

MEETING MINUTES
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
April 13, 2022

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Commission meeting was held remotely in a Zoom meeting starting at 1:00 PM.

Chairman Rosenberry called the meeting to order at 1:07 pm. On behalf of Secretary Galvin, he welcomed the Commissioners. Chairman Rosenberry next addressed the audience, thanking them for attending. For those individuals who may not have attended commission meetings in the past, Chairman Rosenberry explained the structure of the meeting and when in the process the public could address the commission.

The Chairman turned to the first item on the agenda, the **approval of the March 9, 2022 meeting minutes**. He called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the minutes. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt and SECONDED by Commissioner Sullivan. Hearing no questions, the chair moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry turned to the first item on the agenda, the Local Historic District Preliminary Study Reports, first calling for any recusals. Hearing none, he turned the meeting over to Jennifer Doherty, Local Government Programs Coordinator. Ms. Doherty presented the study reports with presentation slides. A copy of the slides is on file with these minutes.

Hayward Homestead Historic District, Mendon

Ms. Doherty then presented the **Hayward Homestead Historic District in Mendon**. The Town of Mendon is proposing to designate a single-property local historic district, the Jotham Hayward Homestead Local Historic District. The property owner is in support of the proposed designation as a way to protect their house from future development.

The single property to be designated is at 6 Bates Street on the east side of Mendon, along Route 140.

The surrounding neighborhood is primarily residential, although some businesses are located away from the proposed district along Route 140. Houses in the surrounding area are a wide mix of dates, forms, and styles, from the mid-19th century up to more recent construction. There are no designated properties in the immediate area. The closest designations are the Olney Cook Artisan Shop, one mile west, listed individually on the National Register in 2019; and the Nathan C. Aldrich House and Resthaven Chapel, a mile and a half west of the Hayward Homestead, listed individually on the National Register in 2006. Mendon currently has two local historic districts, both designated in 2017: the Mendon Center Historic District, a large multi-property district; and the Taft Homestead Local Historic District, a single-property district.

The Jotham Hayward Homestead is a ca. 1820 Cape house with limited style details. The property also includes a detached one-car garage and a small detached early 20th century office that is used as a commercial space.

The Hayward family settled in Mendon in the 17th century and were involved in Town government throughout the 18th century. It is unclear when the Hayward Homestead was constructed, but it appears on maps by 1831. In 1818, John Hayward sold a portion of his land to his son Jotham. Jotham leased a portion of his land to the Town for a schoolhouse, and in 1845 conveyed the property to John Howe.

MHC staff recommends acknowledging receipt of the Preliminary Study Report for the Jotham Hayward Homestead Local Historic District and providing the following advisory recommendations and comments:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission encourages the Town of Mendon to establish the Jotham Hayward Homestead Local Historic District.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission encourages the protection of additional significant historic resources through a larger district or additional local historic districts.

Washington Street Local Historic District, Mendon

Ms. Doherty then presented the **Washington Street Local Historic District in Mendon**. The district would protect 21 properties along Washington Street just outside of Mendon Center.

The Town of Mendon is experiencing more development pressures and is currently working on a master plan update. A recent survey highlighted Mendon residents' appreciation for its historic buildings and rural character, but also an interest in developing more commercial uses, especially at Mendon Center. The proposed district would provide protection for the historic properties along Washington Street just outside of Mendon Center.

Just west of Mendon Center, Washington Street is more rural than busy Route 16 immediately to the south. This stretch of Washington Street is included in the Mendon Center Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2003. Beyond this historic area, further north up Washington Street, the houses transition to late 20th century Capes and ranches. The properties on the east side of Washington Street about the Mendon Center Local Historic District, established by the town in 2017. Further north from Mendon Center is the North Avenue Rural Historic District, listed on the National Register in 2003. There are no other designated properties in the immediate area.

The proposed Washington Street Local Historic District is exclusively residential with building forms and styles representative of the whole span of Mendon's history. The district includes the 18th century Mellen House, a large early 20th century Craftsman style house, and several interwar and postwar houses such as bungalows and Capes.

Through much of the 18th and 19th centuries, Mendon was a rural, agricultural community. Several of the houses in the proposed local historic district are farmhouses from this period, displaying the dispersed settlement pattern typical of early farmsteads just outside of Mendon Center. The proposed district retains several large, open vacant lots surrounded by stone walls. Lacking a source of water power and a railroad, Mendon did not develop any major industry in the 19th century, leaving the community with its dispersed agricultural settlement. It wasn't until the arrival of a trolley line in the early 20th century connecting Mendon east to the industrial communities of Hopedale and Milford that its population began to increase. The town became a bedroom community for workers and a focus of recreational activity due to its intact landscape, leading to the development of small worker housing and larger summer houses.

MHC staff recommends acknowledging receipt of the Preliminary Study Report for the Washington Street Local Historic District and providing the following advisory recommendations and comments:

The Massachusetts Historical Commission encourages the Town of Mendon to establish the Washington Street Local Historic District.

Chairman Rosenberry thanked Ms. Doherty, and called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendations on the Preliminary Study Report for the **Hayward Homestead Historic District in Mendon**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McDowell and SECONDED by Commissioner Pride. The chairman called for questions or comments from the commission. The Chair recognized Commissioner Pride, who asked to see a map of the proposed districts. Chair Rosenberry recognized Ms. Doherty, who opened MACRIS Maps and showed the locations of the two proposed districts. The Chair recognized Commissioner DeWitt who asked if the commissioners could receive copies of the local historic district and local landmark preliminary study reports beforehand. The Chair recognized Ms. Doherty who said she will look into it. The Chairman asked for any other questions or comments from the Commission. Hearing none, he called for questions or comments from the public. Hearing none, he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Rosenberry then called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the MHC staff recommendations on the Preliminary Study Report for the **Washington Street Historic District in Mendon**. A MOTION was made by Commissioner Pride and SECONDED by Commissioner Friary. The chairman called for questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he called for questions or comments from the public. Hearing none, he moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

This completed the Local Landmark and Local Historic District Preliminary Study Reports.

This concluded the voting. Chairman Rosenberry then turned to the next item on the agenda, **Preview of the June 8, 2022 National Register Nominations**, and recognized Ben Haley, National Register Director, who informed the commission that there would be four nominations on the agenda for the June 8 meeting. Copies of the nominations will be sent to the Commissioners about two weeks prior to the meeting.

The Nominations Are:

Boston, South Boston Navel Annex Historic District

Chatham, South Chatham Village Historic District

Gardner, Sylvester Pierce Mansion

Holyoke, Essex Street Historic District

The Chairman thanked Mr. Haley for the preview of the National Register agenda for June, and he then turned to the next item on the agenda, the **Executive Director's Report**. He then recognized Brona Simon, Executive Director.

Ms. Simon began by reporting that selection of MPPF Round 28 grant awards will be voted on at the Commission's June 8th meeting. She indicated that Commissioner volunteers will be needed to serve on the MPPF subcommittee for a subcommittee meeting in the morning of June 8th before the full commission meeting. The June 8th subcommittee and full commission meetings will be virtual meetings. Commissioners DeWitt, McDowell and Ceccacci volunteered to serve on the MPPF subcommittee.

Ms. Simon next gave an update on the Federal FY2022 budget, which was passed with a small increase in the Historic Preservation Fund. MHC's federal funding is now \$1,144,158. MHC staff are now preparing the Annual Work program that will be sent to the National Park Service in order to receive the federal funds.

Ms. Simon next announced that Commissioner Caitlin Emery Avenia, who had represented the Old Sturbridge Village has resigned from the Commission. MHC will work with Old Sturbridge Village for a replacement for Commissioner Avenia. MHC staff would like to ask the Commissioners' support in recognizing her service to this Commission.

Ms. Simon announced some personnel news, stating that Tracey Fortier, Preservation Planner, has resigned from the MHC. She was a preservation planner in the MPPF Grants program her last day was March 25th. She will be greatly missed. David Lewis, a graduate student at Boston University has joined MHC on a part-time basis to assist in architectural review.

Ms. Simon noted that MHC is continuing to try to fill staff positions including Tracey Fortier's position, and vacancies for an Architectural Reviewer, Preservation Planners for Survey and National Register, and an Archaeologist.

Finally, Ms. Simon announced that the New State Register of Historic Places has been published for this year. The cover illustration is the Lucy Stone Home Site in West Brookfield. If any commissioners are interested in a copy, please contact Director of the Preservation Planning Division, Michael Steinitz.

This completed the Executive Director's report.

The Chair then called for any other new business, and hearing none. The Chairman then informed the Commissioners and staff that the Massachusetts House Ways and Means Committee FY23 budget was released. He noted that amendments are being filed, which would increase the annual cap on the Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit from \$55 million to \$65 million a year. The Chair would like to encourage the Commission to contact their Representatives and State Senators to support the amendments. He mentioned the House debate on the budget should take place in early May.

The Chair then called for any other new business, Hearing none, he called for a MOTION to adjourn. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt and SECONDED by Commissioner Friary. The MOTION CARRIED, and the meeting adjourned at 1:35pm.

Commissioners Present

John Rosenberry
Charles Sullivan
Dennis DeWitt
Michael McDowell
Anne Pride
Gina Perille
Gavin Kleespies
Susan Ceccacci
Susanna Selby Crowley
Donald Friary

Staff Present

Brona Simon
Jennifer Doherty
Michael Steinitz
Ben Haley
Elizabeth Sherva
Joshua Dorin
Peter Stott
Paul Holtz

Nancy Alexson
Shari Perry-Wallace

A TRUE COPY ATTEST

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Brown