

Pelham Historical Commission Meeting *MINUTES*
December 20, 2011

Present: Joe Larson, Karl Martini, Tom Hartman, Daniel Robb, Charles Thomson

Guests: Alex Hackman (MADiv Eco restoration), Bryan DeAngelis (NOAA), Doris Holden (HS), Dana McDonald (PCon.Com.) Mikee Cuttings (HS curator), John Bardzik, Dave Ziomeck (Amherst Water)

Meeting started at 7:30 pm.

Minutes: November Special Meeting – Martini accepted

Treasurer's Report: Hartman no change

Pending Business (No action since last meeting): No changes

Community Hall Committee Award

Architectural Descriptions – PVPC funding and Bonnie Parson's rate

New planting at Shays Monument

Millstones at Museum

Old Business:

Removal of Fish Rod Factory Dam : A presentation and discussion of

Memorandum of Agreement by Alex Hackman, MA Div Ecological Restoration

Alex Hackman gave an overview of the river restoration project (now two years in development). He addressed also how to mitigate the loss of the historical structure. Hoped that this would lead to a memorandum of understanding with all involved parties. Removal will benefit the health of the river (fish migration, sediment movement, etc) . while preserving some of the historical significance of the old dam site. Engineering is 90% complete. Implementation of dam removal to start about July 2012. Dam and Mill is on the list of MA historic assets. The proposed project will only partially remove the dam to keep part of the history alive. Development of a memorandum of understanding is the next step in the planning process. Mitigation package could include: leaving abutments in place, informational plaque and display, repair of the downstream mill wall, use of the granite blocks elsewhere in town (about 77stones were mentioned to be potentially useful in rebuilding one corner of intersection Harkness Road and Amherst Road. There are technical, legal, and safety issues to be considered, also time and cost. (between 15K\$ to 60K\$ depending on care taken to move and store the stones. Alex considers this part of the package an almost impossible deal right now. One question was if the blocks could be stacked next to abutment and who would be legally responsible about safety while stored) A public access trail could be build (but no design is put forward yet, he does not want to have it in the formal document. Mr. Lederele has agreed to have his land used for an access trail, this should be explored (parking is an issue). Alex suggests plaque to be install at the abutment, instead off at the trail head, but need understanding and permission of the dam owner. Mitigation is not yet budgeted. Fair market value about \$100 per stone / block (they were cut from a quarry in Pelham). Highway Dep doesn't have equipment to move the stones at the moment, but if we destroy stones now it would be a permanent loss.

Questions and concerns raised were related to: who is giving permission or are only ideas sought at this stage? Joe recalled a project at UM where local HC was consultant in the process while the legally binding signatures was done by the MHC.

This is new as it is trying to safe such a large part of the demolition. Problem also that in the moment we do not have a road project and the storage could be indefinite.

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It could be feasible to save a few of the cap stones (about 20-25) stack them (seems most logical). It was suggested to put them in the town truck and moved them away immediately and then store them on town land. Worth further investigation. If number goes down to half dozen then the excavator could bring it out (no crane needed), that would maintain the historical significance and mitigation at the site. Also onsite use would be easier to manage (like a sitting place etc). Alex reported that they have about half the money for the project in hand and strong leads on the other half. He was in favor of a permanent sign on site and photo graphs etc. Reduced number of stones possible needs to be addressed with town. (on onsite storage of stones) Alex will try to start drafting a document, the memorandum of understanding (hope to sign by March or April). Joe would like to explore with Tom Lederle what he is willing to do. Dan mentioned that if the public has had access to dam over the years there might be already legal precedent... plaque to be designed by PHC paid for by project. We would be finding place to display it...Dana remarked that we may want to have two displays, one about historic part, one about the ecological restoration. David Ziomek expressed some concern about the placement and presentation of the plaque, and to having deeded access to the site. He said that would be the way to go to avoiding future problems. Joe indicated that we should accept immediately Bob Krokovs offer to have the plaque down at the site of the dam.

Orient Springs: (briefing by Alex on his site visit and thoughts)

Would like to remove the small dam, not as much gravel captured as the other dam. Cost estimate for removal about 50K\$. Historical significance understood. No funding yet. Had a phone conversation with the owner. He is in favor of improving river. But no formal agreement yet. Permitting would be minimal. Joe satisfied if the work can be restricted to the non historical side of the river (N side).

New Business:

Grant Proposal for Completion of Historic Inventory

Bell Rope at Museum

Town Clerk's positions on:

Town needs to have an archivist according to clerk. It should continue to be a town position.

Town Archivist position

Genealogical Research related to vital records involve the town clerk. Archivist should help with that

Access to Local History Room

Joe survey the room with Kathy and determined that nothing was Robs personal property. HS archives are in there. Society needs access to it. HC files are in there, will ask Clerk how she feels about it. Library is the other party as some materials are library property. Invited to the meeting (12/29) will be Joe , president of HS, library, trustees, and Kathy Martell. Will then hear Kathy's views. Joe thinks everything will work fine. If the town files are moved into the safe then only HS and library involved. Mikee pointed out that samples of quilts in there also.

Problem will be access to the vault as it is in the police departments rooms and they are very sensitive about access to their space.

HS bought the dehumidifier that is in there. Who is emptying it now? HS also gave yearly donations to the document room so that Rob could get acid free paper and boxes for storage etc.

Monthly Updates:

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December 20, 2011**

Historic Complex – Robb

Community Hall – Robb

Historical Society – Bigelow

Other Items from Members: All

Note: Other items that arise after the agenda has been distributed may be added to the agenda at the meeting. All copies of Commission minutes and related documents are filed in the Local History Room in the Pelham Free Public Library after they have been reviewed and approved by the Commission. Copies of draft minutes prior to approval are available from the Town Administrator.

Next Meeting: 01/17/12 (third Tuesday) at 7:30pm History Room, Pelham Library

Adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted, KM