

## **December 13, 2019 Meeting Minutes**

Town Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
30 Martin Street  
Essex, MA 01929

### Essex Historical Commission Attendees:

Nat Crosby, Chair  
Jay Tetzloff, Secretary  
Keith Symmes, Member  
Richard "Stretch" Stevens, Member

### Additional Attendees:

None.

### **Call to Order**

Observing that a quorum was present, Chair Crosby called the Meeting to order at 8:35am ET.

### **Minutes from Previous Meeting:**

None.

### **Old Business:**

#### 11 John Wise Avenue

Discussion:

\*The Essex Historical Society apparently was not aware that the barn at 11 John Wise Avenue was to be demolished, and "took on the project" of attempting to preserve it

\*Daunting task, as labor must be at "prevailing wage", no volunteers, no off-hours work is permitted per the master demolition and building contract for the new Public Safety Building

Richard - email from CPA

\*Essex Historical Society may request Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds to help defray the cost of dismantling the barn

CPA recently gave \$40k to \_\_\_\_\_?

Motions:

None.

#### 1 Kings Court

Discussion:

\*permit review

\*spoke to Trustees

\*property owners want EHC to resist demolition of the existing (green) 1870s house

\*existing barn has been moved to a new location on the property

\*a large new structure has been built where the barn used to be

New structure was permitted as a “barn/agricultural building”, but is substantially taller than a barn is permitted to be

\*new structure appears to be a house based on center entryway and staircase not characteristic of a barn

\*by rule of the easement, the old house is to be torn down

\*EHC could invoke the demolition delay bylaw when and if a demolition permit is applied for, based on the 1870 build date being over 100 years ago

Motions:

None.

### **New Business:**

#### House Surveys

Discussion:

Richard - there have been no recent CPA meetings funding requests

It may be an opportune time for the EHC to request CPA funding (\$15k) to fund additional house surveys.

Nat - asked where the Essex Historical Commission file location is - Town Hall basement? Also recommended digitization and online access to existing and new surveys

#### Spring Street Cemetery sign

Discussion:

Apparently there was \$3k set aside to repair or improve the signage at the Spring Street Cemetery, at which many of the Town’s founding family members and historical figures are buried.

There is little or no record of a previous gate or signage

Recommendation to request bids for what can be achieved with a \$3,000 budget, e.g a bronze/brass sign or plaque or some such.

#### Essex Historic Districts

Discussion:

Along with the above funding requests, it may also be an opportune time to request funding for establishment of one or more historic districts in the Town. Districts are typically controversial, as property owners generally do not support measures that place restrictions on their use or improvement of their properties. Successful districts typically consist of a visual arrangement of contiguous structures that form a streetscape or scene that has remained largely unchanged for over 100 years. There are relatively few of those in Essex, as it is smaller and more spread out than Salem (as an example). However, Districts can be effective preservation tools, as evidenced by gradual changes made in Salem that are starting to add up.

Motions:

None.

Decided:

-Nat to send Jay the RFP application materials to request funding for additional house surveys.

- \_\_\_\_\_ to determine whether there is in fact \$3k set aside for the Spring Street Cemetery signage, or whether it has reverted to another part of the Town budget.

-Jay to explore possibility of establishing one or more historic districts in Essex

**Motion to adjourn**, seconded and passed unanimously at 9:55 am ET.

Respectfully submitted,

Jay E. Tetzloff, Secretary