mentioned to him that it will stay in town ownership. As to future of museum, Del says an arts group wants to use it for displays.

We thanked Mr. Acton for letting us know about the problem, and told him we would discuss the issue with Jeff Nutting.

Museum Inventory

Dianne says she has been filing all the photographs in separate photo sleeves and putting them in order all labeled, and they are starting to fall in place. You can find old fire department and police department photos now as well as schools and churches.

Many great photos have surfaced: of St Mary's, armed forces, Franklin nurses, and portrait photos.

Getting seniors involved. Agreed to have representatives go to the Senior Center on Sept 23rd at 10AM, to have residents help with captions and IDs.

Museum Move

Planning the logistics of the museum move remains important. We will hold a special session (during regular meeting time, on 10/20) to decide where the main exhibits will go.

Del wants to put the fire apparatus outside. Mr. Landry has not yet taken this for refurbishing. Debbie will call him.

Del says there are too many paintings to hang at new museum.

There are a lot of Herman Duval collectables in the attic, such as parts of an old bicycle. We will have to make hard decisions about what to keep.

Planning for the new museum displays. Joe Rizza of Courtstreet Architects will furnish a ½ inch to 1 foot scale floor plan to use for layout planning. A copy will be run off by the town and Mike D'Angelo will make it available to the Historical Commission. Del will provide case and display object model sizes.

Four Corners Walgreens Project

Doug Benoit of Arista Development presented a final draft of the planned interpretive sign, which met with general approval. Alan suggested making a "box" around some of the text having to do with the architect, to separate it from the rest of the information and improve readability. Others concurred but the final consensus was to box each section of text.

Agreed, that photos as shown are OK (four of the prior building and one generic schoolroom photo).

Del moved to accept design with the recommended addition of a white line. Alan seconded, all those present voted in favor. Doug will send a final copy to Debbie P. for archiving.

Forming a 501 (c) 3 Organization

Mona says it will be all done by next meeting. She is working with Charlie Oteri on this.

Housing Rehab Requests – None

Demolition Requests

- Debbie will check with David Roche about the status of the Woodward House on the Dean campus.
- A demolition request has been received from Ms. Colleen Grady through David Roche for an existing house and barn located at 678 Pleasant Street at Green Street. There is a 1720 plaque on the house but research records indicate it as 1790. It is on the list of properties surveyed but the survey form #242 is missing from our files. It was listed as the Green family house. These buildings have been long neglected.

Research Requests

- Request from Robert Fahey, Veterans Agent. He would like to have a list of the seven “corners” (street intersections) in Franklin that have been honored with names of Franklin veterans. Debbie will attempt to research this in the coming weeks.
- Request received from Holly Fletcher for information about Fletcher Field and the family for which it is named. When was the field dedicated? Is there a Frank Fletcher in the family? She is looking for a genealogy link. Current residents in Franklin are Alexis and Robert on Maple Street. As it turns out, Fletcher Field was given to the town by Jacob F. Geb and Frederick P. Chapman on January 22, 1931 and named Fletcher Field. It was accepted by the voters on March 31, 1931. The reason for the Fletcher name is not known.
- Del received a telephone message from the British Television History Channel requesting information about operating printing presses that were used during the Civil War. Del suspects he received the call based on information on our Web site about the Goulding printing press at the Museum.
- Del received a letter from Dean College requesting a letter of support to establish an archive at Dean. They are looking for application for applying for grant money to organize and store their records in an archival manner. They are approaching the national historical records administration for a grant. A brief letter could include importance of Dean’s records to the Town.

Del responded by writing this letter. The Commission approved informally. Del will visit and find out about their process.

Events

- Del will participate in the Harvest Fest. In years past the Historical Commission has set up a table.
- Del received a telephone message from the Franklin Arts Association requesting continued association with the Historical Commission to plan creative events at the Museum. He informed them of our next planned meeting and extending an invitation to Hannah Close.

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