



# Town of Sudbury

## Historical Commission

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### MINUTES JUNE 16, 2020 VIRTUAL MEETING

**Present:** Chair Chris Hagger, Vice-Chair Diana Warren, Diana Cebra, Taryn Trexler, Jan Costa, Steve Greene, Marjorie Katz, and Fred Bautze.

**Others Present:** Adam Duchesneau, Director of Planning and Community Development; Jaye Hefner, 79 Nobscot Road

Mr. Hagger called the meeting to order at 7:17 PM.

#### **79 Nobscot Road under the Demolition Delay Bylaw**

Mr. Hagger began by summarizing the Demolition Delay Bylaw process the Historical Commission has followed on this application and the public hearing held May 21<sup>st</sup>. He stated that this meeting was not a hearing, and that the Commission would discuss and make a determination whether or not the demolition of the property would be detrimental to the historical or architectural heritage of Sudbury to be preferably preserved, and then take a vote.

He stated that if the Commission votes that the property not be preferably preserved then the Commission would inform the Building Inspector and a demolition permit would be issued. If the Commission votes that the property be preferably preserved then a six month demolition delay would start effective June 16<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Hagger stated that that the property is a very strong candidate for being preferably preserved based on its historical narrative and significance, and that the Commission had determined the structure was historically significant. He commented on the Brown house as being one of three historic Brown houses in the area. He commented on the historical and architectural features of the structure such as the framing, gunstock posts, fireplaces, beams, paneling, boxed staircase, and hardware.

He commented that the Commission's Demolition Delay deliberations do not include discussion of the level of restoration needed on a property that comes before the Commission. He stated he did not see anything that was presented during the public hearing in terms of condition that could not be restored.

Mr. Hagger compared the structure to other historic structures in town that had been restored, such as the Hosmer House, Loring Parsonage, Stone Tavern, 85 Raymond Road, 24 Church Street and Concord Road. He recommended possible alternatives to complete demolition.

Ms. Warren commented that 79 Nobscot Road was older than previously thought, in consideration of the fact that gunstock posts were constructed around 1730, which would make it one of the oldest existing structures in Sudbury. Ms. Warren provided a summary of the history of the structure, and connection with past Brown owners, including Hubbard Brown who started the first greenhouse business in South Sudbury in 1879, Ms. Warren opined that the building maybe a candidate for inclusion in a historic district and should be preferably preserved.

Mr. Green commented that the exploration of other solutions for this significant property was needed.

Commissioners agreed that the property has historical significance.

Ms. Hefner asked several questions including inquiring about where to find information about the other neighborhood Brown family houses, if the decision tonight was to delay the permit was there any reason why she could not get a permit after the end of the six month demolition delay, and about when she would receive notice of the decision and the timing of filing an appeal. Ms. Hefner stated that her legal counsel would like to file an appeal of the decision with Superior Court Monday morning or as soon as the next business day after she gets the notice of the decision and the Demolition Report.

Mr. Hagger and Mr. Duchesneau advised her to seek her own legal counsel as the Commission could not offer comment. Mr. Hagger said that if the Commission votes that the structure shall be considered preferably preserved the Commission is required to prepare a report that will contain information about the other Brown houses, and that the Commission would hope to have a discussion with the owner to try to find other options other than to demolish the house.

Mr. Duchesneau stated that the Commission has not yet voted on the matter.

Ms. Warren moved that the Sudbury Historical Commission determines on June 16, 2020, the demolition, of the property, or any part thereof, at 79 Nobscot Road, Sudbury, MA; would be detrimental to the historical and architectural heritage and resources of the Town of Sudbury. The Sudbury Historical Commission also determines on June 16, 2020; that the John Brown House which is located at 79 Nobscot Road shall be considered to be preferably preserved, and therefore, no demolition building permit shall be issued until six(6) months after June 16, 2020. Mr. Hagger seconded the motion and it passed unanimously (7-0).

VOTED: That the Sudbury Historical Commission determines on June 16, 2020, the demolition of the property, or any part thereof, at 79 Nobscot Road, Sudbury, MA; would be detrimental to the historical and architectural heritage and resources of the Town of Sudbury. The Sudbury Historical Commission also determines on June 16, 2020; that the John Brown House which is located at 79 Nobscot Road shall be considered to be preferably preserved, and therefore, no demolition building permit shall be issued until six(6) months after June 16, 2020.

Mr. Hagger confirmed that a written demolition report would be sent by Friday.

### **Eversource – Transmission Line Project**

Mr. Hagger asked if any of the Commissioners lived within 300 feet of the Eversource Transmission line project. Commissioners all responded no. Commissioners reviewed and provided edits to the draft letter dated June 4, 2020 requesting information about the transmission line project to be sent to Eversource.

Ms. Warren said the letter to the MA Historical Commission discussed at the prior HC meeting had been sent. She explained that Attorney George Pucci recommended that the Commission follow-up within 14 days on letters.

### **Approval of May 21, 2020 and June 8, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Warren stated that she did not have sufficient time to review the June 8, 2020 meeting minutes as they had been sent the prior day and that public comment needed to be added to the draft meeting minutes of May 21, 2020. Both the May 21<sup>st</sup> and June 8, 2020; would be reviewed at the next meeting.

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### **Current Fiscal Year Commission Budget – Use of Remaining Funds/General Fund Purchases**

Ms. Costa provided a budget update. Related budgetary discussion took place. Mr. Bautze confirmed that \$1,400.00 would cover the installation and hardware cost for internet installation at the Hosmer House.

Ms. Warren stated that the approved purchase of an \$800.00 11” screen iPad would be sufficient.

Ms. Costa noted that there may be some remaining funds. Ms. Cebra suggested gardening materials for the Hosmer House. Mr. Hagger stated that \$200.00 could be allocated to such gardening supplies.

Ms. Warren commented that new filing supplies for files kept at the Hosmer House needed be replaced, and that such funding would come out of the Hosmer House fund in the amount of \$50.00 to \$100.00.

Mr. Greene motioned to allocate \$50.00 to \$100.00 from the Hosmer House fund for the purpose of administrative supplies such as files for the Hosmer House work. Mr. Hagger seconded the motion and it passed unanimously (7-0).

VOTED: To allocate \$50.00 to \$100.00 from the Hosmer House fund for the purpose of administrative supplies such as files for the Hosmer House work.

### **Demolition Delay Bylaw – Website Update/Outreach**

Ms. Costa reviewed her document - Suggested Sudbury Demolition Delay Bylaw Education Information dated 6/5/20. Ms. Costa reinforced the primary intention of the Education

Information document was to educate people on the demolition bylaw, especially for homeowners and residents.

The accompanying Q&A document titled Sudbury, Massachusetts and its Demolition Bylaw – Sudbury Historical Commission was also drafted by Ms. Costa. She also suggested that relevant links could be included.

Mr. Hagger supported Ms. Costa's concept of providing links on the Historic Commission Town website. Ms. Warren was also in favor of the demolition delay link inclusion on the Town website. Ms. Warren also suggested links to MACRIS, Secretary of the Interior Historic Preservations Standards, National Register of Historic Places Criteria and the Bylaw. Both Ms. Costa and Ms. Warren recommended that Commissioners supply comments and edits to the documents presented.

Mr. Hagger announced Ms. Costa's reappointment to the Commission.

### **Hosmer House – Technology Purchases/Garden/Book Collection/Orientation Manual**

Ms. Cebra said she and Mr. Greene found several books in the Hosmer House, which may have belonged to Florence Hosmer. Mr. Hagger commented that a book inventory system had started with various books found in the attic.

Commissioners agreed to create an Orientation Manual for new commissioners and Hosmer House volunteers.

Ms. Cebra described elements of proposed Fairy Garden indicated that the new gardens would stand out as a tour feature and would be part of the gardening history of the Town.

Mr. Bautze informed the Commissioners that someone wanted to rent the outside of the Hosmer House and he declined the request. After some conversation, commissioners agreed such exterior rental would not be a good idea at this time due to COVID.

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### **Master Plan – Preservation/Cultural Resources**

Ms. Trexler stated that the Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) sent a letter to the Commission regarding the historical and cultural section included in the Master Plan for the Commission's review and comment.

Ms. Warren suggested that the Historical Commission would like to provide input to strengthen the information found in the Master Plan Volume II draft.

Ms. Trexler stated that the MPSC would be asking for comments on the Master Plan Volume II and the annotated outline was just a draft and she would forward the annotated outline to the Commissioners for comment.

Ms. Warren recommended that the Commission play close attention to Volume II and III, and discuss what possible revisions be included.

### **Historic Building Survey Grant Update**

Ms. Trexler had no updates.

### **Cemetery Restoration Update**

Mr. Hagger spoke of using the remaining CPA funding. Ms. Katz said that in light of the recent COVID emergency, she had not visited the cemeteries to determine what remaining restoration work needs to be done. Ms. Cebra stated that she would be happy to assist at the cemetery. Ms. Cebra noted that DPW had a listing of gravestones.

Ms. Warren noted that most of the CPA funding has been used for the cemetery stone cleaning.

Mr. Bautze stated the new iPad would help with managing the project. Mr. Hagger stated an update would be put on the agenda next month.

### **Date for Historical Commission Meeting regarding Preservation Advocacy Goals**

Mr. Hagger suggested putting this item back on agenda at the end of the summer.

### **Historical Site Mowing**

Mr. Hagger stated the Haynes Garrison site needed mowing. Mr. Bautze said that he would monitor the site and contact Dan Nason at DPW. Ms. Cebra recommended asking about the poison ivy as well.

### **Eversource – Structure Replacement Project 2019**

Ms. Warren commented that such a project would likely disturb resources in the ground. Ms. Warren spoke of related correspondence from PAL regarding archaeological site survey. She contacted the Framingham and Wayland Historical Commissions. Ms. Warren detailed that both Framingham and Wayland had received an un-redacted copy of the PAL Archaeological Survey.

### **Henry Ford Underpass**

Ms. Warren stated that Mr. Hagger received information from the Department of Transportation regarding the style of a railing. Ms. Trexler stated that the railing was located in the front of the Wayside Inn.

Mr. Hagger stated that the Historic Districts Commission handled the matter.

### **Historical Commission List of Issues**

Ms. Warren suggested that the Commission could establish a procedure to mention documentation and letters received since the previous meeting. And Ms. Warren suggested keeping a “running watch list” for projects, and to include this list on the minutes as is done by other Historical Commissions in other towns. Mr. Hagger asked if anyone else would like to keep such a list.

### **Date for Next Meeting**

Ms. Warren suggested an additional meeting before July 21<sup>st</sup> for Eversource business. Ms. Cebra said most commissioners are home so another tentative meeting would be preferred. Ms. Katz queried about getting additional related information from Eversource. Mr. Bautze suggested scheduling a meeting on Tuesday, July 7 at 7:00 pm.

### **Adjourn**

Mr. Hagger motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Warren seconded the motion and was passed unanimously (7-0).

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:00 ng was adjourned at approximately 10:00 PM