Lenox Historical Commission meeting, June 14, 2018

**Present:**

Olga Weiss, Jan Chague, Lavinia Meeks, Suzanne Pelton, Ray Kirby, Cindy Weiss

Guest: Becky Cushing, director of Massachusetts Audubon’s Pleasant Valley Sanctuary

The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m.

1. Report by Becky Cushing: Plan for improvements to Pleasant Valley’s 1790 barn (currently bathrooms are housed in the lower barn). The plan is to enlarge the bathrooms and make them more accessible to the main part of the barn. Becky asked what the concerns of the HC would be about changes and whether renovated bathrooms would have to fit into the current building footprint. Ray suggested an engineering study to see what the septic issues would be. Pleasant Valley will hire an architect; the RFP went out this week. Olga suggested that PV hire a preservation architect. The HC will contact Mass. Preservation to suggest names. Audubon plans to conduct interviews in two to three weeks. Becky asked for any history about the barn that people may know. She would be willing to share schematics once they are ready. Her contact info.: bcushing@massaudubon.org, 413-637-0320.
2. B.J. Church is the new building inspector for Lenox/Lee. Olga had a conversation with her and learned that she is interested in alternatives for historic buildings and in working with the HC.
3. National Register designation: The final report by our consultant is in. We will get copies made for the HC at town hall. The HC awaits Betsy Friedberg’s approval (she chairs the National Register designation for the Massachusetts Historical Commission) before this project goes forward.
4. Westinghouse streetlights plaque: Ray spoke with Bill Gop, Lenox Department of Public Works director, about placement of a stone to hold the plaque. A standard size for the plaque is 14” x 20” and that would cost $900. Cindy will look for boulders on her property that might be used to hold the plaque and Suzanne will check on a possible stone, too. Cindy will check on which stonemason Berkshire Natural Resources hired for its Brothers Trail plaque.
5. Historic house plaques: Lavinia has contacted everyone who had been identified for receiving the remaining free historic house plaques. The plaque charge is $65 after the free plaques are distributed. Suzanne and Lavinia will work on distributing the final plaques.
6. Cemetery sign: The grave of Julius Rockwell was located, the final “missing” grave for the cemetery map. Jan presented the name corrections so that Bart Arnold can make the final changes to the map. Bart can draw in the war veteran designations on the map. Jan and Suzanne will do a final review of the names before Bart makes changes.
7. Brushwood Farms/Oliver Root house, 1792 (Gateway district) has a hole in the roof. The owners are interested in selling the house but cannot renovate it. Olga spoke with them and they will consider covering the roof with a tarp. The Root house is a “twin” of the house that now houses the Arcadia shop – the original owners were brothers.
8. Westinghouse streetlights: The bases are deteriorating and need painting. The poles and bases are separating. The DPW will be consulted for maintenance and the correct paint color to make sure the poles and bases match. Ray will talk to Bill Orr about this.
9. Historic Preservation report from the town consultants: Chapters in the report have been revised, and the final report is being prepared for the end of June. It will be incorporated into the town master plan.

The meeting adjourned at 5: 57 p.m. The next meeting will be on July 12 at 4 p.m.