

Dighton Historical Commission
1111 Somerset Ave
Hybrid Meeting- Old Town Hall and Zoom
July 9, 2024 - 6:00 PM
Present: Pat Gailes, Rafa Delfin, Pat Olsen, Dave Marvill, Zach Caron

Meeting Agenda

1. Call Meeting to Order at 6:00 PM
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Review/Discuss/Act Follow-up meeting with Stacy Spies.
4. Review/Discuss/Act – Community wide survey of West Dighton Properties
 - Stacy Spies Contract - Stacy will incorporate the 10 selected properties into the contract and continue research on Mount Hope and South Dighton districts. Stacy was tasked with researching the extent of Mount Hope Move Buildings, Olmstead landscape features, and the South Dighton district boundaries. Stacy will contact Ben Haley at Mass Historical Commission by Friday for this task. She was gathering information and expected to have a clearer picture by the next meeting. Pat Olsen said that her son has a huge collection of North Dighton and Mount Hope memorabilia; Olsen showed an 1891 map of North Dighton as well as a book with old photos. The book shows Spring Street which became Main Street and Water Street which became Lincoln Avenue. Stacy and the commission reviewed their previous notes and confirmed the number of buildings on Park Island, and discussed efforts to identify historic homes and landmarks in West Dighton with a focus on the Wellington, Williams, Horton, Smith neighborhood and properties with notable last names. The Commission discovered several buildings, such as the Colonel Walker House and the Peter Pitts house, and they discussed the historical significance of the poor farm and its residents. The discussion also touched on the challenges encountered in locating some of these sites and the importance of preserving them. As a result, we identified 11 properties for preservation (including the cemetery), with Stacy to be provided with a list for further action.
 - The interim town administrator suggested to edit and to add the preliminary list of properties to the contract. The Board of Selectmen will also vote on accepting the contract.
 - The group decided on a preliminary listing of West Dighton properties. This listing will be presented to the BOS on their next regular meeting.
5. Secretary's Report
 - Minutes of June 11, 2024
Motion to accept the minutes of June 11, 2024 as amended. Moved by Zach Caron, seconded by Dave Marvill. All in favor.
6. Budget
 - FY 24 Balance and Expenses
Encumbered \$80 for the historical marker sign. The bills for conference were submitted and paid.
 - FY25 Budget
Beginning balance \$1400
 - Review/Discuss/Act -Acceptance of Donations

We need to formally accept the donations that we have received. Under MGL Chapter 40, Section 8D, the commission may accept gifts, contributions from individuals, foundations. Motion to accept the donations from BayCoast Bank (\$300) and Heide Brock (\$250) with thanks and appreciation. Moved by Zach Caron, seconded by Pat Olsen. All in favor. Gailles will send a letter to the BOS notifying them of the donations. Delfin suggested that we acknowledge the donors on the Commission's Facebook page. Gailles said she has already sent a formal letter of thanks to the donors.

7. Unfinished Business

- Review/Discuss/ Act - Preserving Memories of Dighton – Gailles showed a release form from Cam, our first interviewee, who is 15 years old. We have to come up with questions to ask him during the interview. Dave said that the studio may be ready in two weeks. Gailles is collecting names of people we can interview.
- Review/Discuss/Act –Walking Tour Pamphlet of Dighton's National Register Districts - The committee deliberated on the selection of images for a brochure, and legal disclaimers. Zach showed us a Dighton brochure, given to him by Town Historian Myrna Santos that could help us in designing the walking tour pamphlet.
- Review/Discuss/Act- Historical Marker Program – Gailles has been in contact with Paul Pacheco, the marker vendor, who told her that the marker for the Old Town Hall has 6 coats of paint and lettering and a clear coat is being done. Olsen expressed that this project is taking so long to be completed. Delfin said that he had reached out to John Larson of Somerset Historical Society for marker inquiries but they never got back to him. Olsen asked for Rafa's number so she can give it to Larson so Larson can call Rafa.

8. New Business

- Review/Discuss/Act – Informational letter for North Dighton Property Owners. Edited by correcting the address to 979 Somerset Avenue and by replacing contact number with Gailles' e-mail address.

9. Reports

- CPC report – No meeting in June. Should be meeting in July.
- Library Building Committee – Gailles was not able to attend last meeting. Next meeting is July 16 at 2 PM.
- America's 250th Anniversary Met last night. The committee met to finalize the calendar of events and publicity. Robin Lacroix continues to work in identifying the Revolutionary War soldiers. Gailles helped Cathy Potter with her article on 2 of Dighton's soldiers for the Rehoboth Reporter. Karin Potter will be contacting the schools. The reading of the Declaration of Independence will occur in 2025 and 2026. In 2026, the reading will be on August 18th because this was the date that all of the ministers in the colonies had received the Declaration of Independence to read to their churches (at that time the Church and State were connected). Karin is coordinating with the Community Church. One event discussed is a tour of the Bristol Path. Gailles asked if we want to take that on to organize and make a brochure? Zach think it's a good idea.
- Motion moved by Zach to provide the 250th Anniversary Committee the information and organize and prepare materials for the walking tour of the Bristol Path. Seconded by Dave Marvill. All in favor.
- Our walking tour of the NR districts could be done in 2026 with additional information about the areas during the Revolution. Cemetery tours and identifying the graves of the Revolutionary War is on the list of activities and our input there would be helpful. Next

- meeting is August 5. Gailes mentioned that a reenactment is being planned and a presentation about Ezra Stiles and Dighton will be arranged in collaboration with an associate professor from Williams College.
- Zoning Board Meeting – 2120 Water Street. Zach said there were no Commission members who attended the meeting. The building has been condemned and will be demolished. The new owner will build a two-family house in the colonial style to maintain the neighborhood's character. Concerns were raised about parking and potential property damage, leading to conditions prohibiting parking on residents' property.
10. Other
- Next Meeting Date – August 13, 2024 at 6 PM
 - Review/Discuss/Act – The next Working Committee date will be tentatively on August 29th.
 - Reorganization of Commission - The roles and responsibilities of board positions, particularly the clerk and vice president roles, were clarified, with Rafa temporarily assuming the clerk duties. Gailes is open to continue being chair but she wishes to see that the projects that she has initiated will first come into fruition before she considers stepping down. Zach asked if Rafa wants to continue being vice-chair but Rafa is indifferent to the position since it's only "honorary." He'd rather continue being the clerk. Dave expressed his commitment to the commission and proposed discussing leadership roles in August to allow Shara and Irene to consider stepping up.
 - Segreganset School House / Historical Graves – Dave Marvill raised a concern about the security of the school building after checking it during his vacation. He suggests that the new commission members should visit the school. He also raised the potential loss of historical graves on private property, including one belonging to Peter Pitts. Dave had previously worked as a grave officer; he sought permission to investigate the graves, which were reportedly marked by small cards indicating the names of the deceased. Dave also noted concerns about the potential destruction of the Hessians' burial site, which was supposedly located near power lines (Hessians = Germans).
11. Correspondence - A report from PAL – Public Archaeology Laboratory for our files - not for public distribution
12. Adjournment – Motion to adjourn. Moved by Zach Caron, seconded by Dave Marvill. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Rafa Delfin, 7/28/2024