

Meeting Minutes
of the
Sharon Historical Commission and Historic District Commission

October 4, 2023

This meeting was held via Zoom in accordance with the Governor's emergency declaration relative to public meetings.

In attendance: James Grasfield (Chair), David Martin (Vice Chair), Shirley Schofield, Robert Hutton (voting), and Michaela Jergensen (Special Consultant to the SHC)

Guests attending: Lee Ann Amend (Library Director) and Carolyn Weeks (Library Trustee) for the proposed move of the Deborah Sampson statue

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the guests at 7:35 PM.

1. Review of the plans to move the Deborah Sampson statue from 11 North Main Street to the new building at 1 School Street

- The Chair reminded the Commission that the SHC had previously agreed to allow the Library to move the statue to the new building.
- Lee Ann Amend explained that the statue would be moved to a garden plot at the new building when it was completed. It will remain on its granite pedestal at the old library building for now. The exact placement for the statue has not been determined yet. The statue will not be moved until the completion of the construction.
- The members of the SHC asked questions about the methodology of moving the statue and requested that the Library Trustees employ a firm with statue moving experience so that the statue is not damaged in the move.
- *Mr. Martin made a motion to allow the Library to move the Deborah Sampson statue with its granite pedestal with care from its location at 11 North Main Street in Historic District 1 to the new Library location along North Main Street at the conclusion of the construction of the building using a reputable monument moving company. Mr. Hutton seconded the motion. The SHC voted 4 – 0 (Grasfield, Martin, Schofield, Hutton) to approve the motion.*

2. Updates on Current Projects

- The Chair reported that the owner of 208 South Main Street has been provided with numerous examples of bungalow style homes and possible addition ideas for his current house. The SHC is awaiting a response from him with a new design.
- 17 Chestnut Street: The Chair reported that after working out the final design details, the applicant had a new ZBA hearing. After getting the requisite approval from the ZBA the SHC sent the applicant the letter agreement that he had agreed to sign. After a

month of silence, the applicant's attorney e-mailed revisions to the agreement. The revisions have been vetted by Mr. Gelerman, and the final document will be provided to the applicant by the end of this week to sign.

- 104 Massapoag Avenue: The Chair reported that the owner and architect have agreed to a gabled roof and a new layout for the windows on the elevation facing the street. They are working on more details for the windows, and they would like to come before the SHC at a special meeting if possible to get approval for the design.
- The White House at Camp Wonderland: The Chair reported that renovations are under way on the house.
- 52 Pleasant Street: Mr. Martin and the Chair met with the owner and toured the house. The owner agreed to various renovations including simulated divided light windows on the front elevation and repairing and repainting the clapboards to keep the house looking as original as possible. The owner agreed not to add a front porch or other elements that would not be in keeping with the original architectural style of the house. The Chair reported that the renovations so far appear to be in keeping with the agreement.
- 180 Ames Street: The Chair reported that the new home being built on the site is turned 90 degrees from the original house with the garage facing the street. It does not appear to be harmonious with the surrounding historic homes.
- Moose Hill Farmhouse: The Chair was approached by the Executive Director of the Moose Hill Audubon Sanctuary about demolishing the Farmhouse at 300 Moose Hill Street which was the original headquarters building for the sanctuary. The house was built c. 1850. The Audubon Sanctuary used to use the house for housing its director, but now they want to use it for program space. Their architect/engineer claims that it will cost \$3 million to bring the building up to their specification. The Chair and Mr. Martin met at the site with the Executive Director, the engineer, and two facility director/managers this week to review the property. The SHC proposed several ideas for repurposing the building to save it or find a way to salvage the many historical architectural elements from it. The Audubon Sanctuary is not ready to replace the building yet and has no immediate plans to do so. The Chair is meeting with the Audubon directors again next week as a follow up.
- 1 School Street: All conditions that the SHC set for demolition were met. The fanlight window over the front door and an interior transom window were salvaged. Documentary photos were taken inside and outside of the building.
- Post Office Square Mural: The Chair reported that the project is not moving forward because the building owner will not allow it. The Cultural Council is looking for an alternative site.
- Historic District 4: Mr. Martin and the Chair met with Ed Ruvich and toured his home and property. He is very interested in working with the SHC to put his house in the new historic district. The SHC will plan to bring a warrant article for the creation of the new historic district at the May 2024 Town Meeting.

- Library Re-Use Committee: The LRC has reconstituted with new members. Mr. Martin attended the first meeting to let the LRC know about the rules regarding the historic district. The LRC asked the SHC to appoint a liaison to the LRC who will attend meetings on a biweekly basis for the next year. The LRC is very happy to have the SHC involved, and Mr. Martin and Mr. Grasfield will split the liaison duties.
- Cemetery Preservation Project: The CPP group is working to research the histories of each cemetery. Each history will be distilled into the information that will be displayed on each respective sign. The preservation work being conducted at the Moose Hill Burial Ground makes it a top priority for its sign. The Chair is still working with several architectural salvage firms to find an historic fence for the Oliver Lothrop Burial Yard.
- Historic Inventory Project: The project will need funding from the CPC. The criteria for the new survey will be to revisit all of the windshield surveys from the first three surveys (except those properties which no longer exist). In addition, the SHC will plan to survey all of the historic neighborhoods around the center and the numerous older homes that the SHC has identified that were missed in previous surveys.

3. Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting:

- The next meeting of the SHC will be held on Wednesday, November 8, 2023 at 7:30 PM via Zoom.

4. Adjournment

- *Mr. Hutton made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 PM. Mr. Martin seconded the motion. The SHC voted 3 – 0 (Grasfield, Martin, Hutton) to approve the motion.*

Documents:

Site location drawing for the Deborah Sampson statue provided by the Sharon Public Library