

Northborough Historical District Committee

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By Karen Wilber, Town Clerk's Office at 2:55 pm, Aug 26, 2021

Meeting Minutes 4 -21-2021

Meeting held via Video Conference

Governor Baker's State of Emergency public meeting notice read by chair Norm Corbin

Members present: Norm Corbin- chair, Leslie Harrison- vice chair, Millie Milton , Mike Duchesneau, Brian Swanson, Brian Smith, Robert Licht Absent: Bruce Chute

Guest: Tom Reardon.

Public hearing for 1 Lyman Street demolition

Applicant not in attendance

Chairperson reviewed the role of the Historic District Commission regarding the proposed demolition of properties over 100 years old. We are to determine if the property has architectural and/or historical significance. If significant, then a 180 day demolition delay can be applied to the property. The purpose of the delay is to look for alternatives to demolition. Historical information about the property is reviewed including photographs of the architecture. This property was previously reviewed in 2015 for an earlier demolition request. At that time the large barn on the property was determined to be significant enough to warrant a delay. At that time the owner contacted several salvage companies to see if there was any interest in taking the wood. The wood is primarily hemlock and was determined not to be of value to salvage companies.

Chairperson Norm Corbin clarified that this is a new permit, not an extension of the previous permit.

Public Comments:

Ann Beckstrom, 152 Bartlett St, , direct abutter- commented on the increased value of building materials and wood at this time and suggested another attempt to seek repurposing of materials. Commented on abutters having to deal demolition noise, mess, and subsequent project.

John Wixted, 2 Stirrup Brook Ln., has concerns: #1 owner effort to repurpose, and HDC responsibility to hold owner to standards to preserve

#2 ZBA permit issued which is under appeal

Committee Chair Norm Corbin agreed with points brought up in public comment but clarified that NHDC role is only to establish historic or architectural significance.

Public comments again made by:

Ann Beckstrom, 1532 Bartlett St, regarding looking at permit with a "fresh perspective 6 years later"

John Wixted: 2 stirrup Brook Lane, asked if it was historically significant 6 years ago, why it would not be now?

No other public comments received, public comment section closed out

Discussion amongst board members began

Brian Smith commented on increased value of building materials, Mike Deschaneau asked if ZBA decision appeal will be affected by our decision (no, per Leslie Harrison).

After a lengthy discussion, Chair Norm Corbin asked if all feel comfortable making decision tonight on whether barn on property at 1 Lyman Street should be considered historically or architecturally significant. All agreed they were ready to vote if the barn is considered to be “significant”; Millie Milton-no, Leslie Harrison – yes, Brian Smith –yes, Brian Swanson –Yes, Mike Deschaneau-no, Norm Corbin-yes. Vote was 4- yes, 2-no, vote to establish 6 month delay on demo permit is passed.

Regular Meeting Agenda

Prior meeting minutes:

3-4-2021 moved to accept as amended by Leslie Harrison, seconded by Brian Smith - all in favor

2-17-2021 moved to accept as amended by Leslie Harrison, seconded by Brian Smith- all in favor

3-17-2021 motion made by Leslie Harrison to accept, seconded by Millie Milton, all in favor

Old Business:

- * Brigham Street Burial Ground: interpretive sign to be installed on Monday 4/26/2021
- * Howard Street Burial Ground sign: design, details, and content reviewed
- * Historic Preservation Plan – update given, 2 sections reviewed: purpose of plan, & history of Northborough
- * Archeological survey - Mike Duchesneau sent NHDC members an example of an Archeological Site survey done by the town of North Attleborough for review. The desirability of having a Northborough town wide archeological survey was discussed. The Town Planner and Planning Board should be contacted for input.
- *Discussion of Westborough State Hospital grounds delayed due to lack of time. Chairperson Norm Corbin commented that there may be some mitigation measures granted.

Election of Officers:

Secretary: Bruce Chute nominated by Norm Corbin, seconded by Millie Milton, all approved.

Chairperson: Norm Corbin nominated by Mike Duchesneau seconded by Millie Milton, all approved

Vice Chair: Leslie Harrison nominated by Norm Corbin, seconded by Mike Duchesneau, all approved

Brian Swanson will take over writing Letters of Appreciation to historic house property owners

New Member applicant: Tom Reardon

Miscellaneous:

Motion was made by Leslie Harrison for \$131 to be granted for the purchase of 4 certificate award frames to be given to Gale General Store rehabilitation project participants, seconded by Brian Swanson. All approved.

Next meeting: 5/19/2021

Meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Millie Milton & Norm Corbin