

## Ipswich Historical Commission Minutes

Meeting January 12, 2021

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

**Present:** Members Bill Effner, John Fiske, Lee Hathaway, Linda Grimes, Gordon Harris, Laura Gresh, Steve Miles, Tess Schutte, Tom Schutte, Kristen Grubbs of the Planning Department

**Citizen:** Mark Silverman

**November Minutes:** Linda made a motion to approve the minutes and Steve seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.

**Choate Bridge Sign:** The interpretive sign has been installed. John sent announcement information to John Muldoon of Local News and has not had a response. Kristen said there is a lot of construction in the area and waiting till spring to have an in-person recognition might be best.

Questions arose regarding the construction near bridge and how it is impacting the historic bridge. Gordon said he would take a look to see if the bridge is being disturbed with the construction.

Steve thanked Kristen for being the liaison between the DPW and IHC.

Gordon recalled construction at North Main Street nine years ago and that a historic cistern in front of the library was removed without any questions or consult with the IHC.

There was a discussion of where to erect the next interpretive sign. Brown Square was suggested. John brought the town wharf on Water Street to our attention. He said this location has a lot of traffic and should be recognized for its historic significance in Ipswich. A preliminary proposal for this sign will be discussed at the next meeting.

**Linebrook Parish Church:** The town has a preservation agreement for this building with the ceiling arch included in the agreement. The current structure was built in 1830-1840 with the original building built in the 1700s. IHC was asked to evaluate water damage to steeple, roof, and ceiling. Gordon and Steve made a visit to report on this damage. The building is balloon construction with trusses. Water caused extensive damage to the arched plaster ceiling. The damage is covered by an insurance policy. A structural engineer would be able to determine what caused the damage. To generate income, the church is currently rented to a congregational church for services. The church is maintained by a trust and managed by volunteers.

Gordon will follow-up and discuss long term preservation with the trustees.

John said he would be reluctant to use funds from the Harold Bowen Fund for repair to a private building.

### **Harold Bowen Fund:**

The IHC is charged with making recommendations for the Harold Bowen Fund.

Gordon brought up a privately owned home on High Street where the owners inquired with Kristen about financial assistance for lead paint removal. The owners have a child with elevated lead paint levels. The lead paint removal has an estimated cost of \$100,000. John said the Fund is designated for assistance for projects that will provide public value for the benefit of the town and not for the use of private property. John thought the IHC should establish criteria for a non-profit and the appropriate use of the Harold Bowen Fund. The discussion will be continued.

**Update list of Historic Houses created by Sue Nelson:**

Sue Nelson's list was derived from Mass Department of Historic Preservation MACRIS list and Patriot Properties. The list is incomplete and there are instances of inaccuracy. Gordon suggested we elicit the help of a volunteer to edit and complete this list. Laura suggested recruiting a student of a Historic Preservation degree programs to do this as a project for an intern. BU, Boston School of Architecture and Roger Williams College all have programs in Historic Preservation. Contacting Dept. Chairs of these institutions is worth exploring.

**Tri-Board Meeting / Capital Plan Committee:**

FY '22 budget plan will be discussed at the meeting in early February. Steve suggested the IHC attend to make the Select Board aware of our interests to be considered in the High Street Project. Currently the DPW has committed to have a historic landscape architect involved in the planning.

**Mary Conley Award:**

Previously the IHC discussed nominating the Captain Richard Rogers House at 58 North Main Street for the Mary Conley Award. The house, owned by Ingrid and Stephen Miles, was built in 1728 and is of Georgian architecture with woodwork by renowned woodworker Abraham Knowlton. The Historical Commission received an application and detailed list of the work the Mileses did since purchasing the house. All the rooms are intact and have been meticulously maintained. The interior is distinct, being a fine example of historic woodwork.

Laura made a motion to nominate the Captain Richard Rogers House for the Mary Conley Award. Linda and Lee seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.

Gordon said a PowerPoint presentation should be prepared to present to the Select Board for this award. He suggested we announce the award in the Local News and on the Historic Ipswich website but wait until an in-person meeting is possible to show the presentation.

Linda moved to adjourn meeting at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Gresh  
Secretary

***Minutes were approved by unanimous vote at the Historical Commission meeting on February 22, 2021.***