

## **Ipswich Historical Commission Minutes**

### **Meeting July 13, 2020**

Virtual Meeting via Zoom at 7 p.m.

Members in attendance: Bill Efner, Gordon Harris, Linda Grimes, Laura Gresh, Steve Miles, Tess Schutte

Alternate Members: Tom Schutte, Jamie Novak

Also in attendance: Kristen Grubbs of Planning Department, John Muldoon of Ipswich Local News, Hailey McQuaid summer intern for Planning Department and IHC, Dan Donovan – resident High Street, Chris Morse former APDC chair

Hailey McQuaid – Summer Intern Work Update:

Hailey spent part of her work this summer updating Sue Nelson's list of historic homes.

She converted the list of these homes -- currently a MSWord document -- to an Excel document. An Excel document will make it easier for use by other town departments. So far she has completed a list of 300 homes. She researched deeds for houses on Central Street and Argilla Road. Some of the houses listed on Patriot Properties had inaccurate dates. By researching deeds, she inserted the correct date building was constructed. The updated list includes address, period, date of house, and if the house is to be considered historic re possible Demolition Review Request. Her research also included the history of the Ipswich dams.

Kristen thanked Hailey for her contributions to both the Planning and Recreation Department.

June Minutes:

Linda moved to accept the June 2020 minutes. Steve seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

High Street Project:

Kristen said at the last meeting the IHC expressed an interest in including input from a historic landscape architect.

Landscape architect, Kay Demit, was recommended by Chris Morse. Kay has worked to design landscapes for community driven projects.

Gordon recommended contacting landscape architect Martha Lyon.

The landscape architect would collaborate with DPW and make recommendations.

Steve said that he had contacted Director of DPW Rick Clarke and recommended the project include engaging a landscape architect to review the project. Rick said he would be open to doing this. The IHC would provide names of recommended landscape architects and quotes to present to the Select Board.

Kristen thought we should move forward with recommendations.

At prior meeting the members were asked to research via Google Earth for streetscapes of historic neighborhoods in other communities. Newburyport and Old Bennington were mentioned as communities that had successful historic streetscapes.

An article the week prior was published in the *Local News* by John Muldoon reporting upper High Street road and sidewalk alterations were in planning stage. This article mentioned that neither the IHC nor the APD were consulted for this project. This article drew public awareness of changes to be made to the road and sidewalk to the historic area at upper High Street and the significance of this neighborhood.

Resident of High Street, Dan Donovan said he supports involvement of the historic commissions when DPW is planning upper High Street changes.

Gordon reminded that we talked with Kevin of Coneco (firm hired by town to engineer changes at upper High Street) regarding the importance of materials used.

John said it was important for the DPW to collaborate with a firm that has experience with historic neighborhoods. He said we don't want to compete with the engineers hired by DPW; we want to collaborate. We have already provided a list of our concerns.

Demolition Delay By-Law changes:

Linda expressed a desire for future goal of the IHC to create a pictorial essay of photos of historic 1st period homes in town. She mentioned the work of photographer Coco McCabe whose photography is very artistic. A pictorial book would bring attention to the special architecture here in Ipswich.

John said he was disappointed about results from delaying demolitions and that the developer simply waits out the 12 months and moves ahead with project.

John said the positive contributions made by IHC include interpretive signage, walking tour, and website. Future goals should include small-scale projects that promote the historic assets and encourage people to save old houses.

Steve congratulated John for his involvement in creating the APD. Steve noted that in addition to the revised Demolition Delay Bylaw, the creation of the ADP was a significant contribution of the IHC under John's leadership.

Steve mentioned saving the old Caldwell Nursing Home and its conversion to condominiums.

Gordon said the IHC should work to recognize other historic neighborhoods in town. He also said the chart created by John of historic paint colors on website is the most visited.

The Historic Ipswich website draws over 170,000 visits and 400,000 page views each year

A suggestion was made to have a monthly article in *Local News* on the historic assets in town and other info about care for historic homes. Both Laura and Linda were in support of a monthly article.

John Muldoon said he would welcome a monthly article. Perhaps a piece from the website could be used for print in *Local News*. Also if article publicizes the website it will create more awareness of historic assets in town.

Steve said the next step regarding High Street was to obtain the DPW timetable and be aware of meeting so we don't miss out on the opportunity to have a voice at the table.

Tom expressed a concern with historic landscaping. John said we can't be too historically accurate with historic yards since they included pigs and chickens.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Gresh  
Secretary

**MINUTES APPROVED 9/14/20**