



Town of Franklin Massachusetts
Historical Commission

Meeting Minutes March 8, 2023

Commission Members Present: Alan Earls, Scott Mason, Jan Prentice, Paul Pisani, Phyllis Malcolm, Randy LaRosa, Mary Olsson,

Associate Members: Will Lee, Brock Leindecker

Archivist Rowan Lowell

Minutes of the February 8, 2023 meeting were accepted as written

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

APPOINTMENTS: None

PRESENTATIONS: None

DEMOLITION REQUESTS: At a hearing prior to the meeting, the commission unanimously voted to deny the request, presented by Matt Kelly representing the Archdiocese of Boston, for the demolition of the carriage house located at 201 Main Street. Per the demolition delay bylaws, there is a one-year delay in providing a permit to demolish the building. It is hoped that an alternative plan, either repurposing or moving the building might be considered to save the historic structure. The carriage house was owned by the Hayward Family, was built around 1908 and contains a rarely found automobile turntable.

FFHM Report: No members present.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

- **TREASURER:** Phyllis reported that there is \$1,100 left in the budget to spend by June. We have paid \$176 for the legal notice for 805 Washington St hearing and \$532 in receipts for Scott for the materials for his Franklin Train Town exhibit.
- **ARCHIVIST update:** Rowan reported that she continues to work on the backlog in the basement and is assessing the space and shelving needs for storage. She had recently participated in a panel discussion at Dean College for Dean's Founders Day. She is working on a Commencement Week Exhibit with Dean and Jan Prentice. Alan added that Rowan does a great job at the panel discussion. He suggested we might show the 1965 Commencement Film as part of the exhibit in May. Also suggested we could present a list of prominent Franklin residents who have graduated from Dean.
- **Second Sunday Speaker Series:** There is no speaker schedule for April, as the Second Sunday falls on Easter and the museum will be closed. Mary will present The Life of

Horace Mann in May. Ingrid Grenon is scheduled for June and will present the History of the Wrentham State School.

- CPC Update: Phyllis said the plan is to repair the Cupula on top of the museum, by removing it to paint it, this summer. There was discussion as to what effect the moving of the cupula might have on the content of the museum, is there a plan to minimize dust and debris? Will the museum have to be closed for any length of time? How long is the project expected to take? How long will the roof be 'opened'. Mary will ask Mike D'Angelo to attend the next meeting to answer some of these questions and explain the timeline of the plan.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Bell at Old South Meeting House – Mary will ask Jamie Helen about the timeline that the new owners, Habitat for Humanity, have for the removal of the bell. Alan will present a few suggestions as to how we might properly preserve and display the bell for use.
- Local Historic Districts: The Commission agrees it is a good idea to pursue the establishments of LHD. We need to further discuss what should be protected. We will then send a letter to Jamie Helen asking for town support. It was noted that both Mendon and Foxboro have established LHD.
- 2023 Wish List: The Friends of the Franklin Historical Museum approved a total of up to \$2,500 for the following
 - \$280 for flowers in front of the museum, if not covered by the Downtown Partnership
 - \$350 for Refreshments for the Strawberry Stroll, Harvest Festival, Horace Mann 9May)and Ben Franklin Birthday, (January) celebrations, as well as the \$100 for the Town Birthday Celebration (March) (Note, the commission did not host the January and March celebrations this year)
 - Up to \$1,200 for paid speakers for the Second Sunday Speaker Series
 - \$750 for Scott Mason for the next installment of the Franklin Train Town exhibit
 - The request for \$1,300 for the scanner was not approved. It was suggested this should come out of the commission and/or archivist budget.
- Silent Saturdays: Alan reported they went well for the two weekends on either end of the February School Vacation week and will schedule two more movies for April School vacation week (4/15 and 4/22) and possibly present a movie once a month.
- The Boston Post Cane has not been returned since the presentation to Mrs. Spencer last month. Mary will reach out to Town Clerk Nancy Danello to arrange for it's return.
- Exhibit Committee: Alan and Randy have agreed to re-start the exhibit committee and will reach out to Rowan and the Friends to meet and discuss ideas.

NEW BUSINESS:

- New verbiage for Master Plan – Mary and Alan to work together to submit.
- Dean Exhibit – Jan and Rowan working with Dean for exhibit in May
- Strawberry Festival – Friday June 9th, 4-8pm. Greenwich Bay Brass to perform, fresh popcorn to be served.

- Utility boxes – Franklin Cultural District is having the boxes painted by local artists, they hope to move forward with the project when the weather improves.
- Host and Docent Roles – to be discussed and voted on at a future date.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

- Phyllis said the Senior Center would be using the museum again on Monday from 1:00p-3:00pm for their movie. Mary asked that anyone planning to schedule something at the museum, to please clear it with her first, just as a matter of record. It was suggested that a Google calendar might be set up for this purpose.
- Alan suggested an ‘Adult show and tell’ (which got a few laughs and the suggestion that the name be changed) The idea would be for people to come in with an interesting historical item that they might like to share and talk about.
- Alan suggested ‘Past time’ where we select an item from our collection to present and discuss.
- Alan also suggested we develop an Oral History project along the lines of StoryCorps or Mass Memories. These oral histories would be filmed. More discussion needed.
- Brock said he would look into the history of the carriage house turntable. It was made by C.F. Ernst & Company Ironworks out of Buffalo, NY.
- Scott thanks the FFHM for their generous support of \$750 towards the extension of his exhibit.
- It was suggested, in addition to having Mike D’Angelo come to our next meeting, that we have someone follow any construction meetings that might be scheduled so that we have a point person to keep us up to date on timelines, etc. Volunteer needed.
- Alan brought up working with other museums from Shrewsbury to Foxboro on a Route 140 museum trail. We would have to get a list of museums, and work with them to organize the idea. If successful we could have Chronicle cover it, possibly get Mass Historical involved. Great idea for future project.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:12PM