

## Historical Commission Meeting Minutes – Approved

DATE: March 6, 2023

TIME: 5:00 P.M.

PLACE: Claire Teague Senior Center

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

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Bill Nappo

1. Chairman Fick called the meeting to order at 5:00pm..
2. *Ms. Bisiewicz moved to approve the draft minutes of the January 9, 2023. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mercer. All present voted to approve.*
3. Old Business
  - Smartphone Walking Tour status
    - i. Mr. Leveille and Mr. Fick reported that they had met to review the tour status. They made changes to the text for several stops. The Flying Church needs an updated photo and there are two stops where the audio needs updating. Kate Leveille, who initially recorded the audio for the two stops will be in town this weekend.
    - ii. Mr. Fick had no news on changes to the DuBois tour.
  - CPA Update-- Mr. Mercer reported that there were no CPC meetings since the last Commission meeting and had nothing to report.
  - Updates on various projects if available:
    - i. Newsboy statue – Mr. Fick distributed the 2022 maintenance report and announced that 2023 maintenance has been scheduled for August.
    - ii. Utility Box Graphics – Mr. Mercer reported that the box near CVS is next and will feature the Berkshire Inn and the Castle and would be installed this Spring.
  - GB Airport
    - i. Ms. Elizabeth Shaker informed the Commission that the Public Hearing for the Airport Special Permit was continued but she was told the Public Comment period was ended. She thanked Mr. Leveille for representing the Commission at the Public Hearing.
    - ii. Mr. Fick reported that he attended an MHC seminar concerning the process for obtaining a listing on the National Register of Historic Places. He said that during the seminar it was stated that an application for a site that is of national significance it would be more likely to be accepted than if it is of local significance only. Mr. Fick said he would pursue the question of national significance and that he would continue to pursue the question of eligibility based on its local significance. Ms. Shaker said that there is no commitment from the airport to pursue listing on the National

Register. The members agreed that it would be worthwhile to obtain a determination of eligibility from MHC. The question of applying for listing, which is more costly and time-consuming than the eligibility determination, can be deferred until after eligibility is determined.

#### 4. New Business

- Letter supporting Mahaiwe Theatre project -- Mr. Fick reported on the request from the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center for support for historical funding grants for work on the theater building. Mr. Ivory revised a draft letter prepared by Mr. Fick. After discussion, several changes were suggested. Mr. Ivory will add the revisions discussed to his revisions.
  - i. *Mr. Mercer moved that Chairman Fick be authorized to send the support letter, as amended by Mr. Ivory. Ms. Bisiewicz seconded the motion and all present voted to approve.*
- Town Historical Artifacts Policy – Mr. Leveille read a letter that he prepared that questioned the disbursement of town historical property by Mason Library. The Library Director and Board, with the approval of the Selectboard, transferred to the Stockbridge/Munsee Community artifacts that had been owned by the Town, likely since at least the 1880's. Mr. Fick reported that he was not contacted on behalf of the Commission for this transfer.
  - i. *Mr. Mercer moved to authorize Chairman Fick to send a letter to the Selectboard based on Mr. Leveille's letter and questioning the transfer of Town historical properties without first consulting with the Historical Commission; pointing out the existence of paintings throughout the Mason Library that are the property of the Historical Commission and the Historical Society; and requesting that the Selectboard enact a policy that no Town historical property may be disposed of without the concurrence of the Historical Commission. Mr. Ivory seconded the motion. All present voted to approve.*
- Mason Library – Mr. Fick reported that he was asked for advice in obtaining historical funding for the DuBois statue proposed for the front of the Library. He said that CPA historical funding may be able to be used on the portion of the project that is specific to the repair of the front steps of the historic building.
- South Street Park – Mr. Craig Okerstrom-Lang presented a request that the Historical Commission recommend to the Parks Commission that the South Street Park be renamed to its original name of Church Memorial Park. In 1925 the distinctive octagonal home of Col. George and Maria Church was demolished, and their heirs donated the land to the town. The deed stipulates "that said land shall be held, used and maintained by said town as a public park in memory of Maria I. Church and Col. George Church, her husband, now deceased." None of the commission members knew how or when the name "South Street Park" was established.
  - i. *Mr. Mercer moved to authorize the Chairman to send a letter to the Parks Commission requesting that the South Street Park be renamed to its original name,*

*“Church Memorial Park.” Mr. Leveille seconded the motion. All present voted to approve.*

5. Other Member Issues

- Mr. Fick said that grants for the Massachusetts Historic Resource Survey are expected to be open for application in September, 2023. He suggested that this be discussed in future meetings. Members concurred.

6. Citizen’s Speak – There were no requests to make further comments from non-members attending.

7. Next Meeting Date – May 1, 2023 at 5:00 pm at a site to be determined.

8. Adjourn – Without objection, Mr. Fick adjourned the meeting at 6:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Malcolm Fick  
Chairman