

HARVARD HISTORICAL COMMISSION

13 AYER ROAD • HARVARD, MASSACHUSETTS 01451



The Harvard Historical Commission is chartered "...to preserve and protect the historic assets of Harvard, its buildings, structures, places, sites, and surrounding settings of historical or architectural significance."

Those wishing to record any or all of the meeting must alert the chair prior to the start of the meeting and the chair will make an announcement, in accordance with The Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

Following is the **agenda** for a regular meeting of the Harvard Historical Commission to be held via Zoom on, Wednesday, **November 2, 2022 at 7:00 pm**. Access information for members of the public:

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MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

George Triantaris (Chair)

Pam Marston (Vice Chair)

Steve Nigzus

Emanuel Lindo

Seth Trotz

Richard Cabelus (Secretary) * did not show up until later in meeting

MEMBERS IN ABSENTIA:

Matthew McRae *

AUDIENCE: SusanMary Redinger

TOPICS:

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 pm

REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:

Minutes from September 7 and October 5. Found a few minor typos. Pam made motion to accept minutes. Manny seconded. Unanimous vote.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

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1. **Resumption of Public Hearing:** Harvard Advisory Energy Committee on behalf of the Town of Harvard –replacement of streetlights in the Harvard Common Historic District – David Fay – have heard from him that they are still waiting for National Grid to install the replacement bulbs. That has not happened yet.

ONGOING APPLICATIONS:

NEW APPLICATIONS:

1. **Congregational Church 5 Still River Road:** Pam was aware of what has happened and had looked at the application. Said this is a sign made of wrought iron, will hang on right-hand side of church facing it. Along the walkway to the Bromfield School is a door that is open on Wednesdays 10-3. There's a bracket, and a sign. The sign is wooden. Bracket sticks out 3 feet, called "Unique Boutique." People from Loaves & Fishes and others can come to purchase items. On day it's open, will be sign hanging. "Unique Boutique" words will probably remain, but the word "Open" will be only there on Wednesdays. Steve considered change insubstantial, not all that different from putting a flagpole or any other temporary thing that can be easily removed. Doesn't appear to be altering the structure in any way, shape, or form. Manny asked Pam if the sign will be on the side of building and somewhat back. Pam said yes. Manny agreed with Steve. Steve made a motion that change is insubstantial. Pam seconded. Unanimous vote.
2. **Town of Harvard 27 Mass Ave** – new stone wall along Mass Ave. – task is whether to determine this is substantial or insubstantial change - SusanMary Redinger joined to discuss. As building the school, the budget became a little tight, had to take out a wall. Because funds are available now, would like to go back and put the wall in, essentially mirroring the wall that is across the street, same materials, same granite top. Because it's a playing field, trying to both keep balls in and keep kids safe. Wall will act as a barrier. Wall will run from the road entrance to the south of the school up until the walkway that goes across to the library. Will take a turn before that, and will create a corner there. So about 290 feet, takes a turn and goes about 20 feet towards the school, along that walkway that goes over to the library. Have asked construction company (bids already come in), essentially waiting on a vote tomorrow afternoon to award it to the same company that did the wall across the street. Have add-alternate section that the School Building Committee has not had a chance to weigh in on. In addition to the wall, potential of a 2-foot metal fencing to go above that wall, just to catch additional balls, but would not block any line of sight from the street to the building. On the inside of the wall, where there is not an asphalt walkway, because we felt we wanted to maintain a public walkway for people and wanted also to have that walkway for the kids (mile-markered), would be duplicating the walkway inside the wall as well. So it's walkway, wall, and a potential addition of the metal 2-feet section, wouldn't be higher than 4 feet. George asked if she would know whether they would want to do that by next month. Will specs be decided? SusanMary said they would know if the Building Committee is in favor of that or not tomorrow afternoon. SusanMary shared sketch of wall. Pam asked where the school was in the drawing. SusanMary pointed it out. Seth brought up that school was explicitly excluded from historic district, so why being discussed? SusanMary said she wanted to do the procedure right and be sure they were in agreement. George brought up that map is drawn to protect Mass Ave. streetscape. Manny brought up he knew that Marie had told people that when we rebuilt the wall across the street, we had an existing foundation. Just wanted to make sure that the School Committee makes sure there's a proper foundation under the wall. SusanMary said that's included in the spec. Manny brought up there's a part under Mortar, that says "as necessary". Manny had two thoughts about the fence – if kids will be climbing on it, might want to put some loading criteria. Thought Beyond Construction did a good job on other side of street, but they are a small contractor, so cash flow is important. Steve asked SusanMary if they were talking about the metal fence on top. George answered that if they decide to include the fence, which HHC will find out before the public hearing, that will be part of the application. If HHC informed that don't want

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to put metal fence, then will drop it. Simply deciding tonight whether new wall is substantial change or not. SusanMary asked what the parameters were for accepting fencing. George answered that she would bring the design she has and HHC will look at it. Richard brought up that design review guidelines have section that might be helpful. Pam asked if thought of having 4-foot fence only, instead of building stone wall, and then sticking a metal fence on top of it, has that been discussed? SusanMary said no, didn't know if would do fence or not, thought wall would be nicer than just a black metal fence. Have seating for people to watch a game up above, sort of doubles its purpose. With fence there, you wouldn't have that. Steve made a motion that this is substantial change. Seth seconded. Unanimous.

NON-APPLICABLE APPLICATIONS APPROVED:

NEW BUSINESS:

1. George got email from Liz Allard about the Open Space & Resource Committee. HHC is down for demolition delay bylaw and to add Still River as a new historic district. George perplexed on what to do about new historic district. Maybe take demolition delay to Select Board. George opened discussion about Still River. He thought a good idea would be to go to different property owners and tell them they could opt-in, "Here's what it would do, would protect your house. Would you be interested?" Those people could show up at town meeting, say they want their houses included, might be good compromise about historic district to get it started. Onus is on HHC to put paperwork together, so better to do it all at one town meeting rather than piecemeal.

ON-GOING BUSINESS:

1. Shaker Herb House Grant Application follow-up (ML)
George went to Shaker presentation at Historical Society. Was told that existing brick building is actually Shaker Herb Drying House. Shaker Herb House was a very large structure that burned in about 1915, was on the Main Street. Manny sent HHC letter to Select Board. Town Manager sent action to Harvard Conservation Commission, inferring that they own the property, so they have responsibilities. HHC sent documentation that they requested. Manny attended their meeting, answered their technical questions. They said, "We don't do buildings," but were going to go look at the structure." Manny was of the opinion that as long as the letter's been sent to the Select Board, and our designated representative is aware of the letter, to take off of our agenda until somebody reaches out and asks HHC to take action. George said letter did not reach Select Board. Manny said maybe SB would take a walk in the woods and look at the building. Not optimistic that they will take action. George said maybe thing to do is to say to Liz, "If you decide not to do anything with this, please forward original letter back to Select Board," since it was sort of kicked to them. If they don't want to do anything with it, either let HHC know, or just forward the letter on, so that it actually reaches the Select Board at some point. Manny asked if possible to reach out to individual on Select Board. George said he would talk to Liz.
2. Had talked last time about three ways to speed up applications, to make easier on HHC, clarify things. George thought about this some more and thought HHC could expand some of the exemptions. Would like to look at other towns' websites and see what they are doing for exemptions. Steve suggested members could answer about exemptions through a matrix. Before next meeting, George will send a list of proposed exemptions. Moved into discussion about "ordinary maintenance". George asked if group would like to change definition to, "Review is only required if there's a change in material or design," could vote on that now, but don't need public hearing to do that, because it's not an exemption. George brought up one-meeting review as next possibility to speed up applications. Discussion about "ordinary maintenance"

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and exemptions continued. George continued “one-meeting review” topic. For a substantial application, it’s not a bad thing to have two meetings, George thought, but for insubstantial, having two meetings drags it out way too long. George will draft new rules, can discuss specifically at the next meeting, asked HHC to think about exemptions, go to other towns’ websites.

3. Bromfield House

Quick update – waiting for the Town Clerk to file the vote to include Bromfield in the Historic District with the Attorney General. AG has to endorse or approve whatever happened at the town meeting before it’s totally official. Once that happens, HHC has to file map with the Registry of Deeds and with the Town Clerk.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND LIAISONS:

Monument Committee (MM)

CPC (PM)

CPC in process of voting on some of applications received. About \$450,000 in cash available to hand out, and \$950,000 in requests.

Transportation Advisory Committee (PM)

Planning Board (RC)

A lot going on with respect to town overlay, district for entertainment activities, and also an amendment to the Agricultural District bylaw to allow entertainment uses as well, which is on for a public hearing on Monday, both which will potentially be brought for a special town meeting in January.

Design Review Board (SN)

Devens Committee (RC)

Seth asked question about Devens Committee.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY: None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

SET DATE FOR NEXT MEETING: December 7, 2022

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:07 pm.