

Cohasset Historical Commission Minutes of Meeting

January 9th, 2023

Members present: Jacqueline Dormitzer, Mark St. Onge, Julia Gleason, Merle Brown, Jill Crafts, and Megan Elder.

The meeting was called to order at 6:48.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Brochure

The group was aligned to the proposed sections. The Commission decided that it made most sense to have the individual topics live as sections of our new website (opposed to linking to a separate "brochure" file). Mark and Megan to coordinate on having jumps from the topics listed at the top of the web page down to the corresponding content. Jill provided a proofread version; Megan to incorporate edits in the next version.

It was suggested that further elaboration should be done in the "What is the Historical Commission" section to make mention of possibly adding another historic district in town. It may also help to clarify the difference between a local historic district and a National Register of historic district.

Preservation Plan Development

Discussion with Woody Chittick, Chair, Zoning Board

Mr. Chittick joined the group to share his knowledge on Historic Districts. A lot of information was provided. Some key points were:

- Remember that historic districts exist to benefit the whole town, not to benefit the homeowner.
- Hingham has 10 historic districts.
- Age is not the only criteria. Historical significance and integration within the particular area/neighborhood are also core criteria.
- Historic district commissions can override zoning bylaws. It is the only group that has the authority to prevent demolition of structures. Those commissions cannot, however, regulate what goes on inside of the structure, only what can be seen by a typical passerby.

If we were to create a new historic district, the first step would be to define the exact structure/area. Mr. Chittick noted that there are guidelines and booklets that exist to help with this. Another early step would be to create a "study committee" - area realtors, architects, etc. The Commission should additionally get the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) involved. They will be helpful in creating the "study committee."

Coincidentally the longtime head of the Hingham Historical Commission recently moved to Boston. Jackie to reach out to this individual to discuss potentially joining an upcoming Commission meeting. From there the Commission will then pull in individuals from boards such as the Select Board and Planning Board to join a meeting to discuss this potential and gauge their interest.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Elder, Secretary