Lenox Historical Commission meeting, July 15, 2019

**Present:**

Olga Weiss, Jan Chague, Lucy Kennedy, Cindy Weiss

Volunteer: Suzanne Pelton

1) The minutes of June 14, 2019 were accepted.

2) The Form B process of historic structure descriptions has been started with the consultants. The consultants can complete Form Bs on about 35 more structures per our budget (currently, the town has about 400 Form Bs done). Lucy and Olga drove around Lenox to identify structures for the consultants to work on. Lenox Dale could be described by neighborhood. The priority for Form Bs could be houses that the HC is concerned about for demolition delay that do not already have Form Bs.

3) Demolition delay: Lucy and Olga also looked at the most important endangered historic buildings to show the selectmen for affirmative maintenance or a demolition delay designation. About 60 houses were identified. Most are in pretty good shape but are a few in danger. We need to identify those houses that identify a look for a neighborhood – what would the town look like if these buildings were removed?

Lucy is working on the case for a demolition delay/affirmative maintenance ordinance to be presented to the planning board and select board. The HC will also ask the select board if it will allow the town to be a guarantor for loans to help homeowners with financial needs to complete preservation work.

Lucy will meet with Dave Roche, our liaison on the select board, and with the town attorney, and present the bylaw draft to the planning board on July 23. She will let the select board know at its July 17 meeting that the HC would like to discuss the ordinance at the next select board meeting on July 31. The goal is to have the ordinance on the agenda for the November town meeting.

The bylaw would clarify that demolition by neglect also applies to the historic district. (Everything in the historic district is already subject to demolition delay.)

4) Westinghouse street lamps plaque: Mr. Atwood is applying the plaque to the stone. Olga would like to have an installation event for the stone/plaque, possibly at the end of August.

5) Cemetery sign: The HC reviewed the artist’s mockup and discussed final changes. The second sentence in the cemetery write-up (“The oldest headstone is dated 1771”) will be deleted because of inconsistencies in the copy. The HC voted to have the sign slanted for easier readability. HC members will review the copy further for final changes.

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m. The next meeting will be Aug. 8, 2019 at 4 p.m.