

**Northampton Historical Commission
Minutes**

DATE: Monday, July 16, 2018
TIME: 5:30 PM
PLACE: City Hall Hearing Room, 210 Main Street

Member	Present
David Drake – Chair	X
Martha Lyon – Vice Chair	X
Barbara Blumenthal	X
Pauline Fogel	
Dylan Gaffney	X
Bruce Kriviskey	
Craig Della Penna	
Sarah LaValley - staff	X

Chairman Drake called the meeting to Order, 5:32 PM

Public Comment

Fred Zimnoch noted that there is limited information on city and tourism websites regarding historic events, and provided information on some Revolutionary-War related items. Mr. Zimnoch asked what responsibility the Commission has regarding historic signage. Chairman Drake replied that the Historical Commission does not have a budget for new signs, but would support signage efforts by others. Ms. Lyon noted that signage can be a part of larger efforts to promote history.

5:30 PM: Public Hearing – Request for a Local Historic District Certificate of Appropriateness pursuant to Section 195 of the Northampton Code. Proposed work to include replacement of shutters, gutters, and decorative lanterns. Ellery Owner, LLC, 259 Elm Street, Map ID 31A-011.

Bob Thomas provided an overview of the application, with an overall plan to try to make the Inn more appropriate to a Colonial style. White aluminum gutters will be replaced with a copper patina gutter, propane lanterns and period shutters will be added. Gas lanterns are not original to Elm Street, but are inspired by Beacon Hill. Landscaping work and interior renovations are also planned. Ms. Lyon noted that it is a 1950's structure in a colonial style, and is a puzzle to work on, but she is pleased with the proposed quality. Ms. Blumenthal moved to issue a certificate of appropriateness for the work as proposed. Seconded by Ms. Lyon, the motion carried unanimously.

Review of Proposed Work to 1986 Addition at Historic Northampton Pursuant to Historic Preservation Restriction

Laurie Sanders, Historic Northampton Executive Director, provided an overview of proposed work – walling-in an area within the addition to open additional interior space for storage and exhibits. The roofline will not be affected, and a secondary exit will be created. The Commission agreed that the work would not impact the historic integrity of the

building. Ms. Lyon moved to approve the work pursuant to the preservation restriction. Seconded by Mr. Gaffney, the motion carried unanimously.

Section 106 Review – Building Demolition, Veterans Affairs Medical Center

Josee Goldin, VAMC Facilities stated that the VA is working on demolition of dilapidated and obsolete structures that have fallen into disrepair, and apologized for the agency not communicating with the Historical Commission regarding historic reviews previously. The buildings present safety and hazardous materials concerns. MassHistoric has already indicated that demolition of any structures within the VA National Register District will create an adverse effect and required photo-documentation. Ms. Blumenthal expressed concern about loss of VA History.

Ms. Goldin stated that the VA is working to document history wherever possible, and is planning a possible museum, potentially to be located in one of the 1924 buildings, some of which are planned to be demolished. Many other buildings will be preserved.

Chairman Drake asked about any further plans for additional stakeholder involvement or public outreach. Ms. Goldin stated that she will look into ways to open discussions. Ms. Lyon added that the VA's responsibility is to provide modern care, it would be acceptable if that came at the expense of the loss of 1960's era buildings if other core buildings are able to be preserved.

Ms. LaValley stated that the Commission's role in the Section 106 process is to provide comment, although since it was not involved at the onset MassHistoric has already issued a determination.

The Commission agreed that the VA should be commended for their historic documentation, recommended a stakeholder group for input, establishment of a future museum, and to communicate with the Commission early-on in all future Section 106 processes.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM