Historic Commission 11/16/22 Minutes

Attending: Aubrey Theall, Michael LaTerz, Allen King, George Wheatley, Joshua Vollmar

Agenda:

Aubrey Theall called the meeting to order at 7:04PM.

Inventory of Historic Assets: Michael Danti. Michael is out of the country. Michal LeTerz spoke on a related issue, detailed further below.

Prescott House Sub-Committee Update: Aubrey Theall

* No CPA grant application because Groton Hill Music will not support any town funding, including CPA, for anything related to Prescott House.
* GHM has informed us they will not support any future public access to the property as it is considered within their music center's buffer.
* Aubrey believes a private fundraising effort to carry out a historic structure study is worthwhile. General agreement from the Commission although Michael LaTerz suggests it should be a third party and not the Commission.
* Michael LeTerz suggests a public hearing.
  + Can we hold a public hearing without a demolition permit?
  + Give the town a chance to express its opinion.
  + Aubrey thought we might be able to use to seek new members for ad hoc preservation committee, gauge fundraising prospects.
* Aubrey suggests we renew effort to offer the house for relocation.
* Next year we could seek inclusion in Preservation Massachusetts "Most Endangered Historic Resources Program". Doesn't provide any actual protection, is an education and PR program.
* Brief discussion of establishing a single address historic district. This would prevent the demolition of the house but would not compel maintenance. We would have to discuss the pros and cons of such a strategy if it ever were seriously considered.
* Joshua Vollmar suggested we follow up on the language in the demo delay bylaw and what a constitutes a good faith effort to sell the property.

Old Meeting House- Allen King- Out to bid on window project. $140k number being worked on with matching grant, need to raise $70k. If over budget will reduce project scope. In the process of fundraising through the preservation fund. Already have over $25k raised. Building reserve is a backup.

Prescott Stone Update- George Wheatley- Thinks we're going to consider a loosely laid stone with the proper base, overall length of about 8ft with stone in the middle. Location TBD. Still in the works, may make it this fall.

Historic Commission Web Page: Michael LaTerz-

* Mike proposes a web page modeled on the Maynard, MA web page. Better explain what we do and don't do and what its charter is based on. Link to town bylaws that describe demo delay.
* Offer to review historical signage for historic properties.
* Hasn't forgotten metal detector issue but will revisit.

Aid's Attic, West Groton Center- Michael LaTerz- Old building, perhaps late 1800's per Joshua Vollmer's research. Original use not known. Present owner considering some form of restoration. Bringing to the Commission's attention.

Historic Commission Files Stored at Legion Hall- Michael LaTerz – A file cabinet of files have been located at Legion Hall. Get moved over to the third floor at Town Hall with the rest of the Historic Commission files. Includes some old maps.

Historic Signage Update- Joshua Vollmar- Eagle Scout Project. Shepley Hill, General Field. Signs are now in place. Joshua helped with history & write ups.

Any Topics Not Anticipated Within 48 Hours of the Meeting –

* Earl Carter Museum. Ad hoc committee has been set up. Greg Sheldon is understood to be the point person. Too late for CPC funding cycle this year. First order of business will be to have a meeting with Earl Carter. There are others with collections in town that may be interested in contributing. Add to agenda for next meeting.
* George Wheatley was thanked by the Commission for his volunteer service, he will be resigning his position.

New Business – None

Next meeting set for- 1/11/23

Adjourned Meeting by unanimous roll call vote at 8:06PM