

Minutes of the Waltham Historical Commission Meeting November 9, 2015

1. The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m.
2. Commissioners Present: Cox, Daly, Dufromont, Green, Richardson, and Wilson (arrived at during item number 4), Absent: Isaacson.
3. A motion was made by Ms. Dufromont, and seconded by Ms. Daly to approve the October 2015 meeting minutes with the following correction. Absent motion information was made by Mr. Isaacson. "Mr. Richardson asked who the small group" (question mark changed to period) So noted. The motion was **approved**, all in favor.
4. The Chair made the following announcements:
 - a. A Principal Office Assistant Position: Interviews were held. The hiring process is hopefully underway.
 - b. Walk through of Waltham Hospital/Boston Children's Hospital: Ms. Dufromont, Ms. Daly, and Mr. Isaacson attended a walkthrough on October 30, at the Sanderson building, with representatives from the hospital and the City of Waltham. The hospital is considering a display in the new building regarding the history of the Waltham hospital. The hospital officials have limited historical collections in their possession. The commissioners agreed to be in touch with Mr. Kelleher of the hospital. Details remain unclear about which items from the Historical Society, Museum, or other collections might be made available. Ms. Daly noted a campus drawing from the walls, ca. 1950s, and a few other items worth preserving. Overall there were limited archival possessions. Ms. Dufromont submitted her written remarks.
5. Chair: Reading and Description of Correspondence
 - a. Mr. Richardson did not receive correspondence to be read at the meeting.
6. Chair: Public Hearings:
 - a. Development Prospectus Hearing: 9 Hope Avenue
Mr. Robert E. Connors, Jr. with Connors and Connors presented as a representative of the Waltham Hospital/Children's Hospital. The applicant is preparing a development prospectus for their special permit application should they receive their zone change request in late November. Mr. Green asked about MACRIS forms that Mr. Kelleher of Epsilon had offered.
Mr. Cox motioned to sign off on the development prospectus as historically significant as the site of the former Waltham Hospital. Seconded by Mr. Wilson. The motion was **approved**, all in favor.

Recess until 7:20

7. Stonehurst: Monthly report, Stonehurst Curator
 - a. Comments by Ms. Clifford: Ms. Clifford commented that a CPC roof application was submitted to Bill Forte, with revisions made after speaking with the commissioners at the October meeting. Ms. Clifford is improving the book and

archival collections. A reproduction cushion has been delivered in the built-in bench of the Great Hall of Stonehurst.

- b. RE: A Letter in Support of the Stonehurst Roof: Mr. Richardson asked for comments on a draft letter to Mr. Forte regarding the maintenance of the roof through the winter. Ms. Dufromont spoke in support. Mr. Cox asked about cleaning gutters at Wellington as well. Mr. Richardson said Mr. Cox's question would be addressed later in the meeting. Ms. Daly motioned to approve sending the letter. Ms. Dufromont seconded. The motion was **approved**, all in favor.
- c. RE: A Letter in Support of a Roof CPC Application for Stonehurst: Mr. Richardson summarized the letter. Mr. Green motioned to approve a letter of support for restoration of a the roof. Ms. Dufromont seconded. The motion was **approved**, all in favor.

8. Old Business:

- a. Discussion of antennae on historic facades: Given Mr. Isaacson's absence, Mr. Richardson tabled the item.
- b. Historical plaques program (discuss with office assistant): Mr. Richardson will discuss with the office assistant and present more at the next commission meeting, if the position is filled.
- c. Carriage Houses/Out Buildings inventory (discuss with office assistant): Mr. Richardson will discuss with the office assistant and present more at the next commission meeting, if the position is filled.
- d. Rex Trailer Plaque: Mr. Green spoke about a proposal to dedicate a plaque in Waltham on the Lawrence Block to Rex Trailer, per the interest of Senator Barrett. Ms. Dufromont asked who would submit a CPC application. Mr. Cox suggested in front of Grover Cronins (parade), Nova Biomedical (where the helicopter landed), and the Lawrence Block. Somewhere in the Moody Street, Main Corridor, or Hall's Corner. Mr. Cox inquired about the Merc property and its open space. Mr. Richardson said that it likely would not be used much by the public. Ms. Daly asked if Cronin's had a public space. Mr. Cox said there had been but was unsure if it was still there.

9. New Business:

- a. Draft Gore Place letter of support: Susan Robertson, Executive Director of Gore Place spoke about the project. West wing of the 1806 Gore Mansion. The wing had work done on it in the 1930s from the Waltham Country Club. They would like to reinstall walls for a storage room. They would remove the 1935 staircase as well. The new space would house a handicap bathroom. The only bathroom currently is in the basement and difficult to access. They would also add a second bathroom on the mezzanine. They would like to add an accessible ramp. The board would like to place the ramp on the North side, to be masked by landscaping, but enter the mansion where a current mechanical lift is outside. The current mechanical lift is no longer made and replacing parts on the lift is

challenging. They would also like to add an interpretive element, by replacing the missing wall and two missing staircases that were removed. One to the cellar next to the new bathroom. One to the family part of the west wing. They would also like to add a new exterior door on the south side, where laundry was taken out, which was blocked by the country club. It also adds fire egress. Building Dept. has approved the project. The fire suppression grant from earlier years has made this much more possible. Exterior lighting will be added and light restoration will also occur. There was also a drying chamber—a stove-heated brick closet within the main house—to allow for drying clothes on racks. It is a unique feature in America and is the oldest room of its kind extant, only appearing 15 years later in Shaker houses. It is derivative from England. It will be interactive because it is restoration, and will be geared toward supporting exhibits for people with visual disabilities—a multisensory tour. They will be able to operate the drying rack.

Comments from Commissioners: Mr. Cox asked if the disability commission had been contacted and mentioned the Paine Estate. Ms. Robertson said she had not. They have contacted MHC, Building, and Fire. Ms. Robertson stated that the Macadam drive will be removed this week and replaced by a new road that is historically correct. The original driveway was not a loop, which was added in the 1880s. It was a straight driveway with a 14 ft. wider drive with sand-clay mix. Ms. Daly said that she had explored where Gore got the fill for the original, hilly driveway. Gore owned the area around Skunk Hollow and wondered if that was where. Ms. Robertson stated that there is a farm journal about carting sand and rock from Trapelo with great frequency. Mr. Green made a motion to support the letter. Mr. Cox seconded. The motion was **approved**, all in favor.

- b. Notifying purchasers of historic properties: Mr. Cox supported the notion of doing so, and stated that in the 1990s the commission provided information to new homeowners about renovation and how to care for a historic home. He stated that it has direct value for the homeowners of the city about regular people who lived here. Mr. Green stated that resource lists could be taken from MHC. Ms. Dufromont said that it would help people feel less overwhelmed by caring for a historic property. Ms. Daly stated that the Assessor Dept. database is often incorrect.
- c. Mr. Cox motioned. Ms. Dufromont second. To suspend the rules to discuss an off-agenda item. The motion was **approved**, all in favor.

Wellington House: Mr. Green on the Wellington House: It was built in 1779. William Wellington was a soldier and a prominent member of the town. The CPC has provided substantial funds (along with the MHC) to fund the restoration project. The commission has gone through three rounds of CPA grants. The Mayor would like the Wellington House to be the home of the WHC. However, the future use of the property is still up in the air. Councilor Darcy would like the land restored as meadows. The fireplace tiles in the downstairs fireplace need to be restored. Miss Betty Castner's collection of items from the Wellington family is now stored at the Wellington House. There is \$47,000 left over from the previous CPA grant. The

property needs storm windows. The WHC would need to turn the left over funds over to the CPC, and then reapply for a grant to restore the windows.

Ms. Daley asked if an occupancy permit has been issued. She notes that one of the drawbacks to the property is the lack of parking. However, the city owns a large parcel of land that abuts the property. There was a lawn area on the west side of the house that is now overgrown.

Mr. Richardson asked about any damage that may have occurred during last winter. Mr. Green said there was no damage. He will speak with Mr. Cusano about keeping the gutters clean.

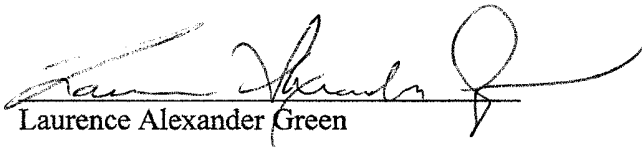
Mr. Green believes that the Wellington House could be used as a place to conduct oral history interviews.

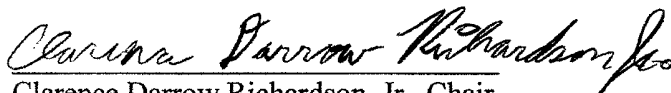
Mrs. Dufromont asked about having a walk-through of the building. Mr. Green will poll the commissioners on potential dates. Mr. Richardson will speak with Mr. Green about dates that work best for the commissioners.

d. Mr. Green motioned to reinstate the rules. Ms. Daly seconded. The motion was **approved**, all in favor.

10. Ms. Daly moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Dufromont. The motion was **approved**, all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,


Laurence Alexander Green


Clarence Darrow Richardson, Jr., Chair