

## Meeting of the Historical Commission

March 17, 2022

South Hadley Public Library

6:00PM

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jose Vasquez, at 6:05.

Members also attending were Frank DeToma, Bob Judge, Tony Judge and Peter Scotto. Also attending were Robert Comeau, Representing Walking Tours, Robert Szklarz and Starr Florio, representing the Sycamores, and Janice DeToma. A new member, Emelie Lyszchyn, was not in attendance.

Bob Judge moved that the Commission explore and develop a demolition delay bylaw, with presentation for consideration at the Fall Town Meeting as the target date. Motion seconded by Peter Scotto. The motion was approved unanimously.

Bob Comeau, a Town resident, described his several historical walking tours in the greater Holyoke area. This is his seventh year of providing the tours. His major sponsor for this year is the Holyoke Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. His web site is <holyokecanaltour.org>. He asked if the Historical Commission would endorse and become a sponsor of this year's tours. In response to a question from Tony Judge about the nature of a sponsorship, Mr. Comeau stated that there is no financial obligation, and that sponsors' names will be noted on sheets passed out to tour attendees and posted on his web site. Bob Judge moved to endorse and sponsor the tours. The motion was seconded by Peter Scotto and passed unanimously.

The Commission then turned to a discussion of the Sycamores. Tony Judge opined that Sycamores is the most important historic structure in town. Mr. Szklarz indicated that Sycamores has several good trusts that can maintain the complex. He pointed out that his company (Colonial Carpentry Innovations) specializes in the preservation and restoration of historical homes. He explained that the restoration effort for Sycamores is ongoing. The building has been made much more energy efficient. Many structural improvements have been made. The plan is to set up set up different rooms on different floors that will display several periods in the structure's history. He explained that he is serving as Chair of the Sycamores Committee, and Starr is the Vice-Chair and House Manager.

Starr gave a brief history of Sycamores, and described her plans for the continuing restoration effort. For some time, Sycamores was a dorm for the College. The third floor will showcase dorm rooms as they appeared in the 30's, 40's, 50's and 60's. She is at the Sycamores on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The committee can be reached at [sycamorescommittee@gmail.com](mailto:sycamorescommittee@gmail.com).

At some point, Sycamores will have an open house. Leo LaBonte offered to publicize any Sycamores events on his Facebook page, the South Hadley and Granby Community Historical Tidbits Group. He will do a talk at the library on the 27<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 PM: Three hundred Years of Granby and South Hadley Farm History. It will cover the 1720-1920 period.

Diane LaRoche, of the Town's Historical Society, will be attending the next Commission meeting.

Peter Scotto moved to adjourn. Seconded by Bob Judge. We adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully,

Frank DeToma  
April 21, 2022