

APPROVED

**Braintree Historical Commission  
Meeting Minutes - Virtual ZOOM  
Monday, January 4, 2021  
7:00 PM**

**Members Present:**

Ronald F. Frazier  
Santina Giannino  
Robert S. Harris (7:09PM)  
Kate Nedelman-Herbst  
Rayna Rubin

**Staff Present:**

Melissa M. SantucciRozzi, Interim Director

**Remote Meeting Provisions**

*Due to the COVID19 Pandemic remote meetings have replaced physical meetings per the Governor's Order on March 3/12/20 as most recently amended. Said order suspended the provisions of the Open Meeting Law to promote public health and social distancing. This meeting was not conducted in an open, publically accessible space. Public access to the meeting and deliberations were achieved by adequate, alternative means that allowed the public to follow the proceeding in a third party communication technology known as ZOOM that is readily accessible to the public by the internet and the Telephone.*

**Call the Meeting to Order**

7:00 PM the Meeting was Called to Order with a Quorum via the Zoom Platform.

SantucciRozzi, conducted a Roll Call vote for Attendance

Kate Nedelman-Herbst - Y

Santina Giannino - Y

Rayna Rubin - Y

Ron Frazier - Y

Member Harris joined the meeting at 7:09 PM.

Introduction and Welcome from SantucciRozzi.

SantucciRozzi announced that Christine Stickney is longer working for the Town and that Chair Elizabeth Mees resigned from the Historical Commission on December 16, 2020 and has been very helpful during the transition and getting me up to speed. SantucciRozzi, looks to the Commission for advice, constructive criticism and idea sharing. Santucci Rozzi, will get acclimated to the way the Commission operates and looks to bring improvement to things that have not worked for the Commission in the past.

**Reorganization**

Frazier – Let's go ahead.

Nedelman-Herbst – Questions the Membership and wants to hold off on reorganization until we know the Mayor's Intentions. In doing so Frazier could Chair for a few months. Until we know who will be on the Commission.

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SantucciRozzi – Referenced the Historical Bylaws require 7 Members on the Commission and that they had only 6 Members for quite some time and that Mees had informed her that the Commission has had a difficult time securing members. It is important to have a fully positioned commission and try not to have an even number. Town Charter says 5-7 Members and Local Bylaw says 7 Members. SantucciRozzi asks if there have even been voting issues with the even number of members, and what do they do if a vote is a tie? There is no tie breaker vote. I will be meeting with the Mayor next week and will discuss this with him.

Nedelman-Herbst - We want 7 members, I think I speak for everyone.

Frazier – We have constantly asked the Mayor (Sullivan) and also discussed with the new Mayor (Meeting to be scheduled after the new year) about members. We have asked month after month for members. We absolutely need an architect back on the Commission.

SantucciRozzi – My notes reflect the need for 2 more members, one being an architect and that the commission membership be in compliance with the bylaw. I have no issues with holding off on re-organization until we have a full Commission. I can work with vice chair Frazier on matters that come up in the meantime.

Nedelman-Herbst – reiterates the desire to hold off on re-organization till we have a full picture of what we are looking at.

Santina Giannino – Agrees 100% with the discussion.

## **Bob Harris joins the Meeting at 7:09PM**

Motion: To table the Re-Organization of the Commission to the March Meeting.

Made: Nedelman-Herbst

Second: Giannino

All in favor By Roll Call Vote:

Rubin - Y

Harris - Y

Frazier - Y

Giannino - Y

Herbt - Y

Vote of 5-0-0 in Favor of the Motion

## ***Meeting Schedule***

SantucciRozzi - The Draft reflects the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the Month, excluding July and August.

Motion: To Approve the Schedule

Made: Rubin

Second: Giannino

All in favor By Roll Call Vote:

Frazier - Y

Harris - Y

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Rubin - Y  
Giannino - Y  
Herbt - Y  
Vote of 5-0-0 in Favor of the Motion

SantucciRozzi – briefly discusses the agenda process and circulation of materials for upcoming meetings.

***Project Updates***

Frazier – comments came from the CPC Meeting that they are trying to close up the Elm Street Cemetery project. Christine raised a question as to the work and funding of the topper fence. Frazier noted that the Historical Commission was very clear they wanted this done and that it was included in the scope and appropriation. Christine wanted to sign off on the project but according to the Historical Commission the work isn't completed. CPC is waiting for a resolution. Historical Commission voted several times to have the fence completed where it belongs over the tomb.

SantucciRozzi – asks if the fence topper was in the original scope and appropriation.

Frazier – Yes it was. Pictures were circulated and people visited the site and there was talk that “it couldn't be done” but there was a fence there before and it looked pretty solid.

Giannino – Also agrees it should be done, due to the drop.

Rubin – Also agrees.

SantucciRozzi – Questions why it wasn't done given the scope and appropriation. I will check with CPC to see if there is any resolution.

Frazier – Christine was holding it up because she couldn't recall the vote to finish the job by the Historical Commission and I am wondering what kind of discussion Manning had with the fence people.

Giannino –recalls that they had an issue with the hooks on the fence.

Frazier – I think it will work. We need to let CPC know and that it is confirmed here tonight that we want the project to be finished.

Harris – states that it was his understanding from the previous meeting(s) that the amount of money that was allocated was spent. He remembers the former Director stating they would need to find more money. He notes he could be wrong but, so it came back to the Historical Commission to see if they still wanted that done and they weighed in that yes they wanted the topper fence and that Stickney said she will find the money.

SantucciRozzi – There have been 2 scenarios' presented that are very different and will require a different path to ensure completion of the topper fence. I need to review the accounting for the project. Once we determine the funding situation. We may need to return to the CPC for a further appropriation for this project.

Harris – He recalls it being part of the original proposal and it wasn't completed for some reasons. The Commission has always said complete restoration of the fence which includes the topper fence, the part

that is not still done. His understanding per Stickney and Manning the amount of money appropriated by CPC had been expended. So there is a need to get further funding.

SantucciRozzi – Notes that it is worth finishing the project even if it requires more funding. This is the missing piece to get this to full restoration in the Historical Commission's opinion. I need to determine what the actual situation is, determine what funds are available and how much the remaining topper fence will cost. This is the next steps to complete this tasks.

Nedelman-Herbst – Agrees with next steps.

SantucciRozzi – Do you want confirm this position with another vote? I will follow up with CPC and Historical Commission to find the easiest way to the finish line.

Harris – That sounds fine.

### ***Historic Inventory 2020***

Frazier - This is a project of the Historical Commission and last time we met Stickney reported that the work was solicited and no bids were received and that she going to reach out to Michael Steinitz at MHC to see if there were some other firms we could reach out to, and what needed to be done to the scope to get it through. We seemed to be able to do it very well years ago, but we are having trouble now.

SantucciRozzi – this is one the items Former Chair Mees discussed with me and that this inventory is something you want to do every ten years and that we are a bit behind that schedule. There was a \$30,000 figure attached to this item. Was it just a figure or was there a CPC appropriation?

Frazier – This is not something that is supposed to happen every ten years, the entire town needs to be surveyed and this is an ongoing inventory project. We could actually do an inventory every year if we had the money to do it.

SantucciRozzi – Thought she found some proposals in Stickney's Area and needs to take another look, but if the dollar amount isn't enough. We need to get someone specialized in this. I will put this back on the agenda for next month hopefully with an update. Things typically cost more than you think and it's a good idea to inquire about cost and then seek funding or bids. You spend some extra time but something like this seems like a mandatory activity that is ongoing.

### **Liberty and Grove**

Frazier – What is going on a CVS? 40B Housing? The Historical Commission was tasked with coming up with an idea for the house (1006 Liberty Street), but what is going on.

SantucciRozzi – I worked with Mayor Korkoros this summer to evaluate the development of this land to secure something that works better for the community. Right now we are very close to signing the purchase and sales agreement for the back portion of the land. Almost all of 1006 Liberty Street piece and then the back portions of 357 and 365 Grove Street.

Frazier – What is going on with the neighbors who wanted to throw in a monkey wrench and go back to the 40B Housing.

SantucciRozzi – Liberty Grove LLC has worked out a private agreement in regards to the pending litigation with the abutter. The litigation will get resolved, the P & S will be signed. The ANR Plan is

currently being reviewed by the LandCourt Engineering Department. It is planned to be submitted on Wednesday and will be endorsed by the Planning Board. This Plan will create the 2 pieces, the front piece will be retained by Liberty Grove LLC and most likely will be re-developed with a CVS, as they remain very interested in the site. The back piece is the part we will be buying and it includes the house at 1006 Liberty Street and will be about 1.5-1.8 Acres. In going to CPC for an unreserved purchase the Town really has an opportunity to do something creative here and some planning to hit up all the CPC buckets, historic, affordable housing and of course open space. I know some of the members had visited the property and that the foundation and the frame may be original, but that a lot of the parts of the home have been modified since construction. This is a great opportunity to engage neighbors in the District, there may also be a need to seek additional funding. There is a lot of opportunity to get ideas from people in the neighborhood. There was even a mention of a pocket park, an area for people walking with groceries or an ice coffee to stop and sit on a bench, something to anchor the business district. It is a nice wooded area to the rear. Looking at the configuration of the house we can really get creative with a parcel for the house and then have the back area for the neighborhood. This is really the spirit of the Community Preservation Act. The opportunity is huge, it's just how huge do we want to go? Once the P & S is signed it might be a good time for the District Councilor to spearhead some kind of Public Meeting or Charrette with input in from the Historical Commission and the CPC. There has been talk that it will be very expensive to fix up the house. I think it is a worthy effort and a chance to maybe heighten the awareness of historical structures given the Town History and to make it a showpiece. To make an investment to show that we care about older homes and preserving them and creating a future for these buildings.

Frazier – There are options. He references the house on Elm Street that the Culkins took over when it was in terrible condition. There are people that enjoy restoring these kinds of homes and that is an option that wouldn't cost the Town any money, and we could recover some of the costs for the project.

SantucciRozzi – The 40B proposal was refiled due to the litigation but will be withdrawn. The Town is still pursuing the purchase, there have been some bumps in the road, but I am confident the Community will prevail and we will have something wonderful to share with future generations. Will update in February and will keep the Commission informed of opportunities for public dialogue.

### ***Message Board at Braintree Town Hall***

Braintree Electric Light is going to be giving the Town money for an electronic message board. The DPW director has reached out and the interest is to have something more permanent where important messages can be displayed, instead of the temporary sign now used. Some rough sketches have been circulated and my initial input was related to the materials and that they should be similar to Town Hall and with an elevated design and quality but shall appear as though it has always been there aside from the electronic sign.

Frazier – Please keep in mind that anything they do has to be approved by this Commission.

SantucciRozzi – Understood and that's why it's on the agenda, to share upcoming information. Is there anything you want to share this evening that I can take back to the DPW Director or Mayor, about materials or location. They are looking to locate it at the intersection of Central and Washington, where they put the wheel barrel sign or at the opposite end at the entry across from the Library. My recommendations have been to locate it on the outskirts of the Mall in areas with good visibility. When I have something worth sharing, I will circulate it to the members. If you have any ideas or comments

about the sign please reach out. Please share any ideas you have early on. This will likely happen this Spring.

## **Minutes**

September 14, 2020

Frazier – Revisions under New Business 4<sup>th</sup> line, it is the oldest, not one of the oldest home in Braintree. Under New Business 11<sup>th</sup> line down remove “new owner George Clements” and replace with the Mclasacs. George took us through and I took a lot of pictures. Santina did you? **YES** Elizabeth Mees did too, so we have some very good pictures of what is going on inside that house.

Motion: For approval of the September 14, 2020 Minutes with the corrections noted by Frazier.

Made: Harris

Second: Rubin

All in favor By Roll Call Vote:

Nedelman-Herbst - Y

Giannino - Y

Rubin - Y

Frazier - Y

Harris – Y

October 5, 2020

No Corrections

Motion: For approval of the October 5, 2020 Minutes

Made: Rubin

Second: Harris

All in favor By Roll Call Vote:

Nedelman-Herbst - Y

Giannino - Y

Rubin - Y

Frazier - Y

Harris – Y

## **Goals and Priorities for 2021**

SantucciRozzi - Notes that the Topper Fence and Inventory as obviously two items that are a priority. What other things do the Commission want to discuss or want staff to look into? The Staff wants to work with the commission to achieve their goals. Long term and intermediate goals, then plan and track progress towards those goals. The Staff looks to the Commission and their input on items of focus Town wide as it relates to their jurisdiction.

Frazier – There are still about 12 gravestones at the Elm Street Cemetery that are in shambles. The other item is to get the Gallivan House in the Historic District. Why has this taken so long? It was supposed to be done long ago.

SantucciRozzi –Yes that is unusual that it is not within the Distict.

Frazier - When the district was established. Hobart Holly was in charge of doing it. They asked everyone if they wanted to be in the district when it was being formed. At the time Peter Vanelli was the headmaster of Thayer Academy and he said he wanted to be in the district, he was very historically oriented. At the time Flanagan the dentist was in the Gallivan House and he declined being in the District. Ever since he vacated the property some 16-17 years ago, it has been a goal to get it in the District.

SantucciRozzi – Was there any recent amendments to the District?

Frazier – He is not sure of the status and the Wild Flower Garden was supposed to be in the District.

Giannino – Bob? Wasn't something filed with the Gallivan House?

Frazier – It was and it has been before the Town Council and before the Mayor, I don't know where it is hung up.

SantucciRozzi – Let's figure out where it is and pick it back up. Any other Members have any items they want to share?

Frazier – I think a lot of things come to us as you are aware, things that have historical significance and I think a lot more should come to us. We are representing the history of Braintree here and that has a legal obligation, there are a lot of things that should be coming to us that never do.

SantucciRozzi - Department wide there needs to be more collaboration amongst Boards as it will result in better projects. From open space, drainage or an architectural standpoint. We see a lot of overlap especially with the Zoning Board of Appeals. We now have the Demolition Delay Bylaw, but sometimes the structure isn't being demolished but completely rehabilitated. You don't have to be in the district to have historical significance or historical character. In a community as old in Braintree you would expect to see more of that carried out in new development. In my community I see a difference in the type of design. I think we have a chance to promote good design and architecture especially in certain areas. Some communities use brochures to promote good design, with suggestions to elevate the historical significance of a community. It's hard to shape development when we don't have any regulations. There are people that want to live in homes that have historical architectural features.

Frazier – There are certain limitations under our Demolition Delay Bylaw, there were some sections that were removed unfortunately. There is a house on Middle Street. It was an antique house. It has been completely done over. The old house looks like it may have been a one car garage. It is totally changed. There is another one on Tremont Street. The one on Middle Street was a farm house and now it's a colonial. The bylaw as adopted eliminated any changes to a structures. This is problem and there are several others in Town.

SantucciRozzi – Agrees with Frazier. If there isn't going to be a full demolition subject to the Demolition Delay Bylaw is there something we can do something. It starts with education, a lot of people just don't know or take the time to know. Things like brochures that give people guidance are helpful. There are themes in neighborhoods worth preserving.

Rubin – These are design guidelines. These would be helpful for historic structures. I think Mees would know a lot about design guidelines.

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SantucciRozzi – Design guidelines are good in commercial districts and often opposed in residential but there are varying levels of guidance. Even if it is form based there are ways to elevate things. We can always do better and always do more. There will be successes and failures but we need to continue to push the envelope. We often criticize development and as Town Staff and Town Boards we can educate and promote. I can understand the frustrations members may have, given the things that they see. If given an opportunity to weigh in on rehabilitation, it could help.

Frazier – Our problem was we had to make concessions with the current Mayor to make this happen.

Giannino – A lot of concessions.

Frazier – If there is no other business

SantucciRozzi – Invites the members to reach out to her to share ideas and communicate, and she will do her best to serve the Commission.

Motion: To Adjourn

Made: Rubin

Second: Giannino

All in favor By Roll Call Vote:

Harris - Y

Giannino - Y

Rubin - Y

Frazier - Y

Nedelman-Herbst - Y

Meeting adjourned at 8:00PM

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa M. SantucciRozzi, Interim Director