

Ipswich Historical Commission Minutes
Meeting February 18, 2020

Members in attendance: John Fiske, Gordon Harris, Lee Hathaway, Linda Grimes, Laura Gresh, Tess Schutte

Alternate Members: Bill Effner, Tom Schutte

Citizens: Nancy Carlisle, Chair APDC

Discussion Demolition Review Changes

John called the meeting to discuss previously approved (at meeting of February 10, 2020) date of 1930 for cut-off date for consideration for a Demolition Review of a building.

John said he did not feel he could present to the Select Board a proposed warrant, pertaining to Demolition Review, with a cut-off date of buildings constructed before 1930.

Bill noted the current by-law with rolling date of "older than 75 years" has been in place for 52 years.

Tess said she and Tom have lived in Ipswich as part-time residents for 27 years. Tess noted the unfortunate change of the architectural character of Brooklyn, NY as it became gentrified. She said she has not seen that change in Ipswich.

Linda and Bill have lived in Ipswich for much of their lives and both noted the positive changes over the years in Ipswich.

John defended the change from the 75 -year cut-off date to "built before 1900".

John said he wanted to change the cut-off date to reduce the number of houses the IHC would have to review.

A discussion pursued about the architecture of houses built between 1900 and 1930 and the neighborhoods that fall within this 30-year period and how significant they are.

Gordon said that the Historical Commission's Partial List of Historic Houses needs to be updated for the 1900 – 1930 time period. It uses the date from the Patriot Properties site, which are approximate and some were actually constructed in the 19th Century.

Laura noted that there are Victorian houses that fall within this time period on Argilla Road, Turkey Shore Road overlooking the river, and Labor in Vain. She said it would be a loss if these houses were not protected under a revised Demolition Review.

Laura asked Nancy Carlisle (chair of APDC) her opinion and she said she would prefer we keep the current date of "older than 75-years". She noted the houses designed by architectural firm of Royal Barry Wills in town would not be protected with a cut-off date of either 1900 or 1930.

Linda questioned why the demolition delay period was changed from 12 to 18 months.

John explained an extended 6 months period would allow the IHC to find alternatives for significantly historic buildings rather than demolishing them with enough time to find alternatives. Examples he mentioned include selling to another party or moving the building to another site.

Laura motioned that the date for a building built before 1930 remain under the Demolition Review. Lee seconded.

Gordon interjected by with a compromise cut-off date of 1915.

Linda motioned for a cut-off date of 1915. Gordon seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Gordon said he would make a complete list of houses built between 1900 and 1915.

A discussion followed for change of the language of item 4 of the existing by-law from "and" to "or". Items 1-3 define requirements for a building to be considered historically significant. Using "and" would require items 1-3 as well as item 4 to be considered historically significant.

Laura suggested "and/or" would be inclusive and avoid excluding any significant building.

Tess added placing the "and/or" after the number "4" so that it is clear that "and/or" applies to each of the preceding statements, not just to statement 3.

Laura made a motion for this change to "and/or". Gordon seconded this motion. All voted in favor.

John made a motion to adjourn, Gordon seconded. All voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Gresh
Secretary

Minutes approved at IHC Meeting 3-9-20