

Provincetown Historical Commission
July 13, 2007
Minutes

Meeting called to order 9:00 AM

Members Present: Stephen Borkowski, Polly Burnell, Steve Desroches, Eric Dray, Steven Milkewicz, Taylor Polites and Char Priolo

1. Approval of Agenda

Steve Desroches moved to approve the agenda. Polly Burnell seconded.

Vote: 5-0-0 (Steven Milkewicz and Char Priolo arrived after this vote)

2. Approval of Minutes

Burnell moved to approve the minutes. Desroches seconded.

Vote: 5-0-0 (Milkewicz and Priolo arrived after this vote)

3. Public Statements

There were no public statements.

4. Oral History Project

An open discussion of different initiatives related to the creation of an Oral History Project were discussed. Desroches described the experience at the Martha's Vineyard Oral History Project, where the effort began small and grew. He also emphasized that the Project had a single individual who drove the effort. Eric Dray noted that he believed the Commission should drive the effort to establish an OHP in Provincetown.

- Burnell stated that she will bring in a list of names to begin an effort to identify individuals who should be interviewed on a priority basis.

Stephen Borkowski noted that the Director of the New York Branch of the Archives of American Art was also interested in supplementing their collection with oral histories related to Provincetown as an art colony. He suggested this could also be a potential resource for funding a portion of the OHP.

Other individuals noted who could be helpful to beginning a project were Claire Sprague, Jay Critchley and perhaps resourcing volunteers from the History Preservation Project.

- Taylor Polites, Char Priolo and Desroches agreed to hold a public meeting to develop a list of goals for the OHP.
- Dray also noted that he wanted to convene a joint meeting between the HC and the

Historic Distric Commission to discuss ways to help the HDC in their work.

5. History Summit in Provincetown

An open discussion ensued regarding efforts to hold a History Summit in Provincetown, bringing in different constituencies related to history and historic preservation efforts in the community. A variety of goals were identified based on the discussion:

- ➔ To roll the OHP in as an arm of the History Preservation Project
- ➔ To ride on the energy and enthusiasm for historic preservation currently felt in the community
- ➔ To raise community awareness about the value and need for historic preservation
- ➔ To identify common goals amongs local institutions
- ➔ To discuss the uses and development of an online resource under the auspices of the History Preservation Project
- ➔ To develop an historic preservation pamphlet
- ➔ To open discussion with real estate interests in the community regarding the value of historic preservation and historic integrity in Provincetown's historic buildings

Polites also mentioned that a Banner insert could be a useful way to raise awareness and open dialogue in the community about historic preservation efforts currently under way and their value.

The structure of the summit was discussed, including asking Bill Schneider, Provincetown's Tourism Director, to be the moderator and structuring break-out groups to tackle specific issues. Borkowski also emphasized the economic component of historic preservation and its ties to cultural tourism.

- Dray said he would draft goals and objectives of the history summit and discuss the idea with Town Manager, Sharon Lynn.

6. Town Buildings

Desroches updated the Commission on the discussions regarding the renovation of Firehouse No. 2. There remains no clear consensus on the type of renovation to be done on the second and third floors, although options remain commercial space or housing.

7. Hawthorne Barn

The Commission determined to include the status and future of the Hawthorne Barn as an

agenda item for the history summit. It was hoped that a part of that conversation would include a broader discussion of how the community can manage similar “emergency” situations.

8. Murchison House

It was reported that Mrs. Murchison had recently passed away. The identity of the new owner(s) was not yet known, nor the fate of the house.

There being no more business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting: Friday, July 27, 2007 9:00 AM

Action Items

- Priolo will begin collecting detailed information on the existing oral histories to create an inventory of them.
- Dray will discuss status of Town Hall with David Guertin and what level of rehabilitation is needed to correct current issues so the Commission has a better understanding of the situation.
- Johnson stated she would make an effort to inventory her oral histories. Burnell offered to assist her in this inventory.
- Burnell stated that she will bring in a list of names to begin an effort to identify individuals who should be interviewed on a priority basis.
- Taylor Polites, Char Priolo and Desroches agreed to hold a public meeting to develop a list of goals for the OHP.
- Dray also noted that he wanted to convene a joint meeting between the HC and the Historic Distric Commission to discuss ways to help the HDC in their work.