

**APPROVED**

**Members**

Samuel D. Obar, Chair  
Christine M. Cochrane, Vice Chair  
George B. Ransom  
Roger F. Turner, Jr.  
Kathleen A. Birtwell  
Melissa Totten, Associate



**Walpole Historical Commission**

Walpole Town Hall  
135 School Street  
Walpole, MA 02081

<http://www.walpole-ma.gov/walpole-historical-commission>

A meeting of the Walpole Historical Commission was held on June 22, 2017 at the Walpole Town Hall, Room 116, 135 School Street, Walpole, MA 02081.

The following members were in attendance:

Samuel Obar, Regular Member, Chair  
Christine Cochrane, Regular Member, Vice Chair  
Roger Turner, Regular Member  
George Ransom, Regular Meeting  
Kathleen Birtwell, Regular Member  
Melissa Totten, Associate Member

The following guests were in attendance:

Lawrence Richard, owner of 234 Stone Street, Walpole, MA 02081

Chairman Sam Obar called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**Site Visit**

234 Stone Street - Demolition Application

A site visit was conducted at 6pm on 6/22/17 to view the structure and property at 234 Stone Street prior to this meeting to determine if the structure is architecturally or historically significant per the Demolition Delay Bylaw.

**Appointment**

234 Stone Street - Demolition Application

Melissa Totten - Completed research on the property at 234 Stone Street

- Original property surveyed in 1872
- Sold to Edmund Clapp - part of estate made into lots
- 1876 Atlas of Norfolk County - House is shown - Lot 54 with the structure
- 1888 - surrounding area empty
- 1893 owner of record James/Margaret Percy
- 1921 owner of record Walter/Mabel Myer
- 1975 owner of record Bushway

- Original piece of land may have been owned by Ebernizer Stone and has social/cultural history important to Walpole
- House was built in 1877

Ms. Totten states she ran out of time to do a complete history of property and is concerned after conducting research that it is inappropriate to have the HC consulted last in the development/demolition process.

Lawrence Richard, the owner agrees the process was backwards. Walsh Brothers his builder has an extensive record of building in Walpole.

Roger Turner - Ms. Totten research is interesting and would like to see it transcribe into an essay for use as a case study - to aid in changing the bylaw. Also would be great addition to the Historical Records of Walpole. Mr. Turner feels the house has been altered so much that very little historical details remain other than the banister and door knobs. He cautions the owner when the work begins to be on the look out for any buried artifacts. Mr. Turner concludes 234 Stone Street is not historically or architecturally significant. George Ransom and Kathleen Birtwell concur.

Christine Cochrane asks whether the board would like Ms. Totten to continue her research and would we have enough time to adhere to the HC Demo bylaw?

Mr. Ransom makes a motion to move the question. Ms. Birtwell seconds the motion.

**The motion is approved 4-0-1. Ms. Cochrane abstains.**

Mr. Ransom makes a motion that 234 Stone Street is not architecturally or historically significant. Mr. Turner seconds the motion.

### **Discussion**

Ms. Totten totally understands and feels this is an upside down process and the town of Walpole has no regard for the preservation of its own Historical resources. Further, the HC needs to revisit the definition of the Demo Delay Bylaw and the process.

**The motion is approved 4-0-1. Mr. Ransom abstains.**

Mr. Obar informs Mr. Lawrence that the HC will send a letter to the Walpole Building Commissioner informing him of the decision.

### **Correspondence**

Request from 160 Diamond Street for a letter of recognition for the owner/builder of said house celebrating the 50th anniversary of the home to be presented to him by his family. All agree this is a good idea and Mr. Obar in cooperation with the Historical Society will create a certificate to be presented at the family gathering.

### **Old Town Hall ReUse Update**

• Ms. Cochrane reports the ReUse committee was hoping for a larger public turn out at the Public Forum but the people who did attend were very constructive. The public forum was well managed and captured a number of public comments which provided a large shopping list of ideas. Which included an Arts Center, open the second floor as a function hall, Historical Society/Historical Commission home, town meeting space, to selling the property with heavy deed restrictions to a private party. \* See the Reuse Committee Minutes for full list \*

### **NEW ITEMS**

- Contact EDC get on their agenda
- Reach out to the Chamber of Commerce to involve the Downtown Merchants/Owners
- Prepare Update/Memo for the BOS - See if they would like the ReUse Committee to come before them
- Reach out Assistant TA Mr. Gregory regarding the Environmental Proposal
- Next meeting of the ReUse Committee will be on 7/18/17 at 6:30 at Town Hall - Ms. Cochrane encourages the HC members to attend

### **New Business**

#### **Town inter-board communication**

Ms. Totten states how 234 Stone Street is an example of how the lack of inter-board communication with the HC is not working and has to be improved.

Ms. Cochrane concurs, the last stop of these applicants should not be the HC. The HC should be notified of any potential development of any property dating 100 years or more at the preliminary stages.

Ms. Cochrane makes a motion for the HC to write a letter to; The Planning Board, Kate Delaney, Economic Development Commission, Liz Dennehy, The Zoning Board, Amy Messier, Building Commissioner, David Norton that the Historical Commission now be copied on any and all projects being reviewed by any town board or department so the Historical Commissions can be included in the review process at the beginning stages. Ms. Birtwell seconds the motion.

**The motion is approved 5-0-0.**

#### **Open Meeting Law Training**

Mr. Obar reminds the members of the Open Meeting Law Training to be held on 6/27/17 at 6pm at the Walpole Public Library. All members are encourage to attend.

#### **Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Profiles**

Mr. Ransom reports he has two new profiles completed and Mr. Obar will submit them with credit given to Mr. Ransom.

#### **Approval of 5/25/17 and 6/1/17 Minutes**

Ms. Birtwell makes a motion to accept the minutes of 5/25/17 with corrections. Mr. Ransom seconds the motion.

**The motion is approved 5-0-0.**

Mr. Obar makes a motion to accept the minutes of 6/1/17 with corrections. Mr. Ransom seconds the motion.

**The motion is approved 5-0-0.**

### **Adjournment**

At 8:38pm Mr. Turner makes a motion to adjourn. Ms. Birtwell seconds the motion.

**The motion is approved 5-0-0.**