



PETERSHAM HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION and PETERSHAM HISTORICAL COMMISSION

3 South Main Street • Petersham, Massachusetts 01366 • 978-724-3353 tel • 978-724-3501 fax

Annual Report for July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

The Petersham Historic District Commission & Historical Commission met monthly throughout the year at Petersham Memorial Library and enjoyed a productive year.

The Commission received a Project Application for an addition and modifications to the exterior residence at 11 Common Street. Upon review, discussion, and completion of a Public Hearing, the project was approved. The HDC received an Application for 26 South Main Street requesting to remove windows and doors from a south side exterior. Upon review, discussion, and completion of the Public Hearing, the project was approved. Both projects had interesting historic photographs which the Commission appreciated reviewing. At the request of the HDC, staff from The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR) met to review a large sign that had been installed on North Main Street, at North Common Meadow and which was felt to be out of scale with the location and blocked views of buildings and landscape. Upon conclusion of a site visit all were in agreement to remove the existing sign and install a new smaller one near the historic Brooks Law Office along with an information kiosk behind the Law Office. The HDC was appreciative of TTOR's understanding and willingness to rethink the project.

Discussion was held during the year about solar panels, bike path designation on Route 32, and possible exterior changes at The Country Store. In February 2015, we submitted our annual town budget for FY16 and in keeping with the wishes of the Selectboard & Advisory Finance Committee, we requested a level funded budget.

The HDC was pleased to welcome new Commission member Jeremy Gabrenas in September 2014. Jeremy takes the seat required to be filled by a person in the trades. The Commission was pleased to welcome new member Mark Bishop in January 2015. Mark fulfills the required position of being from among the property owners of the District. He also agreed to take on the job of HDC Clerk for which all members were grateful. The Board was thankful for the many years Chris Mandel had fulfilled the position of Clerk. In Spring 2015, Mark proposed an HDC Lecture Series as a way to communicate with residents and the public in general. He brought many ideas to the Commission and the series looks promising with guest Joseph Cornish of Historic New England willing to give the first talk on historic home maintenance.

The Commission continued reviewing and editing our By-laws, with HDC member Lynn Shaw keeping the detailed process moving forward. The project is on track for likely submission to the voters at June 2016 Annual Town Meeting and will include the input of the Planning Board for review and public hearing as required by law.

Through the work of HDC member Chris Mandel, the applications for nomination to the National Register of the historic Ledgeville Schoolhouse and Second East Street Schoolhouse, dated 1846 and 1849 respectively, were submitted to Massachusetts Historical Commission on July 3, 2014. In October 2014, Petersham Historical Society (PHS) president Henry Woolsey met with the HDC to review state funding that had been provided for renovation of the town-owned Ledgeville Schoolhouse thanks to support of retiring Senator Stephen Brewer. All agreed the HDC and PHS will work well together on this important preservation project; there is a lot of helpful overlap with Chris Mandel and Nancy Allen also being members of the Historical Society Board. In Spring 2015, Nancy Allen reported project specifications for the Schoolhouse had been developed for review and recommended that the first phase of work focus on structural issues, major interior work, and door & window repairs.

The HDC welcomes attendance at our meetings which are held under the Town's Historic District Commission Bylaw Article XII. The Commission is grateful to Petersham residents and fellow town officials for providing their support for preservation of Petersham's history.

~ Respectfully submitted, *Commission Members, July 2014 – June 2015:*
Nancy Allen, *Chair*; Robert Clark, *Vice Chair*, Mark Bishop, *Clerk*
Jeremy Gabrenas, Christine Mandel, Lynn Shaw, *members*

Meeting Agendas, Minutes, and other HDC materials can be found at the Historic District Commission link on the town web site at www.mytowngovernment.org/01366. Our thanks to the web managers for providing this service and to Petersham Memorial Library for providing HDC meeting space.

ABOUT THE PETERSHAM HISTORIC DISTRICT Through the diligent hard work of town residents and the commitment of Petersham voters, the Petersham Historic District was established in 1967 as one of the earliest in the Commonwealth. Today, there are more than 215 Districts in 110 towns and cities across the Massachusetts. Since the 1930s, over 2,300 Historic Districts have been established across the United States and the number keeps growing as towns discover and appreciate the “quality of community” benefits brought about by preservation.