

MEETING MINUTES

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

October 11, 2017

Chairman Maresco called the meeting to order at 1:32 pm. On behalf of Secretary Galvin, he welcomed the Commissioners. Chairman Maresco said this will be his last meeting as the acting chairman for Secretary Galvin, as he is leaving the Secretary's Office after 36 years. He was recently appointed Town Administrator for The Town of Marshfield and will be starting his new duties on Monday, October 30, 2017. He said that he had chaired the Commission's meetings for 20 years. The Commissioners congratulated Chairman Maresco and wished him the best of luck. The Chairman said he would like to thank the Commission for their professionalism and said that it has been a great experience working with them.

Chairman Maresco then turned to the first item on the agenda, approval of the **September 13, 2017 meeting minutes**. He called for a MOTION TO ACCEPT the minutes. A MOTION was made by Commissioner McDowell and SECONDED by Commissioner Cosco. Hearing no questions, the chairman moved the motion. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairman Maresco then turned to the next item on the agenda, the Local Historic District Preliminary Study Report for the **Mater Dolorosa Local Historic District in Holyoke**, first calling for any recusals. Hearing none, he turned the meeting over to the Director of Local Government Programs, Chris Skelly.

Mr. Skelly presented the study report and distributed a copy of the presentation slides. A copy of the slides is on file with these minutes. Mr. Skelly began by stating that there is already a local historic district in Holyoke, the Fairfield Avenue Local Historic District. This study report was submitted by the Holyoke Historic District Commission. The study report is for a single building local historic district encompassing the Mater Dolorosa Church. The Mater Dolorosa building was closed in 2011. It has been under demolition delay, with the delay expiring 2 weeks ago on September 29th. Two organizations are attempting to save the building from demolition. A friends organization and a non-profit Mater Dolorosa Preservation Society. The building is currently vacant. The diocese applied for a permit to demolish in 2016 due to concerns over the condition of the steeple. This was denied by the city building inspector and was appealed. The appeal was also denied. The mayor of Holyoke engaged the commission to investigate a single building local historic district in July of 2017. This resulted in the preparation of the preliminary study report.

The Mater Dolorosa Church was constructed in 1903 to serve the rapidly growing Polish community of Holyoke. It was designed by George F. B. Alderman, architect from Holyoke, responsible for over 50 buildings in Holyoke. His work included schools, public buildings, and private homes, in Holyoke, Northampton, Westfield, Chicopee, Ludlow, Springfield and South Hadley. The setting of the building suggests that a single building local historic district, and not a multi property district, would make logical sense.

The Chairman called for a MOTION to acknowledge receipt of the Preliminary Study Report for the **Mater Dolorosa Local Historic District in Holyoke**, and to provide the advisory comments that the Massachusetts Historical Commission encourages the city of Holyoke to establish the Mater Dolorosa Local Historic District.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Sullivan and SECONDED by Commissioner McDowell. The chairman called for any questions or comments from the commission. He recognized Commissioner Cosco, who asked if it common that we designate a single property district. Mr. Maresco stated that it is fairly common. Ms. Simon clarified that we are not making a designation, that this is a Chapter 40C local government initiative and Mr. Skelly can provide additional detail. Mr. Skelly said that in other states they are typically established and known as local landmarks. In the city of Boston, they are known as local landmarks. However, because MGL Chapter 40C states that a local historic district can consist of one or more parcels of land, we use the term single building local historic district. Somerville has several hundred single building local historic districts. Other single building local historic districts can be found in Lincoln, Wellesley, Northborough, West Springfield and Huntington.

Chairman Maresco recognized Commissioner DeWitt, who noted that Brookline added a single building local historic district recently. Chairman Maresco recognized Commissioner Pride, who asked whether we know any groups who would restore the church. Mr. Skelly said there is a non-profit who is trying to acquire the building from the diocese.

Commissioner McDowell stated that there is a lot of parking on the same block and asked if anything could be done to protect the area around the building. Mr. Skelly stated that the district boundary could be larger to provide design review over any new construction. Commissioner Sullivan asked if it would be appropriate for us to encourage the city to incorporate the parking lot to insure compatible new development around the building. Chairman Maresco said we would have to amend the MOTION. He said we have to be careful and acknowledge that this is a local issue. Commissioner McDowell suggested that we keep the proposed motion as is. Chairman Maresco said we could make a MOTION to Amend. Commissioner DeWitt stated that the Commission has encouraged larger local historic districts in the past.

Chairman Maresco called for a MOTION for an amendment to be made by Commissioner DeWitt. Commissioner Dewitt made a motion to encourage the city to

consider the possibility of adding one or more adjacent lots to provide a design review. **SECONDED** by Commissioner McDowell.

The chairman called for questions or discussion of the MOTION from the commission. The chairman recognized Commissioner Friary. Commissioner Friary asked what this would actually do and whether it would guarantee design review. Chairman Maresco said it doesn't guarantee design review. The Chairman referred to Ms. Simon to answer the question relating to design review. Ms. Simon stated that it's only an encouragement and that it will be up to the city to decide.

The Chairman called for any other questions or comments from the commission. He recognized Commissioner McDowell. Commissioner McDowell stated that he knew the building well, that while the building has had some bricks falling off around the steeple, it is not unsound. He continued that it is a beautiful building, well worth preserving, and that the diocese should have been maintaining this building like everything else they own.

The Chairman recognized Ms. Simon. Ms. Simon stated that many tax credit projects and review and compliance projects have included abandoned churches reused for condos, rental apartments, community centers and restaurants. The Chairman thanked Ms. Simon and called for questions or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he moved the motion to amend the original motion. The amended motion **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**. The Chairman then called to move the main motion. The motion **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Chairman Maresco turned to the next item on the agenda, the **FY2016 Survey & Planning Grants Highlights**, and called on Peter Stott, Preservation Planning Division

Mr. Stott said that as we wrap up the annual round of Survey & Planning Projects, we usually try to give the Commission a taste of the some of the results of the Survey projects that the Commission approved at its meeting a year and a half ago.

Of the 17 Projects, all but three were for historic resource surveys. Of the non-survey projects, one was for an archaeological survey and National Register nomination for a site in Brookfield; another was for a Preservation plan in North Attleborough, and one was for preservation planning staff support for the City of Salem. Six grants went to CLGs and 11 went to non-CLGs. The total project cost of the 17 projects was \$570,000.

BOSTON (ROXBURY SURVEY PHASE I)

The grantee was the Boston Landmarks Commission; and the consultant was the Public Archaeology Laboratory.

The Boston Landmarks Commission has continued their neighborhood update surveys. After three years working in the North End, this past year was the first of an anticipated multi-year update of their survey of Roxbury, which last saw an active survey program in 1985. The BLC is trying to stay ahead of development pressures in Roxbury, and this survey focused on Lower Roxbury, which included the oldest industrial area in the city

along Hampden Street. Like much of Roxbury, it is also rich in residential, civic and resources from the years immediately following annexation in 1868 and expansion in the 20th century. The car house on Dudley Street marks the old boundary separating Roxbury and Dorchester. The Ralph Waldo Emerson School, from a period of school department expansion, was one of ten schools built by the city in 1923.

DRACUT

The grantee was the Dracut Department of Community Development; and the consultant was John Clemson and a team of two associates.

Until this year, Dracut had seen only fragmented survey efforts and no National Register listings. The present survey, an outgrowth of recommendations from a Survey Plan prepared in 2012 by Larson Fisher Associates, concentrated on those properties at the highest risk of loss, as well as representative public and institutional buildings that best represented Dracut's historical development. Among those recommended for NR consideration:

- Parker Farmstead from the late 19th century and the richest period of Dracut's agricultural expansion;
- Yellow Meeting House, originally constructed in 1794 and significantly remodeled in 1897;
- The 1898 Center School and the 1903 Grange Hall.

Many of the projects, like this one, profited from the rich collection of plans in Archives' Building Inspection Records.

GLOUCESTER

The grantee was the Gloucester Commission; and the consultants were Wendy Frontiero and Kathy Broomer.

Continuing a multi-year survey effort, that resulted last year in the National Register nomination of Rocky Neck. This year's survey effort captured a range of resources from the last half of the 19th century and early twentieth. The Manship Estate, built at the edge of two extant quarries and home of the nationally known New York sculptor Paul Manship, epitomizes the transition of the city from granite quarrying to artist's colonies that proliferated across the picturesque landscape. Pine Cone cottage, a Gothic Revival summer cottage picks up the popularity of the city as a summer resort. Both Stage Fort Park and Stacy Boulevard recall the late 19th and early 20th century civic improvements undertaken by the City.

GREAT BARRINGTON

The grantee was the Great Barrington Historical Commission; and the consultant was Larson Fisher Associates.

The first survey in Great Barrington in thirty years also picked up on a wide range of resources from the late 19th and early 20th century: a large mill village that grew up in the area of the Rising Paper Mill in the last quarter of the 19th century. But much of Great Barrington's development in this period was due to its New York axis as a summer resort. Notable were Harlem Renaissance figures like the author, educator, lawyer and NAACP head James Weldon Johnson and his wife Grace Nail Johnson. Blueprints for his house and studio among his papers at Yale show the 1926 design of his summer house converted from a barn by the prominent Pittsfield architect James McArthur Vance.

GROVELAND

The grantee was the Groveland Historical Commission; and the consultant was Stacy Spies.

The Groveland survey picks up where the Groveland Historical Commission left off 10 years ago with a more detailed look at the mill community of South Groveland. Although its textile Mills are gone, there is still substantial evidence of the workers housing that grew up around them. The Groveland Historical Society has remarkable documentation on much of its mid and late 19th-century building stock, by the contemporary historian Louis Woodbury. His notes and early 20th-century photographs allow an unusually rich window on 19th century builders, like Albert Wales and John Small, both of whose houses and shops still survive. The town retains an unusual number of barns and other outbuildings that were converted to residences by mill owners and others; like this house and barn converted to multi-family housing, often for textile mill workers.

MALDEN

The grantee was the Malden Planning Department; and the consultant was Kathy Broomer.

Like Groveland, the Malden survey also picks up on surveys initiated about a decade ago. Although some of the survey focuses on mid and late 19th century housing for the big employers like Converse Rubber, there is also a rich collection of resources from the 20th century. The Corey Road area is an intact mid-century modern housing development by the Brookline architects Salzberg and LeBlanc laid out by Malden businessman Samuel Reinherz.

Salem Towers, the first senior citizen housing planned by a religious organization.
(Beth Israel)

MARBLEHEAD

The grantee was the Marblehead Historical Commission; and the consultant was Larson Fisher Associates.

Marblehead is also following the recommendations of a Survey plan, completed in 2012, dividing up the town into target areas. The first area, completed last year, for the Coastal Zone, where large houses on large lots are particularly susceptible to development pressures. This year saw the first phase of a two part survey of the Shipyard district, concentrating this year in areas AP and AQ on the map. Much of the residential housing stock was built to serve the rope walks, ship yards, 19th-century Irish shoe workers, and other ancillary industries that once occupied this area.

MEDFORD

The grantee was the Medford Historical Commission; and the consultant was John Clemson and a team of two associates.

Medford is now in the fifth year of neighborhood surveys following a 2010 Survey plan. West Medford, Medford Square and Hillside have all now been subject to intensive review. This is the second year of a two-year survey of East Medford. Concentrating on the area in the southern part of the neighborhood, especially the Washington Square Area and in the vicinity of the Old Ship Street National Register District, for which an expansion is recommended.

SALEM

The grantee was the Salem Planning Department; and the consultant was Larson Fisher Associates.

A comprehensive update of inventory of downtown Salem was one of the top recommendations of the City's Preservation Master Plan update completed in 2015. This project significantly added to information on 155 commercial, institutional and residential properties dating from the 18th century through the city's urban renewal period of the 1970s. Although much of the target area was included in several National Register districts listed in the 1970s and early 1980s, existing building by building inventory documentation was skeletal at best. The project brings together previous building histories compiled by Historic Salem, Inc., and much new research on development of downtown, reconstruction of downtown areas destroyed by the Great Fire of 1914, and documentation of the work of restoration architects and the innovative urban designers of Salem Redevelopment Authority once the bulldozers were stopped in the 1970s.

WENHAM

The grantee was the Wenham Historical Commission; and the consultants were Stacy Spies and Wendy Frontiero.

Wenham has had almost no survey since the 1970s, although several houses were identified and listed as part of the First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts thematic National Register nomination and a local Wenham Historic District listed in 1973. Nonetheless, outside of the center, there is a rich collection of undocumented residences from the late 18th century into the 20th century which this survey did a good

job of covering. In addition to a good selection of surviving schools, among its notable landmarks are the combined 1915 canal and water supply facilities for Salem and Beverly; and a rare intact international style residence, reportedly inspired by the owners' visit to the "Homes of Tomorrow" exhibit at the 1933 Chicago World's Fair.

WEST SPRINGFIELD

The grantee was the West Springfield Historical Commission; and the consultant was Shannon Walsh and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission.

West Springfield's last survey was thirty years ago, but while it identified many of the industries and pattern of development, it was thin in its coverage, and largely omitted 20th-century resources, in which the city is rich. Most of the resources surveyed were residences from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but important institutional and civic complexes including components of the Big E (West Springfield's agricultural and industrial exposition begun in 1914), and one of the region's largest post-war electric power generating stations.

WINCHESTER SURVEY PLAN

The grantee was the Winchester Historical Commission; and the consultant was Claire Dempsey.

Although Winchester has an extensive survey already, the extent of its building stock, much of it architect-designed, from the last quarter of the nineteenth century and early 20th century is vast. Recent revisions to the town's demolition-delay bylaw have brought attention to the need to systematically update the town's inventory. In this Survey Plan project, Winchester has now completed a detailed analysis, dividing up the town into seven neighborhoods. Its survey of the first neighborhood recommended for study, the Old West Side, immediately west of town center, is beginning this fall.

Chairman Maresco thanked Peter for his presentation and then called for question or comments from the commission. Hearing none, he turned to the next item on the agenda, the **Grants Division. MPPF Grants Highlights.** Paul Holtz

Paul Holtz presented the following PowerPoint presentation highlighting recently completed Massachusetts Preservation Projects Funded projects throughout Massachusetts. Images showing before, during and after photos were shared for the following projects.

**Boston Back Bay, Ayer Mansion
Boston/East Boston, Temple Ohabei Shalom Cemetery Chapel
Danvers, McIntire Tea House, Glen Magna Estate
Goshen, Goshen Town Hall
Hardwick, Gilbertville Congregational Church
Hingham, Old Derby Academy**

**Malden, St. Paul's Parish Church
Monterey, Rev. Bidwell House Museum
Northbridge, Northbridge Town Hall
Salem, Dickson Memorial Chapel, Greenlawn Cemetery
Waltham, Lyman Estate Greenhouses, Camellia and Sales House**

Chairman Maresco thanked Mr. Holtz for his presentation and called for any questions. Hearing none, he said it's great to have the opportunity to review these projects and see the work that's been done. The Chairman turned to the next item on the agenda, the **Executive Director's Report**. Executive Director Brona Simon began by thanking the chairman and by announcing the date for the Preservation Awards event that was postponed from May 2017 and that it will be on November 2, 2017. She hoped that the commissioners will attend. It will be held here in this building with a light luncheon around 1:00 PM and the opening remarks are expected to start around 2:00 PM. She noted that a wide array of projects that will be getting preservation awards this year.

Ms. Simon then reported on personnel, announcing that MHC has hired a replacement of Phil Bergen as National Register Assistant. His name is Ben Haley and he will start on October 16th. He has a Master's degree in Historic Preservation from the excellent program at the University of Vermont.

Ms. Simon then announced that there was a statewide Historic Preservation Conference in Lowell on September 22. MHC chaired three sessions, including one on the Historic Tax Credits, and that Mr. Skelly held two workshops, one on Benefits of Historic Preservation and the other titled, "Historic Preservation - With or Without a Local Historic District." All of MHC's sessions were very well attended.

Ms. Simon mentioned the National Park Service requires all SHPO offices to prepare a five-year state historic preservation plan in order to continue receiving federal funds. MHC's draft is being finalized this week and will go out for public comment at the end of the week. Mr. Skelly will send out an electronic version to the commission members. She asked that any comments on the draft plan be submitted to MHC staff. MHC will send the draft plan to the National Park Service in the middle of November.

Ms. Simon asked Chairman Maresco to request volunteers for the Survey and Planning subcommittee who will meet on the morning of December 13th. Commissioner Friary, Commissioner DeWitt, and Commissioner McDowell volunteered. The Chairman thanked the commissioners for volunteering.

This completed the Executive Director's report.

Chairman Maresco thanked Ms. Simon, and then called for any questions. Hearing none, he called for new business.

With that, Chairman Maresco thanked all the staff and especially Brona Simon for being an incredible Executive Director. The commissioners have been on board for some time, and they know the amount of work that MHC does, recognizing the professionalism,

dedication and hard working staff. The amount of projects they review, all the work they prepare for the commission, and their efforts as incredibly hard working, dedicated and committed to preservation. He thanked all. He also mentioned working with Paul Holtz to review the numerous State House projects over the years.

Chairman Maresco called for a MOTION to adjourn. A MOTION was made by Commissioner DeWitt and SECONDED by Commissioner McDowell. The motion CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. The meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.

Commissioners Present

MICHAEL MARESCO
CHARLES SULLIVAN
SUANNA SELBY CROWLEY
CY FIELD
DENNIS DEWITT
ANNE PRIDE
MICHAEL MCDOWELL
JONATHAN COSCO
DONALD FRIARY

Staff Present

BRONA SIMON
ED BELL
BETSY FRIEDBERG
NANCY MAIDA
ANDREW MILLER
CHRIS SKELLY
PETER STOTT
ROSS DEKLE
PAUL HOLTZ
TRACEY FORTIER
ROBIN OSTEN
SHIRLY BROWN

A TRUE COPY ATTEST

Respectfully submitted,
Shirley Brown