



TOWN OF WHATELY Whately, Massachusetts

Historical Commission

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Minutes of the February 27, 2023 Zoom Meeting, 5 pm

Meeting participants: Donna Wiley, chair, Susan Baron, Allison Bell, Judy Markland, Alan McArdle.

The minutes of the February 20 meeting were discussed. Donna noted that they had omitted Allison Bell's recusal from the Quonquont CPA funding discussion. With this addition, the minutes were unanimously approved.

Letter to Select Board regarding the potential sale of the Center School

The Commission discussed the excellent draft letter that Donna had prepared, focusing on the key underlined points in the document.

It was suggested that rather than recommending a preservation restriction on the exterior of the building prior to the sale, the letter recommend that the restriction be a condition of the sale. This would speed up the process and allow the Commission to be the entity administering the restriction. This was agreed and Donna reported that she hopes to have wording soon on similar restrictions to use as examples.

The draft suggested altering the town's right of way include site of the Milk Bottle. Judy noted that the Visioning Committee had verbally recommended that the town provide an easement that would permit the Milk Bottle to remain on site and also allow for access by the Historical Society. It was agreed to change the recommendation to a more general one that the Milk Bottle's site and Historical Society access be protected.

The group agreed to remove the reference to the fact that no comprehensive study of the costs of renovation had been done. Judy suggested replacing the reference to the Green Communities grant with the Underutilized Building grant which hadn't been available when the Visioning Committee did its report, and the group agreed.

Alan questioned whether the Visioning Committee would be upset by the HC's endorsement of a sale of the building. Judy opined that she didn't know but suspected that they would understand, since the request for lease proposals didn't produce any interest.

Donna was thanked for all her work writing the draft and seeking sample preservation restrictions.

The meeting adjourned at 5:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Markland

Document discussed and on file: Draft letter from the Historical Commission to the Selectboard dated 2/27/23.