

Northborough Historic District Committee - Meeting Minutes for August 18, 2021

Conducted remotely per order of Governor Baker's state of emergency prohibiting in-person meetings

Attendees: Norm Corbin-chairperson, Leslie Harrison- vice chair, Brian Swanson, Bob Licht, Mike Duchesneau, Brian Smith, Millie Milton. Potential new members: Lorna Helms, Amanda Derosier Millette

Absent: Bruce Chute

Previous meeting minutes:

- 4/21/2021 reviewed, motion to approve made by Leslie Harrison, seconded by Brian Swanson, accepted by all
- 6/16/2021 minutes reviewed. Bob Licht made mention of adding Historic book by Kent begin distributed at the meeting, motion to accept as amended made by Millie Milton, seconded by Brian Smith. Leslie Harrison abstained from voting, All others in favor

Old Business:

- Howard Street Burial Ground- new interpretive sign installed
- Brigham Street Burial Ground sign - had damage from rainwater getting in, sign was removed, repaired and reinstalled.
- Howard St. Cemetery - nomination for National Registry. We are working with the contractor regarding historic information on the cemetery; she is planning to visit in several weeks.
- Planned demolition at the Old State Hospital site:
 - We reviewed the Memorandum of Agreement between the Northborough Historic Commission and the Division of Capitol Assets Management regarding the mitigation for demolition of several buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
 - Two markers are to be installed to recognize areas of significance on the site. Sign site work, signs, and maintenance of signs/sites to be done by state. Placement to be determined in the future. Northborough Historic District Committee will supply wording for signs.
 - Sign #1: Westborough State Hospital Farm located in Northborough
 - Sign #2: Native American Trail & sites in area
 - Bob Licht asked question about whether sign would be similar to brass/granite of other signs in town that State has done, Norm Corbin indicated that this is what is being expected.
 - Norm Corbin and Bob Licht visited and walked through old Chauncy Hall building to document and take photos. It was determined that there was not anything of a salvageable nature.
 - Motion to accept DCAMM proposal for 2 historic marker signs on Old Westborough State Hospital property made by Mike Duscheaneau. Seconded by Millie Milton; all in favor.
- Historic Preservation Plan - Review of Section 6 (this is the core of the plan)
 - Four key goals of the historic preservation plan:
 - 1) Maintain and expand protection of Northborough historical properties. This goal represents about 90% of the historic preservation plan goals. Most of this comes from the recent town master plan but also includes actions/goals being recommended by the Historic District Commission.
 - Prepare historic preservation plan
 - Promote awareness of Northborough history
 - Promote/protect antique properties/sites
 - Expand historical assets inventory
 - Incentivize restoration/rehab of historical properties
 - Re-purpose town –owned properties: Consider re-use efforts for historic town properties
 - 2) Coordinate efforts among cultural, historic and environmental organizations
 - 3) Preserve and enhance natural landscape of community

- Additional discussions regarding the plan:
 - Reviewed for additional edits, comments, and evaluation.
 - Reviewed list of buildings, structures, sites, districts in town identified for potential inclusion to National Registry of Historic Places significance.
 - Discussion of adding a time-table and designating short, mid-term, and long term goals
 - Bob Licht had question about the order of goals and it was explained by the chair that goals were in order of amount Historic District input/involvement.
 - Bob Licht suggested several edits;
 - Adding the State Hospital signs to the “New Signs” list
 - Updating the Boundary Street map to included on Northborough Trails.
- Next step is editing this section, which Leslie Harrison agreed to help with.

New Business:

CPC Funding Requests for FY-2023, 11/04/2021 is the deadline for applications.

- possible proposals:
 - **#1: Brigham Street Cemetery** - removal of 20+ dead trees, install fencing, add parking. Quote for tree removal obtained by DPW Director Scott Charpentier~ \$35,000. Fencing styles viewed/discussed and preference expressed by many for rough granite posts/chain
 - **#2: Signs for Kizer section of the Howard Street Cemetery** - this is a busy part of the cemetery and has no signs/markings.
 - **#3:** Leslie Harrison asked about a historic marker for the Old Grange Hall. The chair mentioned that the town does not install signs on private property.
 - **#4: Evaluation of Northborough’s Archeological history** – Cost estimate of about \$35k was obtained by Mike Duscheneau. Discussed putting this project on hold until next year.

AppleFest: fee for a street fair booth was sent to the Rotary Club. There were concerns about COVID affecting the event. Alternative options discussed.

New Member Update: 3 new applicants applied for alternate positions:

- Amanda Derosier Millette - has been interviewed by Select Board, next step is being sworn in.
- Tom Reardon - awaiting Select board interview
- Lorna Helms - awaiting Select board interview

Participation in diversity committee meeting 9/2/2021 discussed

Miscellaneous:

- Copies of “History of Northborough” by Rev. Kent will be given to Commission members.
- Next meeting date: 9/15/2021
- Motion made to adjourn by Leslie Harrison, second by Millie Milton, all in favor.