

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
September 1, 2015
Delancey Hall**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Linda Gracie
John Malone
Gail Pantezzi
Steve LaRocca
Francis Tuoti, Chairman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Debby Moore
Marcia Rockwood

ALSO PRESENT: Susie Thompson, Town Historian
Janice Will, Recording Secretary

Chairman Francis Tuoti opened the meeting.

Cat Ridge Cemetery Maintenance/Repairs

Susie Thompson asked who among the HPC members would go along and help on September 12. She said the Historical Society and some members of the Lions Club will also participate. She stated that the goal will be to look at the scope of the project and begin to do some clean-up work, but the group will not be righting gravestones yet. She added that she is pleased that the Historical Society has come on board to help.

Chairman Tuoti asked if there will be another day designated for work in the cemetery.

Ms. Thompson replied that there will be, but none has been set yet. She asked that no one ever go to work alone/at least 2 people should always go. She went on to say that she has purchased a cleaning product called D-2, which is non-toxic and works very well, and also some scrapers, brushes and spray bottles. Ms. Thompson asked that anyone who goes along on September 12 bring rakes, gloves and water. She thought John Malone could show people who missed the workshop how to do the cleaning of the gravestones.

Passing around a card from D-2 showing a clearly half-cleaned gravestone, Ms. Thompson said she would like to ask them if the Town may use the photo in their fundraiser. She went on to say that the vault is cleaned-out and invited Steve LaRocca to go and see it. Ms. Thompson stated that she is getting estimates of the cost for evaluation and restoration.

The Chairman asked if Beyond the Gravestone would give them credit for the assessment (already done and paid for) if they are hired to do the work.

Ms. Thompson thought that if the HPC can get phase 1 done/knows what the vault will require, the actual repair can wait/they can look into fund-raising and enlist the assistance of the Historical Society. She commented that the cemetery has not received much attention in recent years.

Ms. Pantezzi said she has been noticing that cemeteries in other town are in good order, but Ms. Gracie said some of them are not.

Chairman Tuoti stated that even with just the 2 stones having been straightened, the cemetery looks better.

Ms. Thompson agreed. She said the people at Beyond the Gravestone told her the remaining fallen/broken stones should be left face-down for the winter to protect the engravings from further damage.

Certified Local Government Program

Ms. Pantezzi said the suggested amendments to the local law were presented to the Town Board at their last meeting on August 25.

Chairman Tuoti said Ms. Pantezzi did an excellent job.

Ms. Pantezzi said she gave the Town Board an explanation of the program and answered questions; having packets of information at hand made it easy for them to refer to. The Town Board asked that the changes be indicated on an electronic copy of Chapters 130 and 131 for forwarding to the Town's attorney, Roland Baroni, and then they will hold a public hearing on the proposed changes.

The Chairman remarked that he did not sense any objection to the changes.

Ms. Pantezzi said she thinks it will be fine; there is no reason not to do it. She said the next step in the certification process will be for the members of the HPC to show the State who they are as a commission, covering their interests and activities having to do with local history, work on the Commission, ownership of local landmarks and/or professional knowledge of historical preservation. She asked the HPC to have their information ready for the next meeting.

Ms. Thompson suggested they just e-mail their paperwork to Ms. Pantezzi.

Ms. Pantezzi agreed to that and asked that the submissions be set up like resumes, including short sections on education, work history and years' residency in Town, as well as the things she described above, and she will forward them.

Mr. LaRocca commended Ms. Pantezzi for her years of work toward getting the recommendation to the Town Board for inclusion in the CLG.

Chairman Tuoti concurred, adding that Ms. Pantezzi's presentation to the Town Board had been very good.

Rochambeau Exhibit

Ms. Thompson said the exhibit pieces were delivered recently and are currently stored in the Annex. She stated that the panels are true to the mock-ups approved by the HPC and there are 2 sets: 2 framed panels and 2 unframed replacement panels. She told the HPC that Supervisor Lucas will have the Highway Department install the exhibit. Ms. Thompson did not think a big ceremony was necessary; maybe the HPC should just notify the newspaper of the new exhibit's installation so they can publish something about it/invite people to come and see it.

Chairman Tuoti commented that if there is to be any sort of ceremony, it should not be put off.

Ms. Pantezzi suggested that if Supervisor Lucas wants to organize a formal ceremony he may do so, but the actual installation need not be made so much of.

Ms. Gracie asked if something like an official unveiling would be done.

Ms. Pantezzi thought the newspaper, the Historical Society, the HPC and the Town Board should be included in whatever is done.

Ms. Gracie asked if there is any leeway re the installation date.

Ms. Thompson thought they only need to let the Supervisor know when they want the exhibit installed, and she added that she feels it should be put up soon.

Ms. Gracie asked if the extreme dryness of the ground would have any effect on the installation.

Ms. Thompson did not think so, and she noted that the holes are already dug and cement will be used.

Ms. Pantezzi said it will be important for someone from the HPC to be present when the Highway Department sets up the exhibit. Returning to the subject of a ceremony, she asked who should be there.

Chairman Tuoti thought the newspaper and the on-line paper, someone from (or all of) the Town Board, HPC members and someone from the Historical Society should be there. He added that the Improvement Society (responsible for site plantings) and someone from the County government might also be invited.

Ms. Thompson said she will see if the State is planning anything for the entire 15-exhibit project.

Ms. Gracie asked which one is nearest North Salem, and Ms. Thompson replied that she thinks it would be Yorktown.

Ms. Gracie suggested the HPC find out when the exhibit will be installed and try to pick a time when they can get as many appropriate people as possible to come for something low-key.

Mr. Malone agreed, remarking that it will be basically a photo-op and a chance to provide information to the papers/give credit to people who helped.

Ms. Thompson asked when the HPC wants the exhibit to be installed by.

Mr. Malone thought they could be flexible about a date; once they know when it's in, they can arrange a photo-op.

Ms. Thompson said it would be better to do on a weekday/people are so busy on weekends.

The Chairman asked that Ms. Pantezzi be present for the installation and take photographs. He suggested Ward Hanaburgh be contacted to look at the site ahead of time/talk about a date, and offered kudos to Ms. Thompson for her efforts in coordinating the project.

Grant-writing Class

Ms. Thompson stated that this class will be given in Ridgefield, CT in October and costs \$455/runs for 2 days. She noted that Ms. Pantezzi and Marcia Rockwood both expressed interest in attending.

Ms. Gracie thought Debby Moore was also interested.

Ms. Thompson added that there are funds remaining in the Historian's budget that she would be willing to offer for this purpose, but she thought it important that the person who attends the class really commit to using what they learn to help the HPC.

Ms. Pantezzi said she would really like to attend, is available and is dedicated to the work of the HPC. She suggested the HPC write a letter to Supervisor Lucas, stating that she is to attend the class and give the cost.

Ms. Thompson said the HPC is/will already be over-budget with the repair of the Andrew Quick gravestone, which has not been submitted for payment yet.

Ms. Gracie asked if it could be presented as something that will be beneficial to the Town.

Mr. LaRocca asked if, after completing the course, Ms. Pantezzi might be able to offer grant-writing to the Town/not only the HPC.

Ms. Pantezzi replied that she would do so, but she also thought this class sounded history-related.

Ms. Thompson commented that Supervisor Lucas writes lots of proposals already, but she still felt the course would be a good investment. She also reminded the others that Marcia Rockwood was interested also.

It was agreed that, if only one person could go, Ms. Pantezzi should attend the class as the most senior HPC member interested in attending.

Mr. Malone remarked that Ms. Pantezzi can certainly share what she learns with Ms. Rockwood.

Chairman Tuoti said that if Ms. Pantezzi learns grant-writing skills, she may pass them along to anyone. He went on to say that he will speak to the Supervisor/show him the notice of the class with all the details.

Ms. Thompson said the Town Board really needs to approve the expenditure at their next meeting for the funding to be approved ahead of the class date.

Town Maintenance of Historic Buildings/Others

The Chairman stated that, having brought the issue to the attention of the Town Board, there is really nothing more for the HPC to do.

Ms. Thompson said the Board has been made aware of the situation, and it is a matter of public record. She added that Lobdell House is to be painted next year.

Ms. Pantezzi said maintenance has been a problem for years/there is no maintenance budget.

Chairman Tuoti said the issue is made more difficult for the Town by the prevailing wage law, which is very hard on small towns.

Ms. Pantezzi said there are ways for small towns to cope with this kind of issue. She said she also heard that the State penalizes towns for raising taxes more than 2%, but the Town has spent so stringently in the past that now that there is a real need, this cap has become a problem. Ms. Pantezzi felt part of the Town Board's responsibility should be to provide for the financial well-being of the government and the Town. She stated that private financing provided for the restoration and furnishing of Delancey Hall years ago, but it needs to be maintained.

Ms. Thompson agreed that there needs to be a plan for maintenance, capital improvements and operations/emergencies.

Ms. Pantezzi added that the Town is currently also dealing with issues in Croton Falls. She recalled that a business district improvement project resulted in installation of brick walkways and old-fashioned lampposts a few years back, but no one is taking care of these things; she wondered how other towns are managing.

Mr. Malone said the Town went for 15 years without raising monies that should have been put away all along so funds will be available when needed.

Mrs. Pantezzi said there used to be a maintenance person on the Town office campus, and things got done/were taken care of, but she does not know when or why that situation changed.

Croton Falls Presbyterian Church

It was decided that as there is nothing happening re this idea, the item should be taken off the agenda for the time being. Ms. Rockwood may let the HPC know if there is anything to report.

To Approve Minutes of July 7 and August 4 Meetings

(with one change to 8/4 minutes noted)

Motion by: John Malone

Seconded by: Linda Gracie

All in favor.

Next Meeting: October 6

Other

Regarding the proposals to assess the burial vault in Cat Ridge Cemetery, Ms. Thompson asked if she may share that information with the Historical Society.

The Chairman said there was no reason not to share the information.

Ms. Gracie said they might want to discuss it at a meeting.

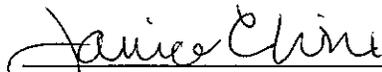
Ms. Thompson thought the Historical Society should be informed, because they will be doing fund-raising/it will help to know what is needed.

To adjourn at 6:05 pm.

Motion by: Gail Pantezzi

Seconded by: John Malone.

Respectfully submitted,



Janice Will, Recording Secretary