

STONEHAM HISTORICAL COMMISSION

November 6, 2017 Meeting Minutes
Stoneham Public Library

Present: Hillary Fotino, Susan Larson, Joan Quigley, Marcia Wengen, Dolly Wilson
The meeting was called to order at 7:12 p.m.

1. Meeting Minutes

- The minutes of October 11 were approved. We did not have a quorum for the Sept 11 meeting.

2. Treasurer's Report

- Balance in operating account is \$985.00 (\$385+\$600). Our Donation Account balance is \$2,173.04.

3. Cultural Council Grant

- Dolly submitted that application on October 16 for the creation of an electronic smart phone app (application) to update and expand the existing self guided walking tour of Stoneham Square. Cost estimate is \$1,100 plus a small annual maintenance fee. Cultural Council decisions are due in December of January.

4. State Preservation Plan - Draft

- Members agreed that the Mass Historical Commission should offer more training and information on the preparation of National Register Listings for property owners, community members and nonprofessionals.
- Members agreed to add 'municipal employees' to the list of stakeholders that do not have adequate opportunities for preservation education. Marcia will write a letter on both points to Christopher Skelly (Mass Historical Commission) who authored the document.

5. Town Meeting Warrant Results

- October 16 Town Meeting approved \$24,000 "to fund the continuing process of repairing hazardous and unstable gravestones" in the Old Burying Ground.

6. OBG restoration/grant/tree work

- Gravestone conservator Barbara Mangum expects to finish her work by the contract deadline of Nov 15.
- The removal of diseased trees is scheduled to begin on Nov 16. Tree Warden Jim Previte will coordinate the work with Northern Tree.
- The 1786 gravestone of Rebekah Green is in three pieces. The portion behind her stone was excavated in hopes that it belonged to Jonathan Green's damaged stone. It does not, but has been identified as the bottom portion of her stone that broke during carving. The carver then just turned the stone and carved the other end. This unfinished end can be re-attached to her finished stone and buried in the ground or have a new base and be an educational example of 18th century stone carving. Dolly felt it would be more respectful to attach the three pieces and bury them; members were sympathetic but agreed to have the unfinished piece buried rightside up behind Rebekah's stone where it had been for years.

7. New Residents Day – Stoneham 101

- Historical Commission and Society shared a table for 2 hours on Saturday Oct 21 to introduce ourselves to new residents. Event was well attended and we were busy for the entire 2 hours.

8. MWRA Communications System proposal

- The Historical Commission was copied on an October 24 letter from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority to the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The letter included plans, specifications and photographs of an equipment shelter and communications tower located on the shore of the Fells Reservoir, southeast of the covered storage tank on the old hospital property. According to the MWRA Project Manager Marianne Connolly, this was a final letter to MHC as the project is complete except for activating the communications equipment. There is no required information from the Commission.

9. Historic Preservation Tax Credit

- The House and Senate will begin deliberation on tax reform legislation that does not include the Federal Historic Tax Credit. The Commission agreed to send emails to Stoneham's Washington delegation asking that the Tax Credit be reinstated. Information was provided for members to lobby them on their own, should they wish to do so.

10. Post Card Scanning Project

- Dolly will provide each of us with a Google sheet to use in documenting the cards. Dating the cards will be the scribe's best guess.

11. Kid's Table – Town Planner request

- The Historical Society has provided pages from their coloring book. The Commission has made no progress on the Match 2 game (34 cards/18 pairs) using 'then and now' photos of Stoneham buildings or the picture puzzle.

12. Town Hall Organ Update

- Susan volunteered to contact Bruce Netten to learn the status of the restoration work on the Wurlitzer Organ and ask if the Historical Commission could be of any assistance.

13. Hillary articles

- Fire whistle article is completed but not submitted. Hillary is interested in writing more articles.

14. Shawmut Car Company Sign

- Nothing to report

15. Speaker Request on Jacob Rogers

- Joan Quigley announced that former Stoneham resident Katie Turner Getty, J.D. will present "Unfriendly to America? Two Sides of Jacob Rogers" on April 12, 2018 at the Historical Society.

Meeting ended at 8:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia M. Wengen, Co-Chair & Secretary