



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
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## Minutes 03/04/2008

Arlington Historical Commission  
 Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday  
 4 March 2008  
 Whittemore-Robbins House, 7:45pm

Call to Order at 7:54pm with Co-Chair, Richard Duffy presiding, with Co-Chair JoAnn Robinson, Commissioners Jane Becker, Patrick Guthrie, Eric Stange and Dianne Schaefer and Associate Commissioner Alex Frisch.

Review of February minutes and January communications. The minutes were reviewed Ms. Robinson moved approval; Mr Guthrie seconded. VOTED: Unanimously.

### Communications Received –

- a. Call regarding 109 Westminster Avenue. Referred to Arlington Historical Districts Commission.
- b. Call from Richard Ramsey, owner of 645 Massachusetts Ave. Mr. Duffy reviewed architect's plans and determined that changes <25%. Sent memo to Building Department and owners to this effect.
- c. Call from Renewal by Anderson regarding window replacement at 86 Richfield Road. Less than 25%, non-jurisdiction memo sent. Mr. Duffy recommends removal of this property from the Inventory. See under New Business.
- d. Call regarding replacement of one window at Idahurst (49-53 Appleton Street) Less than 25%. Advised condo trustees of same.
- e. Call from Derick Snare, architect working for owners of 21 Appleton Street. See under Hearings, below.
- f. Call from Rick Connard regarding information on demolition of Arlington Center railroad station. Mr. Duffy informed him that the old depot was razed in 1977.
- g. Call from Lauren Gervais regarding environmental site assessment of Arlington Catholic High School practice field and adjacent Buzzell Field (Town of Arlington). Mr. Duffy responded with some historical information on prior uses of the land as Fowle's Mill Pond, and that some or all portions are believed to have been a landfill site in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Also referred Ms. Gervais to Jimmy Dodge of the Department of Public Works.
- h. Call from Arch Painting, offering complimentary tickets to an exhibition. As a quasi-judicial body of municipal government, the Commission declines such gifts.
- i. Call from owner of 30 Academy Street. Referred to AHDC.
- j. Call from Chris Bailey regarding demolition of garage at 19 Whittemore Street.
- k. Call from prospective buyer of 3 Kensington Road. Responded to general inquiries about the Commission's jurisdiction.
- l. Call from Deepto Chakrabarty to order historic house marker, and with general inquiry about the possible future removal of stucco from 87 Medford St. Referred to Commissioner Schaefer to discuss stucco project.
- m. Call from owner of Governor Brackett House. Referred to Arlington Historical Districts Commission.
- n. Call from Andy West of 5 Lincoln Street regarding re-shingling of house. Left message that a hearing may be required and requesting further information on scope of project. If a hearing is required it will be scheduled for April 1.
- o. Information about Eagle Scout Project-walking tour of Arlington's past. For more informational books or patches visit [www.menotomytrail.com](http://www.menotomytrail.com).
- p. Call from Town Finance Committee regarding budget.

### Related Activities of other Town Boards:

- a. Arlington Preservation Fund: Nothing to report.
- b. Zoning By-Law Review Committee: Meeting cancelled.

- c. Arlington Historical Society (Duffy): The upcoming program will be on March 25, when Dr. David Fleishman, an ophthalmologist-turned-historian presents his illustrated program "A History of Vision Aids." Audience members will be invited to bring antique eyewear for Dr. Fleishman's evaluation.
- d. Old Schwamb Mill (Duffy): A late winter open house will be held on Saturday, March 8.
- e. Arlington 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee (Meister): The Committee is next scheduled to meet on March 12 to review wrap-up matters, such as the production of a very limited-edition publication to commemorate the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary activities, production and deposit at Robbins Library and the Historical Society of images, etc.
- f. Arlington Historic District Commission: Nothing to report.

5. Historical Commission FY2006 Budget:

Information for Finance Committee to consider: Is normal appropriation sufficient? Are there any proposed expenses? We need to reissue purchase order for secretary. Brochure supply is good. Look at Town Day supplies. Web plan-add pages to spruce it up (\$500?). Cost of adding to Inventory (\$50?). Propose new printout of Historical List.

Proposal to support purchase of markers for quadrants in Old Burying Ground which is consistent with educational mission.

6. Proceeding under Hearings and Approvals:

- a. 3-5 Brattle Street (Fertman) 4/02 Stange – Work is almost completed-front steps need to be finished.
- b. 821 Massachusetts Avenue (Hodgdon-Noyes) 10/03 Duffy – (See under Hearings, below)
- c. Symmes Hospital (Town of Arlington) 6/04 Duffy – The hospital buildings were razed last month and the Nurses' Home is undergoing demolition. Artifacts are being transferred to the custody of the Arlington Historical Society. The MHC received and approved the archival box of photographs and documents that they required as mitigation for the change to the site development to not undertake rehabilitation of the Nurses' Residence as planned. This project will remain on the active project list following demolition of all the structures because of the historical oversight of the "Vista Park" development, street names and related issues.
- d. 197 Lake Street, St. Jerome Church (GK Development) 6/05 Robinson- Nothing to report.
- e. 41 Brantwood Road (Gallini) 11/06: Stange- Moving of fan window of northeast side is still on hold while they look for a contractor. They hope to restore and keep the original window, but still not sure if they can.
- f. 77 Warren St. (Carney) 5/07: Schaeffer- Building is still standing.
- g. 45 Fairview Ave. (Trvalik) 11/07: Guthrie- No report.
- h. 27 Brantwood Road (Duncan/Potter) 11/07: Stange- Nothing to report.
- i. 44 Brantwood Road (Burden) 12/07:Guthrie- No work.

It was determined that work is complete for 22 Pleasant St and 82 Wollaston Ave. and monitoring is no longer necessary. These properties were removed from list.

7. Continuing Projects

- a. Whittemore-Robbins House (and outbuildings): Robinson- (See below under Discussions and Hearings)
- b. Arlington Civic Block Garden: Robinson – MPPF grant request made last month for library wall repair.
- c. Inventory Expansion and Review: Duffy, Robinson, Stange –26 Florence Avenue to be added. Mr. Duffy has taken photographs and drafted a MHC Form B for submission.
- d. Education/Outreach: Duffy/Robinson- "History of Arlington Street Names" is appearing in the Advocate under Mr. Duffy's by-line each week. The public has been quite favorably responsive to this series, and much new information is being gathered from family members and additional research, about which we are recording more information about the development of Arlington-especially 20<sup>th</sup>-century development booms.
- e. Historic House Markers: Duffy – Four marker requests: (1) 87 Medford St. Thomas A. Briggs House, built 1889, (2) 26 Florence Ave. (pending completion of Inventory placement); (3) 9 Montague St.; and (4) 155-157 Westminster Ave.
- f. Town Hall: Duffy- Met with Patsy Kraemer to review decorating changes to the Selectman's meeting room (note: not the "Hearing Room"), and to consult on framing for reproduction of parchment of the 1807 enabling legislation for West Cambridge, which recently was presented by the Arlington 200<sup>th</sup> Committee.

g. Web site: Stange-

8. Discussion and Hearings:

8:00pm Informal Hearing for 821 Massachusetts Avenue (Hogdon-Noyes)

Presenter: Mary Wistanley- O'Connor, attorney for Peter Noyes, one of the trustees of they property trust.

Proponents requested that Commission exercise Section 3E under the Demolitions Delay By-Law.

Review by Mr. Duffy:

- ? House has not been saved for lack of trying
- ? There have been several serious inquiries about moving to other sites.
- ? The spirit of demolition by-law has been satisfied many times over.

Further discussion followed by Commissioners regarding preferential preservation or demolition. A vote will be taken at the formal hearing on April 1, 2008. Permission was requested and granted to the Commission to provide access for the purpose of taking interior pictures of the property.

Informal hearing completed at 8:17pm.

Informal Hearing for 21 Appleton St. (Benjamin Locke House and site of the First Baptist Church) began at 8:19pm.

Presenters: Marc Colosimo and Derick Snare

Plans for renovations with a raised roof were presented for the eastern and northern elevations of the house.

Commissioner requests and considerations for formal hearing on April 1, 2008:

- ? Explain exactly what is not to be preserved in proposed construction.
- ? If changes were to be reversed in the future, could the lines of the older real ell be restored?
- ? Rear elevation has secondary importance to main block of house, but is historical because of age and function in the home.
- ? Roofline changes when raised change shape and pitch of roof.
- ? Bring pictures of similar buildings with proposed type of addition.
- ? Make sure roof ridgeline is harmonious.
- ? Design should make changes subordinate to the main block of house.
- ? It should be discernible that it is a new addition and sympathetic in design.
- ? Present illustration of south elevation.
- ? Provide small diagram of what pieces were added and when in the past.
- ? Discuss windows and doors in complete detail.
- ? Provide 8.5X11" copies for each Commissioner to review.

Informal Hearing concluded at 8:54pm.

Discussion regarding Whittemore Robbins House and repair for gutters: 8:55pm.

Presenters: Christine Connolly, Patsy Kraemer and John Flood.

- ? Bids from contractors range from \$17,000-\$94,000. (average yearly expenditures requested \$5,000-\$7,000)
- ? Plan proposal to present to Commissioners of Trust Fund Maintenance Fund.
- ? Want to back up because there are too many unknowns about condition of house.
- ? Include periodic review/inspection of house as part of plan. (e.g., work with preservation architect or engineer).
- ? Have architect Randy Lewis look at house; he worked on the Whittemore Robbins House during its last major work in 1996.
- ? Do a complete evaluation to retain this profile of the gutter.
- ? Requesting endorsement of Commissioners for study.

Motion made to support efforts in discovery phase to evaluate work to be done and means to stabilize present condition. Mr. Stange seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Discussion closed at 9:13pm.

9. Old Business:

10. New Business: Mr. Duffy requested that 86 Richfield Road be removed form the Inventory. The house is a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century typical ranch-style house of a residential subdivision, and has been progressively altered (replacement siding, windows, etc.) over the years so as to render it unfit for continued placement on the Inventory due to lack of original architectural character.

11. The meeting adjourned at 9:53pm.

The next Arlington Historical Commission meeting will be April 1, 2008 at 7:45pm.

For the Arlington Historical Commission, Victoria Rose, Recording Secretary.