

SWAMPSCOTT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

MEETING LOCATION: Virtual Meeting
Thursday, September 7, 2023
6:30 p.m.

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| <u>MEMBERS PRESENT</u> | Nancy Schultz, Jonathan Leamon, Brad Graham, Ryan Judkins, Justina Oliver, Richard Smith, Franceska O'Reilly, Kim Barry, Brendan Bradley |
| <u>OTHERS PRESENT</u> | Doug Thompson, Stephen Cummings, Marzie Galazka, Jerry Sneirson, James Cipoletta |
| 1. <u>MEETING CALLED TO ORDER</u> | N. Schultz called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. |
| 2. <u>TREASURER'S REPORT</u> | <p>R. Judkins reported that the general fund balance is \$2,892.70 and the revolving fund balance is \$6,351.61. The revolving fund balance includes a \$2,000.00 deposit representing the Essex Heritage Grant reimbursement. Those funds likely should be transferred to the Town's account.</p> <p>There is a pending expense of \$300.00 for a report by L. Mausolf.</p> <p>J. Leamon requested funds to purchase a frame for an exhibit photo. R. Smith moved to authorize up to \$100.00 for that expense, B. Graham seconded. Unanimously approved.</p> |
| 3. <u>53 PURITAN ROAD</u> | <p>Property owner J. Sneirson stated that he will lower the height of the garage to 17', and provided the Commission with drawings. Prior to demolition, the siding was aluminum, but he is willing to use 4" clapboards. R. Smith suggested using Azek trim and Hardie cement shingles on the front of the garage, as well as Andersen 400 windows. R. Smith offered to assist with material selection.</p> <p>S. Cummings requested that the Commission issue a letter with guidance on the style of the</p> |

rebuilt garage and materials to be used, with photographs. J. Oliver moved to establish a design review subcommittee comprised of R. Smith, J. Leamon, and N. Schultz. R. Smith seconded. Unanimously approved.

J. Leamon reviewed the history of the garage. He also reviewed the demolition bylaw permitting the Commission to impose a fine up to 10% of the assessed value of the property (\$973,000) for wrongful demolition. J. Sneirson offered his view that the garage collapsed; it was not demolished. He also argued that he was not given access to Building Department documents.

J. Leamon moved to assess a fine of \$50,000.00. N. Schultz seconded. J. Sneirson expressed his disagreement with the proposed fine, indicating a willingness to pay up to \$25,000. J. Sneirson's attorney, J. Cipoletta, joined the meeting at this time. J. Leamon agreed to withdraw the motion to allow J. Cipoletta to speak.

J. Cipoletta reviewed the plans to restore the roof height and original peak. J. Leamon renewed his original motion and N. Schultz seconded.

J. Sneirson argued that it was not his intent to demolish the garage, and that he did not know the importance of the garage. J. Leamon reminded him that he came before the Commission in February 2019 and was provided with the historical information, followed by a letter explaining same. B. Graham confirmed that J. Sneirson received that letter.

A vote was held on J. Leamon's motion to assess the \$50,000.00 fine. J. Oliver and B. Bradley abstained. K. Barry was not present for the vote. All other members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

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| <p>4. <u>CHAIR’S REPORT</u></p> | <p>N. Schultz reported that she and B. Graham met with a representative of the Conservation Commission to discuss preservation of the Blythswood estate.</p> <p>N. Schultz will be visiting the Glover property with Structures North to finalize its assessment and report. A Commission representative will meet with site developer Legatt McCall once that report is complete.</p> |
| <p>5. <u>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</u></p> | <p>J. Leamon moved to approve the minutes of the August 3, 2023 meeting as drafted. R. Smith seconded. Unanimously approved.</p> |
| <p>6. <u>35 PITMAN</u></p> | <p>Per N. Schultz, Bob Erbetta visited the property and believes the house was built in 1800 and possibly earlier.</p> <p>N. Schultz and R. Judkins researched the property and found that the property was sold to Pitman by the granddaughters of Joseph Richards, who fought in the Battle of Lexington. Richards’ ancestor had a house near the current house. While the records are not clear, it is possible that Richards lived in the house currently on the property.</p> <p>7 Hillside Avenue is a potential site for relocation of the Pitman house. The Affordable Housing Trust is seeking a frontage variance to allow the house to be sited there. The Zoning Board will meet on September 12, 2023, to address the variance.</p> <p>D. Thompson reported that the Affordable Housing Trust has not allocated money to the project, but that there is no need to do so until the Zoning Board approves the variance. If successful, units in the Pitman house would be sold at market rates to those earning at or below 80% of the area’s median income.</p> <p>N. Schultz opined that sale of the units would nearly cover the costs of moving the house and renovation. Habitat for Humanity has</p> |

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| | stepped away from the project because the organization typically sponsors projects with more than two units, and targets lower-income buyers. |
| 7. <u>FISHING EXHIBIT</u> | The official opening of the exhibit will be September 13, 2023, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The Commission will serve chowder. J. Leamon moved to approve up to \$100.00 for the purchase of the chowder, bowls, and utensils. J. Oliver seconded. Unanimously approved. |
| 8. <u>BYLAW AMENDMENTS</u> | The Select Board has requested proposals for changes to the Town’s bylaws. J. Oliver moved to establish a subcommittee to review the bylaws, comprised of N. Schultz, J. Leamon, and B. Graham. R. Judkins seconded. Unanimously approved. |
| 9. <u>ENDANGERED PROPERTIES</u> | <p>N. Schultz suggested the need to take a more proactive approach to preservation, including: (1) identifying historic properties before a demolition permit is requested; (2) researching properties more thoroughly; (3) prioritizing preservation-in-place; and (4) working to pass the Community Preservation Act.</p> <p>R. Smith identified resources for community preservation plans, including the Massachusetts Historical Commission and National Alliance of Preservation Commissions.</p> <p>R. Judkins has begun researching the Town’s ten oldest properties, but the research takes considerable time, and the Commission likely does not have the resources to perform that research for dozens of properties. J. Oliver suggested taking reports from the preservation awards/plaque programs to ensure those properties are imported to MACRIS.</p> |

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| | K. Barry raised having Blythswood placed on the National Register. She will provide additional information at the next meeting. |
| 10. <u>TRAILS AND SAILS</u> | J. Oliver raised the need for Commission members to volunteer for Town Hall tours during the Trails and Sails event. The Commission is responsible for any damage/issues that take place during the open house, and any incidents could impact the Commission's ability to host events at Town Hall in the future. |
| 11. <u>NEXT MEETING</u> | Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. The Commission has agreed to continue to meet virtually via Teams. |
| | Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m. |

Respectfully submitted,



Brad W. Graham, Secretary
Swampscott Historical Commission