

Page 1 of 4

Meeting Minutes Report

The purpose of the monthly meeting was to review the agenda items previously released by e-Mail. Non-attending members are encouraged to please notify either Co-chair as soon as possible to allow time to prepare the agenda for discussion. The items discussed were as follows:

Date & Time: February 9, 7:00PM

Present: Michael Smith, Co-chair Historic District Commission Absent:

Paul Bell, Co-chair HDC

Peter Gunness, HDC member Richard Cheek,

Lydia Ogilby, HDC Emerita HDC Emeritus

Richard Pichette, HDC member

Lauren Meier, HDC member Nancy Richards

Arleyn Levee, HDC member

Joe Cornish, HDC member

Allan Vanderley, HDC member Distribution:

All members

Office of the Town

By: Lisa Harrington/aev HDC member Administrator

Item: Description:

Action:

1. BHDC-GUIDELINES

1.1 Cost estimates for printing: Ms Lauren Meier researched several scenarios for pricing, "Ambitpress.com" looks promising. The next step will be to approach the Board of Selectmen and Tom Younger, town administrator, for funding the guidelines publication. Mr Joe Cornish and Lauren each have published a "one-page" overview of the Belmont Historic Districts for the Commissions consideration for publication.

1.2 Jurisdiction: A discussion of whether to use "Historic District Commission" or "Historical Commission" as a point of jurisdiction, the consensus was that the "Historical Commission" designation is activated by request by other authorities according to state law chapter-40 [M.G.L.c.40C.section-2]. In addition it seems, the Commission can act in an advisory capacity as the Historical Commission by self activation.

1.3 Proofing: Commission members were requested to review the one-page information sheets and the Guidelines before the next scheduled meeting. Lauren will provide the Commission with deadlines for comments and will submit four hard copies of the final version to the Board of Selectmen.

HDC

HDC

L.M.

2. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2.1 Mr Joe Cornish reported that he wrote a letter to the editor of the Belmont Citizen-Herald to be published [2.18.10] about the use of historical precedent in the Comprehensive Planning process. He reported that in the Comprehensive Planning meetings that there is a desire to press for development allowing four and five story construction. The Commission felt there is no historical precedent for this in Belmont and that it would therefore be inappropriate. There is a Belmont Planning Board meeting Wednesday [2.10.10] to review the Comprehensive Plan.

J.C./M.S./P.B.

BELMONT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES REPORT, PAGE 2 OF 4

FEBRUARY 9, 2010

Page 2 of 4

2.2 The updated Comprehensive Plan has been posted for comment by the office of Larry Koff Associates [<http://www.lkoffassociates.com/Belmont.html>].

3. LIAISON REPORT

3.1 Benton Branch Library: Mr Michael Smith reported that the reuse committee is searching for alternative low neighborhood impact uses such as home-office or children's library. The Board of Selectmen prefers to relieve the town's operational burden and have the capital asset provide or produce income. Selling the building into private ownership may require a deed restriction to preserve it.

3.2 Sustainable Belmont: Mr Smith reported the Commission issued a letter of support to Sustainable Belmont as part of its Cool Communities program.

3.3 Barn at Rock Meadow: Michael reported that the naming of the open space and barn is at issue at the present by the subcommittee group. Mr Joseph Cornish speaking on behalf of the Belmont Historical Society suggested storing the Cushing-family estate "Belmont Circular Library", currently partly stored in the Wellington Station building and a private home, in the barn, at least temporarily. This issue will be discussed with the Land Management Commission. An alternative suggestion was to offer storage placement to the Town of Danvers.

3.4. Demolition Activities: Mr Cornish reported the demolition of the Wellington School is underway.

3.5. Demo Review Bylaw: Mr Allan Vanderley will release a draft for review, comment, and discussion once substantially complete.

3.6. Town Hall Operational Improvements:

A. Mr Vanderley reported that he had suggested additions to the Belmont Media Center's request-for-proposals to upgrade the Town Hall's sound system. Suggestions included adding a provision that new work shall comply with the U.S. Secretary of Interior Standards for Historical Preservation, and that all phases of the work shall be submitted for review before execution of the work. Co-chair Paul Bell suggested forwarding additional information to Allan for record.

B. Allan will forward a draft memo to the chairmanship for review of the status of operational improvements for the coming years.

3.7 CPA-Community Preservation Act: Mr Peter Gunness reported that a steering committee for a campaign of the general public education and outreach for applicable uses has been established. A kick-off meeting is being scheduled for Monday [March-1<sup>st</sup>] with a member from the Community Preservation Coalition to provide background and guidance. A discussion included ideas about how the Commission could assist in the cause of public education or outreach.

A. Listing: Chairman Smith suggested creating a list of potential projects for applicable use for CPA-community preservation act funds. Potential historic preservation fund projects could include, but not be limited to;

1. The Benton Branch Library
2. The Barn at Rock Meadow
3. The Belmont Center Granite Stone Railroad Bridge Overpass

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BELMONT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES REPORT, PAGE 3 OF 4

FEBRUARY 9, 2010

Page 3 of 4

4. The Belmont-municipal Underwood Pool – Mr Peter Gunness requested that we begin putting together budgeting numbers for the restoration of the Underwood Pool as a project eligible for the historic preservation portion of the CPA-fund. It was suggested that the Belmont DPW-department of public works through Mr Peter

Castanino had compiled a cost report for the CPOC-capital projects overview committee.

B. Historic Properties Inventory: Ms Lauren Meier suggested the Commission in its Historical Commission role could designate historic properties in the Town of Belmont. Lisa Harrington added the Commission has done this type of activity in prior years.

P.G.

L.M./L.H.

#### 4. CUSHING VILLAGE

Cochairman Smith reported there is a need for the Town to pressure to save the S.S. Pierce building at a meeting for review and comment scheduled for Wednesday, February-10'th. There are two independently posted websites for the Commission to consider – 1.] [cushingvillage.com](http://cushingvillage.com) [by the developer], and 2.] [cushingneighborhood.com](http://cushingneighborhood.com) [by the neighborhood].

HDC

#### 5. RECORDS

Arleyn Levee brought attention to the need to store historical records like the records of the Eleanor Raymond House. The consensus of the Commission was that it would be appropriate that the originals to be archived in the care of the Historical Society while a record copy may be held by the Commission.

Arleyn suggested that Modernist-style houses should be considered for future records.

A.L.

#### 6. NEW DISTRICTS

Mr Richard Pichette met with Mr Fred Paulsen [90 School Street] and discussed the future establishment of a neighborhood historic district – the Goden Street / School Street District.

The Commission discussed the process. Ms Lisa Harrington shared that the technical process would begin with the state Massachusetts Historical Commission Form-B:

Lisa Harrington shared in a case-study of a Town of Wayland neighborhood district a general rule-of-thumb for a district was where 80% [eighty-percent] of the individual property owners agreed to the designation.

Lauren Meier suggested that there is a difference between a contiguous district and or per individual property designation.

Arleyn Levee cautioned that either process of designation will be perceived as a political process involving property rights.

Mr Pichette suggested the consensus may begin with having as little as five individual property owners designating themselves as members to a neighborhood “club”. The Commission felt further consideration should be given by having Commission members walk the neighborhood when the weather is better, as well as getting together with a group of interested neighbors.

M.S.

meeting

TBD w/

F.P.

#### 7. McLEAN OPEN SPACE

Michael Smith reported that a meeting would determine the process to rename the McLean open space. Lauren Meier suggested that the name should be reflective of the history of the land. Lydia Ogilby added that the original name was “Cambridge Rocks”.

#### 8. MEETING MINUTES

January Meeting Minutes were approved.

A.V.

BELMONT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES REPORT, PAGE 4 OF 4

FEBRUARY 9, 2010

Page 4 of 4

#### 9. OPEN MEETING LAWS

Co-chairman Smith reminded the Commission on issues of protocol related to Open Meeting

Laws are coming up.

HDC

10. OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Proposed Cell Tower: A balloon test will be flown on February 12-'th and 13-'th at the corner of state route-2 and Pleasant Street for the proposed Verizon cell tower. News coverage is expected in the Belmont Citizen-Herald regarding the tower.

10.2 Mr Joe Cornish reminded the Commission to submit nominations for historical awards for the year 2010.

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11. NEXT MEETING

11.1 March.....Tuesday, March-9'th.

11.2 April.....Tuesday, April-13'th.

12. Meeting adjourned, Meeting Minutes Report approved 4.13.2010 and submitted for record. A.V.

END OF REPORT