



Lynnfield Historical Commission
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ANNUAL REPORT 2008

This year has been a busy and rewarding one for our Commission. Members Nan Hockenbury and Faith Honer-Coakley were reappointed and took the positions of chairperson and recording secretary. New members appointed were Stephen Smith treasurer, Linda Gillon, publicity, and Steven Richard photographer and manager/ liaison to the DPW for the newly named Historical Centre at 35 South Common Street.

During the last months of 2007, the Commission began to research the Demolition Delay By-law and Community Preservation Act, deciding to bring these valuable pieces of legislation before the town for enactment. The Demolition Delay By-Law is used to prevent unnecessary demolition of historic homes, buildings and landscapes, and the Community Preservation Act is designed to acquire funds that would fund historic preservation, purchase open space, and aid low-income property owners.

The Commission invited Mory Bahar from the Trust for Architectural Easements, Kathy Greenfield and Virginia Adams from the Reading Historical Commission, to the January meeting. The Commission was informed about their experience with the Demolition Delay and Community Preservation Act as well as other solutions for preservation of historic homes.

It was decided to hold three forums at the Meeting House to present the Demolition Delay By-law and the Community Preservation Act to the public. The first was held in January with panelists Mory Bahar representing the Trust for Architectural Easements, Bill Power, noted historical author and Peabody Historical Commission chairman, Doug Kelleher, board member of PreservationMass and former member of the Salem Historical Commission, and Michael Steinitz from the Mass Historical Commission. Informative presentations were given on national and local historic districts, the Demolition Delay By-law, the Community Preservation Act, and the role of the local Historic Commission, followed by a question and answer period.

A.L.L., or *Assure Lynnfield's Legacy*, was introduced as a volunteer organization to educate, inform, organize, and discuss issues and concerns that address Lynnfield's historic sites, their significance, and the prevention of their loss. Volunteers would participate in grant writing, cemetery conservation, inventory survey building, etc., under the supervision of the Commission.

Attorney Jay Kimball moderated the second forum held in September with representatives from various town organizations including Betty Adelson, Conservation Commission, Marge Generazzo and Nathan Rawding, Open Space Committee, Kendell Ingelese, Library Trustees, Betty Hayter, Council on Aging, Edie Richard and Barbara Drozek, Historical

Society, Marge Magonagle, Flower Workshop, Richard Simmons, Bike Trail, as well as representative of the Recreation Committee, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and the Veterans Association. Katherine Roth from the Community Preservation Coalition presented an informative slide show on the Community Preservation Act, followed by much discussion. The third Forum in October featured Commission members in a round table discussion.

Nan Hockenbury and Linda Gillon met with Town Counsel Tom Mullen to finalize wording of the Bylaw. Both the By-law and Community Preservation Act were presented to Town Administrator Bill Gustus, Selectmen Arthur Bourque, Robert MacKendrick, and Al Merritt, the Finance Committee, Planning Board, Recreation Committee and Conservation Commission over the course of the year. Both received approval from the Selectmen for vote at the October Town Meeting.

The Demolition Delay By-Law presented by Linda Gillon and Faith Honer-Coakley was passed after a roll call vote and the Community Preservation Act was approved for placement on the town ballot April 13, 2009. `

In March, Steve Richard attended a workshop titled *Developing and Managing Digital Projects*, given at the Northeast Document Conservation Center in Andover. Commission members Nan Hockenbury and Linda Gillon attended a *Preservation Roundtable* held at the Traditional Building Conference in Boston. Participants included the National Trust for Historic Preservation, PreservationMass, Historic New England, and the Boston Preservation Alliance. Faith Honer-Coakley, Hockenbury and Gillon represented the Commission during *Library Night* at the Lynnfield Library.

Stephen Smith and Nan Hockenbury attended a conference given by the Community Preservation Act Coalition at Essex Aggie. Hockenbury attended workshops concerning historic preservation and working with the CPA while Smith was informed about the legal aspects of protecting land in trusts and instituting the CPA.

Prospective Eagle Scout Neal Sacks undertook the challenge of beginning the rehabilitation of Freeman Park, a project that was started by years ago by retired Historical Commission members. He met with Conservation Committee member Betty Adelson who approved his plan to remove overgrowth and debris, create a walking path, and arrange for future plantings and a commemorative bench. Stephen Smith applied for a Landscape Preservation Grant through the Essex National Heritage Commission that was unfortunately not funded.

Kyle Shinnick from Lawn Pros also met with Betty Adelson and received the okay to remove some tree limbs and overgrowth from the landscape at the Historical Center. The gardening Commission members will continue to restore the bulbs and perennials exposed under the weeds and with further trimming and care the grounds will bloom again.

The heating system in the Historical Centre was replaced after its failure led to water damage that required some ceiling repair and floors refinished. Both the Historical Commission

and Historical Society now have offices in the building although more repairs and updating are needed. The Lynnfield Historical Society librarians Edie Richard and Barbara Drozek with Judy Angus, and the Commission are working together to establish a working resource center to provide access to the objects and documents that represent Lynnfield's history. The Historical Centre will be open to researchers, classrooms, individuals, and homeowners to view and study the collections, as well as gain information about preservation, conservation, and restoration of antique homes and landscapes.

Two Thousand Nine will bring continued efforts to pass the CPA in April, repairs and object cataloging at the Historical Centre, plantings, a granite bench, and a sign for Freeman Park, gravestone cleaning, repair of historic district signs and plaques, and a look at the historic Bancroft-Danforth House. The board members of the Lynnfield Historical Commission are looking forward to another busy and productive year.