

**Historic District Commission**  
**334 Main St. Town Hall**  
**Great Barrington, MA 01230**  
**Public Meeting Minutes 11/20/2014**

**Meeting Opened: 6:35 pm**

**HDC Members Present:**

- Don Howe, Chair
- Dan Bailly, Vice Chair
- Holly Troiano, Secretary
- Barbara Syer, member

**Absent: James Mercer, Pat Ryan**

**Meeting opened by Chair Howe at 6:38pm**

- Motion to open the public meeting by Barbara Syer, second by Dan Bailly.
- Rob Gaughran, property manager for Searles Castle presented proposed repairs to the southwest balcony.
- Petitioner is notified that because there are only four HDC members present, any approval must be unanimous. He agreed to continue.
- The southwest balcony, held up by struts, is concerning to the building inspector as unstable especially because it is over a fire exit from the basement.
- Pictures from the previous architect Dan Pierce were shared
- The owners of the property wants the existing stones to be saved and catalogued. It was noted that at some earlier time some stones were replaced with concrete. It was also noted that weak stones will not be put back.
- Barry Architects have been engaged to do the balcony removal and the larger project that will redo the entire exterior of the castle.
- Chair Don Howe explained to those present that the owners may not apply for state help because of single ownership and the school it houses is a for profit institution.
- It was noted that Barry Architects may not be acceptable to Mass Historical.
- Carol Bradder was noted as the current owner.
- Barry is bringing in a historical consultant to be sure Mass. Historical guidelines are followed.
- Tonight's application is solely about removal of the balcony and preservation of the stone.
- Chair Howe asked where the stone would be stored and Rob replied in the sub basement.

- Chair Howe asked how the site would be protected after the removal of the stone. Rob said that he hoped only brackets would be on the outside and if they had to remove them they would.
- It was noted that mortar selection is necessary for certain types of stone and that the brackets are in good condition.
- Chair Howe suggested that follow-up should be done on the previous work done by Pierce architects.

A motion to close the public meeting was offered by Holly Troiano and seconded by Dan Bailly.

**Discussion:**

- Don suggested that a certificate of hardship be used to get the work done instead of a certificate of appropriateness so that the larger job may be more easily applied for.
- Dan Bailly, Barbara Syer, and Holly Troiano all voiced approval of the project.
- Barbara Syer made a motion to approve a certificate of hardship on the application by the Educational Consultants on 389 Main St., also known as Searles Castle and John Dewey Academy, to remove the southwest balcony, catalogue and store the stones removed.
- Second by Dan Bailly
- Motion made by Chair Howe to amend to include a request for documentation of said job.
- Second by Dan Bailly
- Vote was unanimous by roll call as follows: Yes, Don Howe, yes, Holly Troiano, yes, Dan Bailly; yes, Barbara Syer.
- Chair Howe clarifies that Pierce may have a copyright on the older photos that may not be approved by us for the new architect, Barry.
- Rob wants to have both to compare,
- Pierce is now located in Boston.
- Barry was brought in for a high level assessment. He had to be pressed for a full assessment.
- Chair Howe told Rob to come in when he has plans and he can check in informally. The new plan and certificate will be done in a few days

**Discussion of July 10 meeting which had been postponed:**

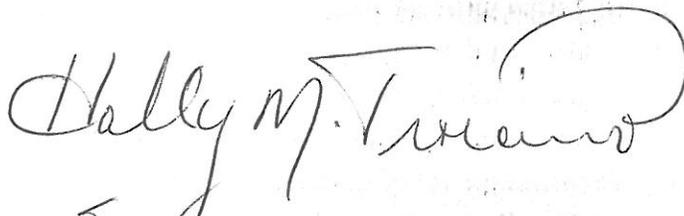
- Dan Bailly made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Barbara Syer. Motion was approved unanimously.

**Discussion of Aug 21 meeting:**

- Motion to accept by Holly Troiano, second by Dan Bailly. The vote was unanimous to accept.
- It was noted that Mr. Gee was not available for signage questions regarding Bra and Girl.

**Discussion re: historical markers**

- Holly Troian asked why it was taking so long to get them.
- Chair Howe said that James Mercer got a quote today for \$180 for the bronze plaques and add a one time pattern charge for the cenotaph @ \$150. As soon as the order is ready, Jim will put it in.
- A motion to spend \$731 for the 3 initial plaques, bronze, and the one time pattern fee for the cenotaph emblem was made by Chair Howe. Second by Dan Bailly. Passed by unanimous vote.
- 5-8 weeks for delivery
  
- General approval of the last meeting with Chris Skelley from Mass Historical
- Chair Howe suggests keeping our budget the same for the coming year.
- Chair Howe noted the following: Joe Sokul can get signage for the Taconic West district, we will need to update property sheets. The Historic Commission is applying for professional help for updating the property surveys.. There are issues with non contributing properties such as the Copper Beech development.
- Dan Bailly noted that the Town Manager wants all black streetlights and benches for the downtown plan. Dan let her know that we had already voted and approved what is listed in the plan. She asked that we reconsider. ]
- Don noted that it involves more than our Commission
- Dan was asked to reaffirm our previous decision to the Town Manager and we all support that decision.
- Our group also wants to maintain concrete benches in front of Town Hall.
- HDC members may attend the Select Board meeting on Mon. Nov. 24 to support Dan Bailly in reaffirming our decisions if they are available.
- Motion to adjourn by Dan Bailly, second by Holly Troiano, vote unanimous

  
Secretary