

**Northampton Historical Commission
Minutes**

DATE: Wednesday, June 28, 2021
TIME: 5:30 PM
PLACE: Remote Online Meeting

Member	Present
Martha Lyon, Chair	X
Barbara Blumenthal, Vice-Chair	X
Jonathan Daube	X
Vacancy	
Dylan Gaffney	X
Harvey Hill	X
Craig Della Penna	
Sarah LaValley - staff	X

Martha Lyon called the meeting to Order, 5:31 PM

Public Comment

None

Approval of Minutes

Barbara moved to approve the December 21, 2020 minutes. Seconded by Dylan, the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Chairs Report

Martha informed the Commission that the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission found that the Commission acted appropriately in denying a Certificate of Appropriateness for proposed window replacement at 330 Elm Street.

Martha noted that the Commission’s vote regarding the Hatfield Street roundabout was not reflected accurately in a Springfield Republican article. Martha encouraged Commissioners to participate individually in the Main Street redesign process. Steve Moga was presented by WMAIA as the organization’s nominee to the Historical Commission, and should be confirmed by City Council later in the summer.

Review Work to Shepherd Barn, Historic Northampton, Pursuant to Historic Preservation Restriction

Martha stated that the City holds a preservation restriction on the Historic Northampton campus, and the Historical Commission reviews all work classified by the restriction as ‘major’ in accordance with the terms of the restriction and the Secretary of the Interior’s standards for the treatment of historic properties.

Laurie Sanders and Betty Sharpe, Executive Directors, provided an overview of the project; work towards the goal of reopening the barn as a performance space and exhibit area, with new bathrooms. The goal will be to maintain the look of the barn and original materials, arresting water damage and creating a new stone foundation. Benches, bathrooms, and removal of a deteriorating wood deck are all proposed. The team is working on archaeology through the State Archaeologist, and timer framers are being consulted.. The second floor is

not accessible to the public. Martha asked about gutters. Laurie replied that a decision on material has not been finalized, but they will be designed to handle extreme storms. Fred Zimnoch asked about heating and cooling. Laurie replied that heating will not be added, and that ceiling fans will provide circulation. The Commission agreed that the work is well thought out and sensitive to the original building. Jonathan moved to approve the work as proposed, pursuant to the Historic Preservation Restriction. Seconded by Harvey, the motion carried unanimously.

Request for Support of CPA Application – Michelson Galleries Façade Reconstruction, 132 Main Street

Paul Gulla, Gallery Manager, stated that the façade of the 1913 building extends above the roofline, and the masonry is corroding and fracturing from water incursion. Expedited CPA funds will be requested to potentially complete the work before winter. The façade is not critical to the business, but is a prominent part of the building.

Sarah clarified that the building is part of the downtown National Register district and is eligible for CPA funding. Any exterior changes to the building would need review by the Central Business Architecture Committee.

Barbara noted that the application seeks 100% of the funding for the work, and asked if there is any opportunity for matching funds. There is no question that the building is significant to the downtown. Richard Michelson noted that additional problems are likely to be discovered, and significant resources have been spent over the years on building maintenance. Paul added that tax credits are being looked into but they pose some limitations. Martha suggested that a long-term maintenance plan would be helpful moving forward. Barbara moved to support the preservation of the building. Seconded by Jonathan, the motion carried unanimously.

Central Business Architecture Committee Nominee

The Commission had no nominee and will discuss at a future meeting.

Commission Roles and Responsibilities Overview Series: Demolition Review

The Commission reviewed a staff summary of Demolition Delay. Martha noted that this is one tool in the Commission's toolbox. Some developers factor a delay into the planning process, and some communities are moving away from delays. Incentives and additional tools can be looked at during the Historic Preservation Plan process.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:52 PM