

DRAFT Minutes of the Cambridge Historical Commission—THIS DRAFT HAS NOT YET BEEN REVIEWED OR APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION

Minutes of the Cambridge Historical Commission

April 13, 2023 – Meeting conducted online via Zoom Webinar (837 5018 8621) - 6:00 P.M.

Members present (online): Bruce Irving, *Chair*, Chandra Harrington, Elizabeth Lyster, Jo Solet, Yuting Zhang, *Members*; Gavin Kleespies and Paula Paris, *Alternate Members*

Members absent: Susannah Tobin, *Vice Chair*; Joseph Ferrara, *Member*; Kyle Sheffield, *Alternate Member*

Staff present (online): Charles Sullivan, *Executive Director*, Sarah Burks, *Preservation Planner*

Public present (online): See attached list.

This meeting was held online with remote participation pursuant to Ch. 2 of the Acts of 2023 adopted by the Mass. General Court and approved by Governor Healey. The public was able to participate online via the Zoom webinar platform.

With a quorum present, Chair Irving called the meeting to order at 6:04 P.M. He explained the online meeting instructions and public hearing procedures, then introduced commissioners and staff. He dispensed with the Consent Agenda and designated alternate members Gavin Kleespies and Paula Paris to vote on all matters.

Mr. Sullivan explained that the meeting was a continuation of the March 30, 2023 meeting to consider the remaining items from that agenda.

Preservation Grants

Case IPG 23-8: 80 Trowbridge St., by Cambridge Ellis Nursery School. \$25,000 requested for replacement windows.

Case IPG 23-9: 1450 Massachusetts Avenue (3 Church St.), by First Parish in Cambridge. \$325,892 requested for facade and clock restoration.

Mr. Sullivan shared his screen and showed slides of the Cambridge Ellis Nursery School and the First Parish church. He explained the scope of proposed work for each application. Seven windows at the school needed to be replaced but would match the existing size and details. The church belfry was in a state of advanced decay. Some of the original tracery in the arches was missing. Quatrefoil trim detail had been revealed under plywood applied in the mid twentieth century. He explained that the church's 2022 accessibility project, which had received grant approval, had been put on hold. He suggested re-allocating the previous grant of \$100,000 toward this project and adding some additional grant funds for the current project. The total restoration cost for the belfry and clock was estimated at \$650,000. He said the current balance in the preservation grant fund was approximately \$450,000. Both grants would be made on a matching basis.

[Ms. Lyster arrived.]

Mr. Kleespies asked why the nursery school wasn't proposing to replace all the windows. Mr. Sullivan answered that many had been replaced already with cheap pine windows that were now failing. The original historic window casings that remained were in good condition. The proposed seven replacements were mostly located on the north side of the building, a former shock absorber manufactory.

Mr. Kleespies asked how the First Parish belfry had gotten so bad. Mr. Sullivan explained that

DRAFT Minutes of the Cambridge Historical Commission—THIS DRAFT HAS NOT YET BEEN REVIEWED OR APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION

though the church had completed restoration of the north wall of the building in 2014 and 2015, their momentum had slowed for several reasons including the pandemic, being between ministers, and fund-raising challenges.

Mr. Sullivan recommended approval of the requested \$25,000 grant to the Cambridge Ellis Nursery School. Mr. Kleespies so moved. Ms. Parish seconded the motion which passed with 6 votes in favor (Kleespies, Paris, Harrington, Solet, Zhang, Irving) and 1 abstention (Lyster)

Mr. Sullivan recommended re-allocating the \$100,000 unused prior grant and another \$150,000 grant for the belfry project at First Parish church. Ms. Paris so moved. Dr. Solet seconded the motion, which passed with 5 votes in favor (Paris, Solet, Harrington, Zhang, Irving) and 2 abstentions (Lyster, Kleespies) in a roll call vote.

Preservation Awards

Mr. Sullivan shared slides of 18 nominated award projects. The Commission decided to postpone an award for the Lampooon project until next year since it wasn't near enough to completion. They approved the idea of recognizing the several books on Cambridge historical topics that had been completed in the last year and researched extensively in the CHC collections.

Amendments to Ch. 2.78, Art. III of the City Code

Mr. Sullivan talked about the petition for amendments to the City's Neighborhood Conservation District and Landmarks Ordinance (Art. III of Ch. 2.78) and his responses to the petitioners and his own proposed friendly amendments. He said the original ordinance was adopted in 1983 and was the first such ordinance in the state of Massachusetts. He announced that the Ordinance Committee would hold another hearing on the matter on April 26 at 12:30 P.M.

Minutes

Regarding the minutes of February 2, 2023, which had been voted on at a previous meeting, Dr. Solet noted that she had voted against the proposed curb extensions on Brattle Street in 2008 because she thought they would interfere with bicycle safety. Regarding the draft minutes of March 2, 2023, Dr. Solet moved to add her comment to the February minutes and adopt the March minutes as presented. Ms. Harrington seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0 in a roll call vote. (Solet, Harrington, Lyster, Zhang, Irving, Kleespies, Paris)

Mr. Kleespies moved to adjourn. Ms. Paris seconded and the motion passed 7-0 in a roll call vote. (Solet, Harrington, Lyster, Zhang, Irving, Kleespies, Paris) The meeting adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah L. Burks
Preservation Planner

**DRAFT Minutes of the Cambridge Historical Commission—THIS DRAFT HAS NOT YET BEEN REVIEWED
OR APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION**

**Members of the Public
Present on the Zoom Webinar online, April 13, 2023**

Sage Carbone	270 Third St #709
John Hawkinson	CambridgeDay.com
Lucy Patton	333 Walden St
Betty Saccoccio	55 Otis St.

Note: Town is Cambridge, unless otherwise indicated.