

Lenox Historical Commission meeting, March 12, 2020

Present:

Cindy Weiss, Lucy Kennedy, Olga Weiss, Pat Jaouen, Ray Kirby

The meeting was held by conference call due to the corona virus outbreak.

1. Minutes of the last meeting will be postponed until the next meeting.
2. Discussion of the historic house inventory: Olga asked Neil Larsen, our consultant, about the National Register designation. He plans to rewrite the application rather than address each critique from the Mass. Historical Commission, but Olga will talk with him further about this. His partner, Marissa Marvelli, has reviewed more than 200 houses in Lenox Dale for the historic house inventory.
3. Budget: Lucy reported that we have sufficient money in the budget.
4. East Street Schoolhouse: Phil Considine and Jan Chague spoke with Olga about concerns for its preservation. Phil agreed that Ms. Wong of Eastover, the property owner, should be consulted but said she might not come to one of our meetings. The feeling was that the HC should visit her. We could discuss with her a short-term plan and long-term plan for keeping the schoolhouse preserved.
5. Demolition delay: No further information is available about when the ordinance will be approved by the AG and go into effect.
6. Endangered houses: 212 Main St. has been purchased. 211 Main St. was sold to an LLC. Lucy will contact Matt Tannenbaum to see if he has gotten a response to the letters to the 17 West St. owners. Jan's binder on the endangered houses is in the Historical Commission office.
7. Cranwell/Miravel: They are hiring and preparing for opening. Blantyre is also planning an expansion. The HC should be at the ZBA visit to the property, and Lucy will check on this so that members can attend. Members should read the Great Estates bylaw before the visit.
8. Walking tour handouts: Lucy asked the Historical Society if they would sell a bulk lot to us, but they will give them to us instead. We can distribute them. Pat will distribute them to inns, library, chamber of commerce, etc.
9. Village sign program, as recommended by the historic preservation plan: Historic information could be embedded in sidewalks or on signs. We would need to decide what to highlight, get approval from the Historic District Commission, and get a designer. Olga will speak to Bill Gop, director of public works, about what we would like to do and what the limitations are.
10. Old house material: A recent Mass. Preservation meeting included a talk about having a brochure or materials for realtors about the benefits of preserving an old house and what the steps in renovation are. The materials could also include information about financing for renovating older homes. Creating these materials would be a long-term project. Lucy and Cindy will look for examples of what other towns have done.

The meeting adjourned at 5 pm.

Next meeting: April 9 at 4 p.m.