

## Historical Commission Meeting Minutes – Approved

DATE: August 8, 2022

TIME: 5:00 P.M.

PLACE: Zoom Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Gary Leveille, James Mercer, David Rutstein, Paul Ivory, Marilyn Bisiewicz, Malcolm Fick

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Bill Nappo

### 1. FY23 Reorganization.

- Ms. Bisiewicz nominated Mr. Fick as Chairperson. Mr. Ivory seconded the nomination. A roll call vote was conducted, and all voted to approve.
- Ms. Bisiewicz nominated Mr. Mercer to be the Commissions representative on the Community Preservation Committee. Mr. Ivory seconded the nomination. A roll call vote was conducted, and all voted to approve.

### 2. Chairman Fick called the meeting to order as a virtual meeting authorized by the Governor's March 15, 2020, and June 16, 2021 orders. A roll call was conducted to determine members present.

### 3. Ms. Bisiewicz moved to approve the draft minutes of the June 13, 2022. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ivory. All voted to approve except Mr. Mercer, who abstained.

### 4. Old Business

- Ms. Bisiewicz reported that the Fairview Hospital gift shop still has sufficient copies of *Great Barrington Here and Gone*.
- Mr. Fick reported that the Smartphone Walking Tour is being updated to add the tour being created by the W.E.B. DuBois Freedom Center. Mr. Leveille is working to identify photos that can be used on the new tour.
  - i. Mr. Leveille reported that he has some pending changes and corrections to the tour, especially the audio portion.
  - ii. Mr. Mercer requested QR codes to add to the utility box graphics.
- Mr. Mercer reported that the CPC has discussed schedules and that more information would be forthcoming in the Fall.
- Mr. Fick reported that Daedelus was scheduled to clean the Newsboy Statue on August 9.
- Don Howe reported on the status of the Trolley Shelter. Bidding documents were being prepared. An overhanging tree was removed and an additional tree will be planted at the request of the Selectboard. Mass DPW is adding a curb cut and sidewalks to the plan.
- The Commission committed to educational signage as part of the CPA funding request. The sign could include a history of trolleys in the town and of Belcher Square.

5. New Business

- Historical Certification of 107 – 109 Stockbridge Road. The Commission discussed an application by the owner, BAB Capital 77 LLC, to certify that the property qualifies as historic under the town bylaws. The applicant, Mr. Craig Barnum, was present to answer questions.
  - i. Mr. Ivory asked what architectural features, such as the iconic sign, would be retained. Mr. Barnum answered that there was no intention of tearing down the sign but that other plans were still up in the air.
  - ii. Mr. Rutstein said the property has cultural significance but questioned if it achieved the required level of architectural significance. Mr. Ivory pointed out that the property is a fine example of Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century leisure activities. Mr. Leveille pointed to the filming of the Big Lebowski and the fire that left a portion of the building standing. Mr. Mercer likened the property to the Mahaiwe Theater.
  - iii. Ms. Bisiewicz moved that 107 – 109 Stockbridge Road is determined by the Historical Commission to be historically, culturally, and architecturally significant to the Town of Great Barrington. Mr. Leveille seconded the motion. By roll call vote, all voted yes.
- Mr. Howe reported on the historical house marker program. The online application was being updated. The price for a synthetic plaque will be \$75.00 and a bronze plaque will be \$300.00.
  - i. Mr. Howe and Ms. Bisiewicz will process applications for the Historic District Commission. One application is in process and previous applications will be reviewed.
  - ii. The application can be found on the Town's Historic District Commission web page.
- Mr. Mercer reported on the status of graphics for sidewalk utility boxes in the town. Mr. Leveille recused himself from the discussion because of a potential conflict of interest.
  - i. Mr. Mercer reported that artist Franklin Marael of Cyanta Studios was creating graphics for the project.
  - ii. Mr. Mercer moved that the Commission endorses the Historic District Commission's efforts to place historical graphics on sidewalk utility boxes. Ms. Bisiewicz seconded the motion. By roll call vote, all voted yes.

6. Other member issues

- Mr. Leveille prepared a tribute to Jim Parish, long-time Chairperson of the Commission and noted local historian. Mr. Fick will distribute the tribute to the members and will forward to the Town for a press release.
- Ms. Bisiewicz reported that the Indian Ford sign at Bridge Street was discussed at the Thursday Morning Club. The Club will consult with the Great Barrington Land Conservancy who oversees the River Walk and is responsible for the signage.

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7. Citizen's Speak – no citizens requested to speak.
8. The next meeting date was set for October 17, 2022, in person if permissible.
9. The business of the Commission being concluded, Mr. Fick adjourned the meeting without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Malcolm Fick  
Chairman