

HARVARD HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Special Meeting
Old Library
June 11, 2014

Members present: Ken Swanton, Joe Theriault, Pam Marston, John Martin, Sherry Graham, Ron Ostberg, Chris Cutler, Moe Dancause

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

The discussion revolved around sending a letter to the newspaper about the commission's thoughts. The Board of Selectman contacted HHC to discuss the TH restoration. The commission needs to decide if we are going to support BoS or go our own way. Ron and some other members feel the town needs to continue with the TH as the seat of government, noting that HHC's jurisdiction relates only to the outside of the building. It was mentioned that one of the key principles of historical preservation as given by the HHC Design Guidelines and those of the Commonwealth and the National government states that "1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment."

The commission OK'd a letter to the Press reading:

"The Historical Commission is concerned about recent developments in the town hall renovation plans.

Harvard center is, of course, a major contributor to the special character of our town, and contains one of New England's most quintessential historic town commons. Forty years ago, Harvard voters created the Harvard Common Historic District and the Historical Commission as a means of preserving these historic assets. The town hall is an indispensable part of this historic district, and as such must be preserved. The top of the hill on the common has been the seat of town government for 282 years, and this should continue.

Recent discussions at the June 3rd Board of Selectmen meeting about possibly moving much of town government from its historic location may put this important cornerstone of Harvard Common at serious risk.

Many people forget that \$1 million of the \$3.97 million price tag voted to renovate the town hall is to come from CPC funds. CPC funds are restricted to certain purposes, one of which is for an historic building preservation. The town hall renovation is by far the biggest ticket CPC item that the Historical Commission has ever sponsored. The money should be used as it was voted, to renovate and preserve our town hall."

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Marston