

Wayland Historical Commission
Meeting Minutes
November 13, 2020, 11:00 a.m.
Via Zoom

Present by Zoom: Katherine Gardner-Westcott, chair; Brad Carver, Amanda Ciacco, Richard Conard, Ann Gordon, Elisa Scola. Not Present: Tonya Largy

Guest Attending by Zoom: Doug Sacra, Maple Hill Architects, representing Margaret Kolm and David McCauley

Katherine Gardner-Westcott called the meeting to order at 11:06 a.m. She read required legal notices and reviewed the agenda. She noted that the meeting was being conducted via Zoom, and that the public was encouraged to communicate via Zoom or to call in with comments and questions.

Public Comment

There was no public comment

Weir Meadow

- A. Ciacco: Because of previous cultural resources found at the property, we are happy that Doug Sacra and the current owners are including the WHC in monitoring digging as they plan for demolition of the existing home and construction of a new one on this 10.5 acre lot
- There has been disturbance there, and when they excavate for the septic and patio, we hope to join and look while they are digging
- D. Sacra shared a proposed site plan (all subject to approval of Conservation Commission), proposing to combine two driveways, demolish existing house and build a new one at a slightly different orientation
- Planning to cut open an area in the trees for a new septic
- Digging will be primarily for the foundation, patio, and septic
- Only thing near the river is improving existing walk where there has long been a boat ramp
- Previous owner (father Henry Kolm) had found artifacts on the property
- D. Sacra showed proposed plans for the new house and pointed out areas where there will likely be digging
- Schedule: Hope to start the construction next summer, but there are many hoops to jump through especially with Conservation Commission because the property is within 100 feet of the river
- R. Conard: Have the found artifacts been documented?
- D. Sacra: No one knows where they were found. We don't know where the collection is now
- K. Gardner-Westcott: Thanks to Doug and his clients for including us and collaborating
- By text message in response to a query from A. Ciacco, T. Largy wrote that the findings at Weir Meadow were not donated to the Wayland Lab and she does not know where they are now

Approve Minutes

The minutes from our March 9, 2020 meeting were reviewed and one amendment was made.

MOTION: A. Ciacco moved to accept the minutes with the amendment, B. Carver seconded.

Roll call: Brad—yes; Ann—yes; Rick—yes; Elissa—yes; Amanda—yes; Kay—yes.

Minutes were approved 6-0.

Budget

- We will have expenses for the lab, a possible speaker on how to do house genealogy, possible spring cleanup expenses at the railroad site
- R. Conard doesn't anticipate expenses for spring cleanup, if we are even able to have an in-person work weekend
- K. Gardner-Westcott: Framingham had a cleanup session this summer where they kept their distance, we may be able to do that
- E. Scola expressed support for having a speaker come to talk about dating older homes, to increase the appreciation for older homes
- Brad: Bill Halsey is someone he did a fellowship with at Deerfield and thinks he would also be a good speaker
- The Wayland Historical Society has recorded recent talks by Jane Sciacca and Gretchen Schuler and will put a link to them on the WHS website. We can also link to them from our website.
- R. Conard: An additional expense may be the plaque for Paul Gardescu's bench; can we work toward resolving this?
- K. Gardner-Westcott: We have to write a letter to Board of Selectmen, get their approval, and see if a donor is still willing to donate the money. If BOS approves that, we can go forward
- We might want to have two speakers come this year. We know who the house genealogy speaker would be, and WHS is having someone come to talk about finding the lost footstone's home; we might want to have a speaker give a talk on something having to do with cemeteries
- **MOTION:** E. Scola: moved to approve a \$1000 budget with \$500 for two speakers and \$500 for lab supplies; A. Ciaccio seconded; Roll call: Brad—yes; Ann—yes; Rick—yes; Elisa—yes; Amanda—yes; Kay—yes. The motion passed, 6-0.

CPC

- E. Scola: The next CPC meeting is next week, where we will discuss procedural aspects, updating form for applying, etc.
- K. Gardner-Westcott: Gretchen Schuler has asked for updates on some of the funded projects
- E. Scola: some still have money outstanding, such as the signal for the Depot
- Stone's Bridge: The plan is to put it out to bid this winter. We want to make sure we are being kept abreast of the project, because CPC money cannot be spent unless work complies with the MHC guidelines
- E. Scola will reach out to make sure the relevant groups know
- The fence around First Parish was completed in the spring; it went over budget by \$3,000 because of the delay in getting the contract out; the church paid the overage

Signage

- A. Gordon updated on the work of the Wayfinding Group. This group is working under the direction of Town Planner Sarkis Sarkisian with a graphic designer with extensive public signage experience to develop a signature image that will go on public signs in Wayland, including any signs the WHC creates for interpretive sites. The design work is funded by a grant.
- The group has suggested and reviewed several rounds of designs, with the goal of choosing an image that celebrates something special about Wayland.
- The group expects to choose a final design within the next month.

Railroad and Rail Trail Depot

- R. Conard reports: Brush clearing in May did not come to pass

- We hope we can do it next spring if conditions permit
- Thanks to Kay's work in arranging a meeting in early 2020 with Tom Holder and Louise Miller, the DPW has agreed to periodically mow the railroad site
- R. Conard sent a thank you to DPW in June for the mowing they had done
- Weeds are returning, and he will request the DPW mow again before the winter
- Bittersweet vines are up and covering the engine house foundation site we had cleared, so it would help to get it mowed before winter
- Update on the train order signal: This project was approved over 2.5 years ago at Town Meeting, and the funding was approved for repairing the carpentry work on the Depot; that was done last year
- On the train order signal, on March 9 R. Conard emailed Steve Vitello, asst. to Facilities Director Ben Keefe, and he said they had sent the check to purchase most of the parts, and would arrange to pick them up in a few days. R. Conard said he believes they purchased most of the parts, including spectacles, rods, control lever. The one part missing was the top casting that goes at the top of the pole, to which the spectacles are attached. This is a key piece that was not included in the parts that were offered to the Town to purchase. There is also a question about whether or not the signal pole is solid enough to support the casting.
- On June 22 S. Vitello emailed to say they had delayed the pick-up, but would do it soon
- R. Conard recently asked for an update by email, but as of our meeting had not heard back
- R. Conard attended a Zoom meeting of the Sudbury Historical Commission (SHC) on Monday, and they are working on the Eversource power line extension and Rail Trail that would be built on the railroad in Sudbury. This has been a contentious issue in the town for several years. The project went to the Supreme Judicial Court which ruled against the town, and the SHC has been trying to preserve the artifacts. They have hired Stacy Spies from Hopkinton, and R. Conard has been in touch with her and supplied her with needed information.
- SHC is trying to identify which artifacts are eligible for the National Register so they can make the case to the Mass Historical Commission; Eversource has done quite a bit of engineering design work, and many documents are available on the SHC website
- SHC expects to have another meeting on Nov. 17 and R. Conard intends to attend, and possibly one or two meetings in Dec. with a representative from Eversource and perhaps also Stacey Spies
- R. Conard has offered his help and is waiting to learn more about what they need

Archeaology

- Castle Hill: A. Gordon reported that in Aug. 2020 she and T. Largy met a group of Troop 1 Coconino Boy Scouts and their leaders and parents at the entrance to Castle Hill Conservation Area, where they were beginning an Eagle Scout project to build a new kiosk at the trail head. Largy explained to the boys and their leaders about the role of the WHC and our interest in being on site whenever there is digging on public land in town. This site was on the edge of a site with archaeological interest. Largy sifted soil that was dug up during the project, and filed a report that can be found on our website.
- A. Ciaccio: A resident who heard Tonya's talk at the library last October reached out to us because he is doing excavation, and T. Largy and A. Ciaccio went to his place to talk with him and show him what to look for
- We haven't had access to the lab, but hopefully once we have access we will use the new supplies to bag and re-bag materials
- A. Ciaccio said she and T. Largy have been discussing when to submit a grant request for a roving archivist to come to our lab from Mass Historical Commission

- Discussion about whether to wait until we ourselves have access to the lab, or submit a request now to “get in line”
- Question and discussion about whether we might qualify for cultural grants, such as from the Wayland Cultural Council
- A. Ciaccio reports that she and T. Largy have discussed hiring someone with CPC money to help with the lab; data entry, physical labor, it’s the behind-the-scenes work that we really need to get done
- Question about whether we can put more images of our artifacts on our website, to expand the public’s awareness. T. Largy should be involved in this discussion.

Cemetery

- A. Gordon reported damage in the South Cemetery: A DPW worker knocked a gravestone over with a landscaping vehicle while a crew was clearing leaves on Saturday, Nov. 7
- She took a photo and sent it by email to Tom Holder, DPW Director, who apologized and said they do remind the crews to take extra care around the gravestones
- B. Carver thinks the town may have insurance that would cover this
- The report by Barbara Donohue from the 2015 repairs to the North Cemetery included a section on techniques that DPW should employ when working in cemeteries
- Discussion about when we might commission another round of gravestone repairs
- E. Scola: We don’t have a schedule for repairs. About 2005 we began work on the oldest stones in North Cemetery first, then the Stoney section in North Cemetery along with the South Cemetery in 2015. Experts said it was cheaper to do more stones rather than one at a time, and it has been a while since we did that.
- We should look at Lakeview Cemetery to see if we want to initiate a project there since we haven’t done that one yet
- K. Gardner-Westcott has photos of Lakeview stones that need repair from several years ago
- E. Scola says the repair process proceeds in two stages: First we pay someone to come out and examine the stones that need repair and write a proposal, what each stone needs and the cost;
- Once that is done, we go to Town Meeting to get funds for the work itself
- The work done by Barbara Donohue in 2014-15 included ground penetrating radar to determine the location of the first Meetinghouse, which added to the expense. Doing just stone repair will be less expensive
- North Cemetery wall is falling over because of a nearby tree; E. Scola suggests the tree should be removed
- Barbara Donohue’s report stated that large pine trees such as white pines are not appropriate in a cemetery, because they tend to fall and damage stones
- Her report suggested we use an arborist who could assess/manage the trees in our historic cemeteries
- B. Carver and A. Gordon agreed to work together on a proposal to repair cemeteries, and to follow up with DPW on the falling wall

Dudley Pond Boat Launch

- This project was approved and work is proceeding; K. Gardner-Westcott will check with Public Works on the status

Monitoring Board and Committee Agendas and Minutes

- K. Gardner-Westcott asked that each WHC member take responsibility for monitoring agendas and minutes of other boards and commissions to be alert for issues that are related to our work. WHC members volunteered as follows:

Selectmen—K. Gardner-Westcott

Planning—A. Ciaccio

Conservation—A. Gordon

Recreation—E. Scola

Community Preservation—E. Scola

Public Works—B. Carver

Housing—K. Gardner-Westcott

Historic District Commission—R. Conard

Zoning Board—A. Ciaccio

Permanent Municipal Building Committee—R. Conard

Surface Water Quality—K. Gardner-Westcott will ask T. Largy if she is willing

- Seath Crandall, moderator, used screen share to demonstrate how to subscribe to alerts from committees and boards (in the lower right corner of Town website home page)

Miscellaneous

E. Scola will demonstrate holiday floral creations at the Wayland Museum. The Girl Scout tree will go outside, weather permitting.

No additional business was identified.

MOTION: E. Scola moved to adjourn the meeting. A. Gordon seconded.

Roll call: Brad—yes; Ann—yes; Rick—yes; Elisa—yes; Amanda—yes; Kay—yes.

The motion passed, 6-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Gordon