

Braintree Historical Commission
Minutes
Monday, January 5, 2015
Johnson Chambers – Braintree Town Hall

Present: Elizabeth Mees (Chair)
Ron Frazier
Al Varraso

Absent: Kate Nedelman-Herbst
Paul Carr

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

Meeting convened at 7:05 PM

New Business:

Elm Street Cemetery Stone Restoration Project: Frank Drollett and Glenn Taylor attended the meeting to update the commission on the progress of the project. Frank explained the weather has been decent and to date they have raised approximately 50 + stones. The existing stones are a variety of marble, granite and slate – each stone is treated differently but he noted using before and after pictures the final outcome of the stones. The issue they are encountering is the stone's bases are buried beneath a foot or two of soil. Using photos of the work done, Frank explained how the stones are being found and the corrective measures they are undertaking to bring everything to grade. A major issue is the roots of trees in the cemetery; they are entwined around some of the stones and bases. Two trees in particular Frank feels should be removed before future damage occurs to some old stones should the tree come down in a storm. Ron Frazier questioned if the Elm Street Cemetery is one of the worst Colonial has seen and Frank responded it is typical of other South Shore cemeteries, citing examples in Plymouth and Marshfield that he has worked on. Discussion briefly turned to the recent toppling of stones in the Whitman cemetery by vandals and could this happen as well in Elm Street? Frank noted as part of the restoration carbon fiber rods are being added to the stones to secure them to the bases so they can't be knocked over like they did in Whitman. Frank explained the pros of using carbon rods rather than stainless steel or another material for the longevity protection of the stone. Frank noted that a benefit is that the cemetery has never had any real work done on it so they are finding most of the missing bases, foot markers and any pieces of the stones that have broken off which has made it easier for Colonial. Glenn Taylor pointed out to members with the photos the amount of detail on the stones they are uncovering when cleaned off. Frank called out two obelisks; the Arnold and Holbrook he noted they are substantially leaning and should be repaired for public safety reasons. Members agreed after seeing the photo. Discussion turned to the additional work being uncovered that was not foreseen when bidding the project. Christine explained the contractual limitations and that there is some ability to address some of this work in a change order. Al Varraso **MOTION** to ask Christine to look into the Town's tree removal contract and see if the two trees so noted can be removed from the cemetery, seconded by Ron Frazier – unanimously approved. Ron Frazier asked if the Rhododendron bush could also be looked at with the trees he feels it may be infested with something that is causing portions of it to die. Christine said she would have someone look at the rhododendron as well.

Frank Drollett stressed that once the project is complete maintenance of the cemetery really needs to be stepped up with more care given to the landscaping, the prohibition of dog walkers that frequent the cemetery as well as a three year cycle program for spraying the stones with D2 to keep the mold off of

Page 2
BHC Minutes 1/5/15

them. Members agreed this has to be discussed further with the Mayor and Cemeteries and Grounds division of the DPW. Ron Frazier **MOTION** to approve the payment for additional work Colonial Stone is doing relative to the exposure of the bases and two additional obelisks, seconded by Al Varraso – unanimously voted. Frank thanked the Commission for their support and urged members to come down and see the work first hand when all said and done he believes the cemetery will be outstanding. Ron Frazier said we should be publicizing this so people know what is going on and see all the good work – he will work on some type of press release. Members also discussed the need for addressing the perimeter fence around the cemetery and putting another CPA request in for funding. Christine spoke of the CPA's interest in having the cemetery placed on the National Register – it appears there was some type of attempt a number of years ago but never followed through. Frank was thanked for his work and left the meeting.

Discover Quincy Visitor Guide – Christine reported that a winter addition of the guide has been published and that perhaps members could be thinking of Braintree sites for inclusion in a spring version – Elizabeth Mees suggested the Elm Street Cemetery. It was agreed members would think more about potential locations.

Old Business:

Town Hall Roof – Christine reported the progress they are making on the roof as to what has been accomplished and what work remains to be done. Members expressed their pleasure with the slate roof.

Old Thayer Library (OTL) – Christine reported Phase II (Doors and Windows) has been completed and signed off by all parties. Phase III, architectural design addition and ADA acceptability is awaiting the signing of the contract by the Mayor for design services. Christine stressed the Commission really needs to give some thought to what will work for OTL and its relationship to the Town hall side entrance and ADA issues. It was agreed this would be put on the February agenda for discussion – Christine wants to make sure the architects are heading in the same direction as the Commission wants for the building.

John Adams Park – Christine reported nothing new since the last meeting – she will check on it with the Church. She suggested that a date be established for a fall event for the park and the cemetery for the public to attend.

Administrative:

Ron Frazier **MOTION** to accept the minutes of 11/3/14, seconded by Al Varraso – unanimously voted.

Al Varraso **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ron Frazier – unanimously voted

Meeting adjourned at 8:20PM

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Stickney, Director
Planning and Community Development