

## **Ipswich Historical Commission Minutes Meeting March 9, 2020**

Members in attendance: Gordon Harris, Lee Hathaway, Linda Grimes, Laura Gresh, Steve Miles, Tess Schutte; Alternate Members: Bill Effner, Tom Schutte. Kristen Grubbs of Planning Department

### **Minutes**

The secretary (Laura) presented two IHC meeting minutes -- February 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting and February 18<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting. Linda motioned to approve the two February meetings minutes. Steve seconded the motion, All voted in favor.

### **High Street Improvements**

Steve previously requested the IHC be involved with changes to High Street. He said they have started digging up High Street and this would be the ideal time to plan and for the IHC be involved. He suggested we look at what other towns have done in historic districts. Steve mentioned that Chris Morse of former Chair of the APD also requested to be involved, and that an Ad Hoc committee has met and the meetings have been open to the public. Steve said he has approached the Town Manager to have IHC involvement for this \$5M project. The Town Manager has held inter-department meeting to review the project. Steve expressed concern and said that this is the time, while digging trenches, that conduit lines for utilities could be buried. He suggested that the Planning Department -- Kristen and Ethan -- should be consulted as this project is planned and moves ahead.

Steve motioned that the IHC request to participate in public hearings especially in the context of historic preservation. Gordon seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Linda said there is a meeting every Tuesday with all Town Departments attending. She said that project planning began three years ago.

Gordon said three years ago he attended meetings to advocate for bike lanes or accommodation, lowering speed, reconstructing sidewalks, and planning green areas.

Tom suggested we get a list together of suggestions to present. Steve asked members to email him any suggestions for a traffic-calming plan. These would enhance and improve the historic character of High Street.

### **Demolition Review by-law changes**

Gordon attended last Select Board meeting to discuss the Historical Commission's proposed warrant with a revised cut-off date of 1915 and changing the demolition delay from 12 months to 18 months. Select Board member Linda Alison asked if we might separate the two changes.

The IHC discussed Item C: #4 of Demolition Review use of wording "and/or" between criteria for historic significance, which was voted on the previous last meeting. (Tess had said the use of "and" should appear "#4 and" after criteria #1-- #3.) Kristen advised us that this wording is problematical to the review process laid out in the rest of the bylaw. Gordon made a motion for the change be "#4 and...". Laura seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

## **Election of IHC Officers**

John Fiske has stepped down from his role of Chair of the IHC. Currently Gordon is the Vice-Chair and therefore the acting chair. Linda nominated Gordon for Chair. Laura seconded. All voted in favor. The Commission postponed consideration of the Vice Chair and Secretary positions until the upcoming April meeting.

## **Position of Archivist**

The IHC has \$975 funds left from this year and another \$975 for a consultant/ archivists after June 30 -- totaling \$1950 available to be used in the next fiscal year. Kristen said the Planning Department has an intern every summer and suggested the Planning Department have their intern also do project work for the IHC, and that they would provide supervision. The above IHC funds would supplement payment through the Planning Department.

Possible projects for the intern would include:

- 1.** Updating the 2006 Partial List of historic houses. Gordon noted that the Patriot Properties site has incorrect dates for many houses.
- 2.** Begin research and documentation to applying for National Register Historic District designation for the Victorian era neighborhood bounded by Washington, Central, Maple, Liberty, and Mineral Streets. Most of the houses in this neighborhood date to 1850 – 1900 , constructed after wetlands around Farley Brook were drained.

Linda motioned the IHC work with the Planning Department to have the intern perform projects for the IHC and to allocate \$1950 (two years budget) to pay for this work. Steve seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:31  
Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Gresh  
Secretary

***Minutes approved by Historical Commission on April 21, 2020***