

## Historical Commission Meeting Minutes – Approved

DATE: October 31, 2022

TIME: 5:00 P.M.

PLACE: Zoom Virtual Meeting

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

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Bill Nappo, David Rutstein

1. Chairman Fick called the meeting to order at 5:07pm..
2. Ms Bisiewicz moved to approve the draft minutes of the June 13, 2022. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leveille. All voted to approve.
3. Old Business
  - Mr. Fick reported that the Du Bois Freedom Center walking tour has been completed.
    - i. To access the tours from a web browser, use the link: <https://barrington.stqry.app/1>.
    - ii. A new feature of the tour app is “geofencing,” which notifies users when they have reached a stop. This feature will be added to the existing Historical Tour. In December Mr. Fick and Mr. Leveille will meet to review the status of the Historical Tour.
    - iii. Mr. Mercer suggested that the distribution of the tour booklet and the smartphone tour be coordinated to cross-promote and expand availability.
  - Mr. Mercer reported that the Community Preservation Committee has received the Step 1 applications and will be meeting Tuesday, November 1 for a review.
  - Updates were reported on various projects
    - i. The proposals for Housatonic School were discussed. Mr. Mercer said he has hope for one of the bidders who has done similar work successfully in Pittsfield.
    - ii. Mr. Fick reported that Daedalus worked on the Newsboy Statue on August 9.
    - iii. Mr. Don Howe reported that the bidding documents for the Trolley Shelter restoration project are nearing completion. Trees have been removed from around the shelter. The Historical Commission is committed by its grant application to install interpretive signage. Mr. Leveille said that he has a photo of a trolley with the destination “Belcher Square” which might be used.
    - iv. Ms. Bisiewicz requested an additional six to eight copies of *Great Barrington Here and Gone* for the Fairview Hospital gift shop.
    - v. Mr. Howe reported that the Historical House Markers Program has its first marker under construction. Another is being considered by a homeowner commemorating her house and an older structure that had been partially destroyed by fire.
    - vi. Mr. Mercer announced the installation of the first Utility Box Graphics. Graphics for the next box, near CVS, are underway. The graphic artist has reserved space for QR

codes to download the smartphone walking tour. Mr. Fick will provide the codes.

4. New Business

- The commission discussed the application, made by the Town, to determine if the Mahaiwe Cemetery is historical under the Town Bylaws. There was extensive discussion of the historical, cultural, and architectural aspects of the cemetery including its founding as a private cemetery, its many significant residents, and its many architectural features.
- Mr. Leveille pointed out that the word “white” in the application may not be accurate or appropriate, in that the cemetery is known for its Native American and African American internees.
- Mr. Mercer moved that “The Historical Commission has determined that the Mahaiwe Cemetery has historical, cultural, and architectural significance to the Town of Great Barrington.” Mr. Ivory seconded the motion. All members present voted “yes.”

5. Other Member Issues

- Ms. Bisiewicz reported that the Thursday Morning Club’s Bridge Street “Indian Ford” sign is gone. Mr. Leveille expressed his objection to some of reporting of the missing sign, which said that it mysteriously disappeared rather than stating that it was stolen. Mr. Leveille also said he was disappointed in the use of the word “controversial” concerning the sign.

6. Citizen’s Speak

- Mr. Howe, having already weighed in on any issues that concerned him, had no other comments.

7. The date of the next meeting was established for Monday, January 9, 2023, at 5:00 pm at a place to be determined.

8. Without objection, Mr. Fick adjourned the meeting at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Malcolm Fick  
Chairman