

## Hadley Historical Commission Minutes for March 22, 2016 Compiled by Jeffrey Mish

Members Present: Jeffrey Mish, Tom McGee, Linda Ziegenbein, Marjorie Pratt Townsend, Margaret Freeman, Kate Kentfield

Members Absent: Ginger Goldsbury

Guests: Patrick Borezo, Maureen Jacque, Alison Donta-Venman

Linda Ziegenbein served as Chair in Goldsbury's absence.

Meeting came to order at 7:00 with Ziegenbein approving the digital February minutes, Kentfield seconded. Minutes will now be E-Mailed to all members before each meeting; the approval process will take place at the meeting.

### Library

Library Director, Patrick Borezo, as well as two trustees, Maureen Jacque and Alison Donta-Venman, came to the meeting with a packet of information regarding the prospective new library that may replace Hooker School (currently the Hadley Senior Center). The town will officially vote on the matter (Article 20) at town meeting. If approved, Hooker School, a building dating to 1921, will most likely be torn down.

The Commission informed the Trustees that their purpose is to advocate for the preservation of Hadley history, and that a letter had been mailed to the Massachusetts Historical Commission regarding the matter. The Trustees requested a copy of the letter, as well as any response received from the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

The Commission inquired why Hooker School had been chosen for the site of the new library; the Trustees responded by stating that the Municipal Building Committee offered the site to them, prompting Linda Ziegenbein to state: "The building committee is offering up buildings to destroy."

Tom McGee pressed the Trustees on why they hadn't purchased the former Saint John's Church when it was available. At least one of the Trustees was unaware that the church ever was for sale.

McGee inquired whether or not federal money was involved in funding the new library, to which the Trustees replied that the project hinges on a grant (application deadline, January 2017) that would cover 54% of the cost. The remaining 46% would be covered by the townsfolk (36%) and the Capital Gains Program (10%).

Marjorie Pratt Townsend inquired why the field behind Hooker School hadn't been chosen as the prospective site. The Trustees responded by saying that the site had minimal visibility from the road, making it an unappealing location in reference to the aforementioned grant application.

The Trustees did admit that the cost of building on the field would be about the same as on the Hooker School site.

Margaret Freeman asked if the Trustees had considered a way to use Hooker School without knocking it down. The Trustees responded by saying that they are looking for the most efficient and cost-effective option, meaning that the library should be 11,000 square feet and a single level. Hooker School (13,000 square feet) and other historic buildings in town were too large, meaning that their use would result in unnecessary work and expenses. The weight of the books/structural reasons were also cited as issues with using historic buildings.

McGee pointed out that if a new library is built, it will be a municipal building/town property, meaning that the town can use it for whatever purpose it wants, noting that the destruction of Hooker School will displace the town's senior citizens, as well as town boards, such as the Historical Commission, which are based in Hooker School.

McGee also said that the town could acquire the former Aqua Vitae site on which to build a new library.

Kate Kentfield asked if the grant work could be transferred to another site if Article 20 is rejected, to which the Trustees responded that they would accrue another expense by altering the current plan, but did say that their backup location is the field behind Hooker School.

Ziegenbein said that the Commission should use the April meeting to decide what should be said about the library situation at town meeting.

### Miscellaneous

The Commission received a letter from MassDOT regrading repairs being done to a bridge over Russellville Brook in front of the William Dwyer residence on River Drive. The Commission responded by sending MassDOT a letter stating that they must abide by Section 106, even if they don't receive federal funds for the project.

A series of E-Mails were received from the Select Board, one of which discussed the creation of a new building committee. Ziegenbein volunteered to join the new committee.

Discussion of the Historical Commission pamphlet was postponed.

Kentfield made a motion to adjourn at 8:54, Ziegenbein seconded.