



# Town of Sudbury

## Historic Districts Commission

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### MINUTES

May 15, 2025 AT 7:03 PM

### VIRTUAL MEETING

### JOINT MEETING WITH HISTORICAL COMMISSION

**Historic Districts Commission Members Present:** Vice Chair Taryn Trexler, Chris Hagger, and Griff Noble

**Historical Commission Members Present:** Chair Chris Hagger, Vice Chair Michael Wallace, Bill Andreas, Kim Burns, Jan Costa, Chris Durall, and Stephen Greenstein

**Others Present:** Planning and Zoning Coordinator Beth Perry

#### Preservation oversight of Hosmer House exterior restoration project

##### **Background:**

- Town meeting successfully approved over \$1 million for roof and envelope projects on Hosmer House with wide community support.
- Projects will be supervised primarily by the Facilities Director.

##### **Discussion:**

- Whether additional preservation oversight beyond Facilities Department is needed.
- Historical projects in other towns have hired preservation consultants to oversee contractors, but such oversight was not included in current Hosmer funding.
- The firm hired for this project has preservation experience which was a factor in contract award.
- It was suggested to first consult Sandra Duran (Facilities or project lead) regarding her oversight plans and confidence in contractors' preservation qualifications.
- Concerns were expressed about multiple contractors involved in the envelope project (estimated six firms) and coordinating preservation standards among them.
- The Permanent Building Committee (PBC) is likely the primary authority managing the project execution and contractor hires.
- It was noted that the roof project is less complex with a single experienced firm.
- Regular updates from Sandra or the Facilities Director to the commissions throughout the project would be valuable.

- The idea of requiring preservation credentials as part of contractor qualification (RFQ/RFP process) was suggested.
- Oversight model from a previous project (Loring Parsonage) was discussed involving a preservation consultant ensuring architectural appropriateness.
- The need to avoid missteps or modifications that do not meet preservation standards was emphasized.

**Action:**

- Schedule a meeting with Sandra Duran to review oversight plans, contractor credentials, and project scheduling.
- Continue process coordination between commissions and Facilities.
- Monitor future design approvals by HDC and track any need for additional preservation oversight or COA amendments.

**Future planning strategy for CPA historical resources**

**Background:**

- There has been increased utilization of Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds for historic projects in recent years.
- This agenda item focused on overviewing current historical resource CPA funding and planning potential future projects.

**Discussion:**

- Major upcoming or potential historic projects identified include:
  - Henry Ford's Carding Mill restoration (including dam repairs)
  - Continuing Hosmer House collections and landscape restoration
  - Cemetery restoration and cleaning (noted high stone damage and need for additional funds)
  - Town Hall renovation and accessibility improvements (currently on CPC radar but on hold pending PBC capacity)
  - Goodnow Library roof replacement
  - Rail Trail historic structure preservation (section house, station, and hundreds of rail artifacts)
  - Boy Scouts reservation conservation (uncertain due to leadership changes)
- Discussion of current CPA historical reserves:
  - Approximately \$690,000 dedicated to historic resources, with funds largely spent on Hosmer House.
  - Additional funds may flow back via matching or other mechanisms.
  - CPC funding varies year-to-year with competitive requests across historic, open space, and housing categories.

- Other topics:
  - Potential for low-interest loan fund to assist historic homeowners with preservation projects (suggested by HDC).
  - Reviewing and potentially expanding or refining historic district boundaries to better capture historically significant properties.
  - Noted that new historic districts require strong neighborhood support.
  - Importance of ongoing annual reporting to CPC to avoid fund reversion.
  - Upcoming work on design guidelines with consultant Peter Benton beginning July 1.

**Action:**

- Continue coordination with CPC representatives (Jan Costa is HC representative).
- Monitor evolving needs for CPA funding and plan future applications.
- Maintain communications with other commissions and stakeholders regarding historic resource priorities.

**Stewardship committee expansion to other stakeholders**

**Background:**

- The stewardship committee mission statement was approved in the last CLG meeting with intent to incorporate broader historic preservation stakeholders in Sudbury.
- A draft letter inviting stakeholders to join was discussed.

**Discussion:**

- Clarification that the stewardship group is primarily a communication mechanism rather than a formal decision-making body.
- Different models for stewardship groups were considered, ranging from informal email listserv communications to potential meetings or coordinated projects.
- Concerns about sustaining engagement with a growing stakeholder group were raised.
- Historical examples included an informal historic homeowners' group and the Sudbury 250th Committee as models of stakeholder collaboration.
- Identified goals for stewardship include communication, coordination, and potentially pursuing joint preservation projects (e.g., centenary markers).
- Recommended stakeholder groups to include: Sudbury Valley Trustees, Conservation Commission, Wayside Inn Foundation, Sudbury Historical Society, Goodnow Library, Planning Board, Parks and Recreation, Rail Trail Advisory Committee, Town Historian, and other groups listed in the master and preservation plans.
- The letter would invite stakeholders to submit contact information for inclusion in the communication network.
- A vote was held and the letter with minor modifications was unanimously approved for distribution.

- Discussion about the number of representatives per stakeholder group (suggested up to two) and concerns about potential quorum/open meeting law implications if formal meetings occur.
- Guidance from CLG coordinator Adam on open meeting compliance and group structure is to be sought.

**Action:**

- Distribute the approved stewardship committee letter to identified stakeholders.
- Establish an initial communication network (email list) for ongoing coordination and information exchange.
- Determine structure and function of the stewardship group based on stakeholder interest and legal guidance.
- Plan for potential future meetings or projects as appropriate.

At 9:00 PM, Ms. Trexler made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Hagger seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Trexler – Aye, Mr. Hagger – Aye, and Mr. Noble - Aye,

Mr. Hagger motioned to adjourn the meeting of the Historical Commission. Ms. Costa seconded the motion. Hagger-Aye, Wallace-Aye, Andreas-Aye, Costa-Aye, Durall-Aye, and Greenstein - Aye