

# HARVARD HISTORICAL COMMISSION

13 AYER ROAD • HARVARD, MASSACHUSETTS 01451



*The Harvard Historical Commission is chartered "...to preserve and protect the historic assets of Harvard, its buildings, structures, places, sites, and surrounding settings of historical or architectural significance."*

Those wishing to record any or all of the meeting must, prior to the meeting's start, alert the chair to such and the chair will announce the fact, in accordance with The Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

Following are the **minutes** for the regular meeting of the Harvard Historical Commission, in Volunteers Hall in the Town Hall, on **Wednesday, May 1, 2019 at 7pm.**

## MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Pam Marston (Chair)  
David Vannicola (Vice Chair)  
George Triantaris (Secretary)  
Steve Nizus  
Emanuel Lindo  
Richard Cabelus  
Aron Clarke

**AUDIENCE:** Bob O'Shea

## CALL TO ORDER:

**7:00**

## TOPICS:

Bob O'Shea appeared and asked to discuss a project on behalf of the Parks and Recreation Commission. Since this topic was not on the agenda, would require an application, and was likely to be of public interest, HHC would not engage in a discussion and suggested the topic be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

**REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:** Minutes of April 3 meeting unanimously approved

**PUBLIC HEARING:** none

**NEW APPLICATIONS APPROVED:** none

**NEW APPLICATIONS:** none

## ON-GOING APPLICATIONS:

Scott Hayward, 5 Elm Street addition to residence on hold for June hearing. Plan for June public hearing and send out abutters' notices.

## NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion on how to approve non applicable applications  
George reported that in other towns (for example Salem) non applicability applications are circulated to the commissioners by email by the chair or clerk. Commissioners have 24 or 48 hours to either agree that the proposed work is not applicable (by not answering) or request that the application be discussed at the next meeting. This process ensures that non applicability applications are verified by more than one person before being approved. While there was agreement that Harvard should adopt this process, several commissioners wondered

# HARVARD HISTORICAL COMMISSION

13 AYER ROAD • HARVARD, MASSACHUSETTS 01451



whether it might violate the open meeting law. George to investigate.

2. Discussion on changing meeting time to 7:30

It was decided that meetings will continue to be held at 7:00 pm

3. Aron, Steve and George have terms up June 30<sup>th</sup> according to Julie Doucet.

Commissioners whose terms will end to communicate with Julie Doucet as to whether they wish to be reappointed.

4. Historic preservation workshop Apr 30 report to commission (PM, DV)

There was discussion at the workshop about historic surveys. There is a Massachusetts website which already lists some Harvard properties. This discussion led to topic 5 in this section and topic 4 below (see below)

5. Discussion of creating a survey of historical properties in town, not just districts (SN)

Steve pulled a list from the town records which shows the construction date for all properties in town. It was decided that he would sort this list by significant historical period in line with the demarcations used in the Ashland survey (see below).

## ON-GOING BUSINESS:

1. Discussion to complete revisions for directions for applications for certificates (GT)

Revised directions discussed and unanimously approved. Final version to be posted on the HHC website.

2. Devens jurisdiction discussion (RC)

No new developments to report

3. HHC handbook, look at mock up (EL)

Mock up reviewed. Final version to be reviewed at next meeting

4. Demolition delay discussion and revision (GT)

Final version of draft demolition delay bylaw reviewed. Following up on a question from the last meeting, George reported that several towns will render an opinion as to whether a structure is significant without a demolition permit application being filed. This is done informally by HC's (not part of the bylaw) and is seen as helpful to property owners, although preliminary and not binding. Other towns (for example Concord and Ashland) have proactively performed historic surveys to determine which properties in town are significant. These towns maintain that such surveys increase the importance of historic structures and are helpful in discouraging property owners from seeking demolition, or if demolition is sought, in finding favorable outcomes that do not include demolition. There are state matching grants available to conduct such surveys. There was discussion about further investigating the town records (Steve), the Massachusetts database (Pam), a survey kept by the Harvard Historic Society (Pam), and historic surveys conducted by other towns and how these are used in conjunction with demolition delay bylaws (George). Once this information is gathered the HHC can decide what to recommend to the select board.

By unanimous vote it was decided to accept the bylaw as written and to hold the draft until materials and a recommendation is prepared regarding a survey of Harvard's significant structures. At that time the draft bylaw will be forwarded to the select board with the recommendation that the bylaw only be presented for vote if the select board is willing to invest in an associated survey that will improve its chances of being effective.

## CORRESPONDENCE:

Liz Allard permitting guide for Harvard and any input we want to share (sent docs 4/17) for May 14 meeting.

It was suggested that brief information be provided in any printed materials about permitting and that those interested in learning more about the HHC and procedures be referred to the website which is more likely to be up to date.

## REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND LIAISONS:

**Monument Committee** (DV) WWII project continues. MC considering whether Devens has monuments that

# HARVARD HISTORICAL COMMISSION

13 AYER ROAD • HARVARD, MASSACHUSETTS 01451



might need oversight.

**CPC** (PM)

**Cemetery Commission**

**Demolition Delay Committee** (GT) and (PM) see above

**PUBLIC COMMENTARY** None

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** None

**SET DATE FOR NEXT MEETING:** June 5, 2019

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

**8:22**

**DOCUMENTS:**

Revised Instructions for Applicants

Draft Demolition Delay Bylaw