

Braintree Historical Commission
Minutes
September 9, 2013
Town Hall – Johnson Chambers

Present: Elizabeth Mees (Chair) Kate Nedelman-Herbst
Paul Carr Al Varraso
Ron Frazier

Also Present: Frank Drollett, Colonial Stone
Christine Stickney, Director of Planning and Community Development

Elm Street Cemetery project:

Frank Drollett from Colonial Stone attended the meeting to share with the Commission some recent findings and concerns he has encountered with the project. Frank briefly explained his background and the status of the project being close to completion. Frank explained the soil conditions in the cemetery have had a tremendous effect on the existing stones and there a number of stones that this project will not address but are in immediate need of attention. The stones he referred to are currently laying on the ground, have broken parts from the Town's lawnmowers running across them and left as is will deteriorate faster. He is suggesting that the Town take immediate action to at least have the stones lifted off the ground and laid on pressure treated wood and have the loosed pieces bagged and place beneath. This will remove the stones from the moisture in the soil and the thaw/freeze that will occur during the winter if not taken off the ground. He provided pictures of many of the stones described.

In addition he suggested that some stones have been vandalized by someone carving inappropriate epitaphs on the back of the stones or sprayed painting symbols. Two such stones are offensive and he could take care of them with this phase of the project but he anticipates there are others out there too. Also using samples of materials he demonstrated how the marble stones are "sugaring" which is the actual breakdown of the marble into a sand consistency from age hence making the stones un-repairable and could mean a totally new stone – before these are lost he suggest a rubbing be made to have a record of the information on the stones. Mr. Carr asked about the details of how repairs were made and Mr. Drollett explained how he performs the work and the materials he uses for the stones to promote their longevity.

Christine noted that she asked Mr. Drollett to come to the meeting with an estimate of what it would cost to have this done and he provided a written estimate of \$6,985 to pick up approximately 25-30 stones and address the two severely vandalized stones. Christine said under the current contract that there was only a 25% threshold for change orders and this amount is above that number so another contract would be needed – funding could be request from CPC as an emergency measure given that winter is approaching if they were agreeable. The Commission unanimously agreed to have staff pursue the issue of supplemental funding for the \$6985 needed for the interim measures until a future CPA application could be submitted in March of 2014.

Mr. Drollett also noted to the Commission that the mowing process as he witnessed being on-site is not protective of the stones because of the weed wackers against the stones and the mowers going over stones that have fallen – more care should be taken by the DPW personnel. Also he said the cemetery personnel should be informed of certain graves that have begun to sink and that additional fill should be added before someone is hurt. He thanked the Commission for their time and discussion and left the meeting.

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Old Thayer Library Phase II (windows/doors)

Christine reported to the Commission that BH+A provided the paint analysis from Ms. Chase – a copy provided to the members and they asked about clarification on the basement windows that have been determined to be in need of replacement. Does the BHC want replacement in kind of the wood or something else that may be cheaper but like wood such as a fiberglass window? Ms. Mees commented that she expects MHC would want wood and since we will need to submit a project application to them for approval – members concurred and recommended wood.

Civil War Monument Restoration – CPA application

Christine informed members that the Town grant writer, Barbara Mello had submitted an application to the Mass Historical Commission on behalf of the Town for the cleaning and restoration of the Civil War monument located in the mall out front of Town Hall and was granted the award (\$4,750) however a local match of \$5,200 is needed. Ms. Mello prepared the CPA application on behalf of the Historical Commission as the applicant for the local match and Christine provided members with a copy to review. Ms. Mees expressed her appreciation to Ms. Mello. Al Varraso **MOTION** to approve the submission of the applicant and that the Braintree Historical Commission is the applicant, seconded by Kate Nedelman Herbst – unanimously voted.

Updated on Historic Inventory project:

Christine shared with members a handout of an email from the consultant, Kathy Broomer that asked for clarification on five items relative to the project – the Commission addressed all five and instructed Christine to respond on their behalf back to Ms. Broomer. The BHC confirmed their intention of seeking inventory forms for every building over 50 years of age regardless of the level of alteration for the properties shown on the map.

RFQ/RFP Town Hall:

Christine reported that nine proposals were submitted and that the reviewing committee has looked at all nine and chosen four firms to invite for interviews which will be the week of September 23, 2013. Then a recommendation would be made to the Mayor for negotiation on a fee. She will keep the Commission updated on their progress.

LHD district/bylaw and Demolition delay – Christine had no progress to report on these matters – she is awaiting responses back from the Town Clerk and the Town Solicitor.

Administrative Matters

Christine reported other than the civil war monument CPA application only an application from the Housing Authority came in – there are no applications in need of BHC review. Kate Nedelman Herbst **MOTION** to accept the minutes of 6/24/13, seconded by Ron Frazier – unanimously voted.

Al Varraso **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Kate Nedelman Herbst – unanimously voted.
Meeting adjourned at 8:10PM

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Stickney, Director