Appendix

Item 1.

Invitation to March, 2016 informational meeting

Dear Falls Resident,

You are cordially invited to a public meeting with the South Hadley Local Historic District Study Committee, to be held at the Firehouse Museum on March 10, 2016 at 6pm. “Why?” you may well ask. Well, it’s because WE LOVE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD!

“What the heck is a Local Historic Study Committee?” you may well ask. We are a group of volunteers appointed by the Selectboard. Our charge is to explore ways to ensure that the special historic character of South Hadley Falls is preserved for future generations. Our members are a selectman, folks who were born and bred in the Falls, and neighbors who believe that the Falls is rich in architectural diversity and character.

After much consideration, the Study Committee has determined that of all the areas in the Falls, your neighborhood has the highest concentration of architecturally significant homes. It is therefore a candidate for becoming a local historic district.

The Study Committee members would like to

- tell you more about who we are and what we have been doing since we were appointed,
- point out some examples of the architectural richness of the Falls and especially your neighborhood,
- inform you about local historic districts - - how they are formed, what they are, and what their value is to neighborhoods, and
- MOST OF ALL, answer your questions, and get your opinions about having a local historic district in your neighborhood.

We are sure that you have questions or concerns about local historic districts. We sincerely hope that you can join us for light refreshments and lots more conversation. We hope to see you on the 10th!

Eric Salus, Chair
Item 2.

Information sheet that accompanied the March, 2016 informational meeting invitation.

INFORMATION SHEET NORTH MAIN STREET AREA
LOCAL HISTORICAL DISTRICT

Location of District

The proposed Local Historic District is comprised of North Main Street, Carew Street, Cordes Court, Lathrop Street, and Crescent Lane.

Establishment

If residents respond favorably to the concept of a local historic district, the Study Committee will prepare a preliminary report and draft by-law for submission to the South Hadley Select Board, the Planning Board, and the Massachusetts Historical Commission. A public hearing will provide the opportunity for all town residents and interested parties to pose questions or offer comments on the proposed district regulations. The final report and recommendations will result in an article to be placed on the Town Warrant.

The creation of a Local Historic District must be approved by a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting. The district would be established and administered solely by the Town of South Hadley. There would be no involvement by any state or federal agencies and there would be no restrictions on the sale of use of property (except as established by local zoning by-laws.)

A five-member Historic District Commission appointed by the Select Board would administer the proposed historic district. The Commission would consist of a representative of the South Hadley Historical Society, a member of the local Board of Realtors, a registered architect or a builder familiar with the restoration of antique properties, one resident or property owner in the district and one resident at-large.

Impact

The Local Historic District by-law would provide for the local review of any demolition, exterior alteration, or new construction within the district to preserve the visual harmony
and character of the neighborhood. The proposed by-law would NOT require review of:

1) Routine maintenance and repairs
2) Paint color
3) Any feature not visible from a public way
4) Any interior features
5) Any features more than 250 feet from the front lot line

The Local Historic District Commission would consider each application on its own merits. The historic district would not require every building to be restored to its original appearance would encourage changes in a manner appropriate to the age and character of the building. The town zoning by-laws would still define the standards for commercial and residential uses, signs, and parking.

Procedures

Before undertaking any demolition, new construction, or significant alteration within the local historic district, a property owner would be required to submit plans to the Historic District Commission for review. Within forty-five days, the Commission would either issue a certificate of appropriateness allowing the work to proceed or provide suggestions for improving the design and compatibility of the work.

If a certificate of appropriateness is denied, the property owner may meet with the District Commission to discuss alternative approaches. The review procedure is not designed to prevent the improvement of properties, or to discourage new construction. It is intended to encourage the responsible treatment of historic buildings and the sensitive design of additions and new structures. Members of the Historic District commission would be expected to work with the property owner and offer expertise, guidance, and historical information to assist in developing an acceptable design. Applicants would be encouraged to approach the District commission for preliminary discussion at the earliest stages of planning.

Benefits

By insuring that the character of a neighborhood will not be drastically altered, the Local Historic District would protect and enhance the value of residential and commercial properties. In most communities, the historic district is a source of civic pride and results in better maintenance of the area by the town and by local property owners.
Questions: If you have any questions on the proposed Local Historic District, please contact Frank DeToma Sr. 533-8561 (Day)

Item 3.
Informational Brochure prepared for general distribution

16 North Main
1732

This home has been linked to the original Taylor Family that purchased South Hadley Falls, known thereafter as Taylors Field. The house lot has been home to many of our town founders who brought this town known as the Canal Village into the Industrial Revolution.

50 North Main
1914

This home lot was purchased from the Daniel Lumb family by Henry Taylor. This lot is at the end of the district as defined. The house next door was built about the same time and it about the school house lot at the corner of Taylor and North Main.

50 North Main
1840

The Frederick Smith, home rebuilt in 1914 after a fire destroyed the original 1840 home of Hiram Smith, postmaster and one of River Gods of South Hadley. Fred was the President of Hadley Falls Company and one of the original city architects of the Holyoke/South Hadley Dam and canal system still in place today.

Historic District
Study Committee
Of South Hadley, Massachusetts
2016

Supporting the stewardship of Canal Village History.
The History of the town is to be identified, preserved and presented to the world.
South Hadley, taking pride in history.
December, 2016 survey of property owners in the proposed historic district, with responses

We mailed a survey letter to 50 property owners in the proposed historic district. We received 10 responses. The survey letter and questions, and the responses IN ITALICS, are shown below:

Dear Falls Resident:

As we are sure you know, the South Hadley Falls area was the site of the first navigable canal in the United States, which opened in 1795. The Falls was the center of shipping and industry in South Hadley. Early industries in South Hadley included four paper mills, Howard & Lathrop, Ames Bros., Hampshire Paper and Carew Paper Mills. The Glasgow Company manufactured premium gingham textiles. These companies employed hundreds of workers and fueled the local economy. Over the years, mill owners, supervisors, and workers built homes of architectural distinction in the Falls.
Many of these homes survive to this day in neighborhoods such as yours. They are an important part of the special character of the Falls.

As you may know, the Selectboard has appointed a committee to study the possibility of preserving the appearance of these historic neighborhoods by establishing a local historic district in the Falls area. You are getting this survey because your home lies within the boundary of a possible historic district. The committee members would very much like your opinion about forming a local historic district in your neighborhood.

We ask that you first familiarize yourself with the concept of a local historic district, and what it would mean for you, by reading though the enclosed Frequently Asked Questions sheet.

Then please fill out the survey below. Feel free to add additional comments wherever you like. We need your input.

SURVEY QUESTIONS (Please circle your choice)

1. The Falls area contains many older homes. Many of them are located in your neighborhood. Do you agree that some of these homes are historically significant and architecturally distinctive?

   YES   NO

   All respondents answered YES, with no comments

2. Do you think that their street-facing sides, or facades, are worth preserving in order to preserve the historic character of your neighborhood?

   YES   NO

   All respondents answered YES, with no comments

3. If a local historic district were to be established in this area, a set of guidelines for alterations to the facades of these homes would be put in place. Changes to the interiors or other sides of the homes would not be affected. Routine maintenance, repair work and landscaping would also not be affected. Owners would retain the right to choose the paint color for their homes, install storm windows and storm doors, and install satellite dishes.

   If you agree that a local historic district in this area would be a good thing to do for the neighborhood and for future generations, can you think of any other home upkeep or alterations to the facades of these homes that should be permitted?
“Anything to promote energy efficiency.”
“Vinyl siding, porch enclosures.”
“Restoring original appearance if the homeowner decides to do so.”
“My house has public ways on three sides; what would that impact?”

4. Overall, do you support the concept of a local historic district as a way to preserve the beauty and historic importance of these homes?

   YES   NO   NOT SURE, but would like to find out more.

Seven respondents answered YES.
One answered YES if it means he/she would receive a grant.
One answered NOT SURE, “would like to find out more about it.”
One answered NO.

5. Please include any other comments that you would like to make in the space below:

   “Would a historic district make the town eligible for certain monies to be used in the district?”
   “Could there be funding to all who wanted to maintain the historic district if they could not afford the upkeep?”
   “Our home needs exterior work. Would we be forced to do those things?”

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. You can use the enclosed, stamped envelope to return the survey to:

The South Hadley Local Historic District Study Committee
Town Hall
116 Main Street
South Hadley, MA 01075

Please return the survey by December 15, 2016. At that time, we will compile the surveys and let you know the results.

Item 5.

As part of a mail invitation to a second informational meeting, we asked 48 property owners in the proposed district if they supported the establishment of local historic district in their neighborhood. The invitation letter is shown below, with the responses:
We need your opinion!

The South Hadley Historic District Study Committee needs your opinion about establishing a historic district in the Falls.

You have an unusually diverse collection of distinctive homes in your neighborhood. There are fine examples of Shingle Style, Greek Revival, Georgian, Baroque, Italianate, Queen Anne, and Craftsman styles. That makes the North Main Street area very special, and worth preserving. But we all know that keeping up a property is expensive. Being in a local historic district can be helpful, because it makes property owners eligible for rehab funding. Preservation rules apply only to the fronts of the buildings and they are simple. The enclosed flyer gives you more information about a local historic district, and also gives you computer links to sites for getting even more information. The back of this page shows a flow chart for establishing a local historic district. We are at step 4 in the flow chart, where the Local Historic District Study Committee (LHDSC) provides information to property owners and gets their opinions about establishing a district. In the previous step, the LHDSC meets with a staff member of the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), to learn about the process of getting a district in place. We have done that. A 2/3 majority vote at Town Meeting is required to establish a district.

If you would like to learn more about the historic homes and other buildings in your neighborhood, come join your neighbors at the Old Firehouse Museum on Sunday, April 22nd, at 3PM. We’ll give you some coffee and doughnuts.

Keep up the Neighborhood!

If you agree that preserving the fronts of the historic homes in your neighborhood is a good idea, please check the box!

[ ] I support having a North Main Street Local Historic District.

You can use the addressed, stamped envelope to send us your reply.

Your Local Historic Study Committee

Members

Eric Salus, Chair
Cynthia Baker
Pauline Casey
Frank DeToma
Tony Judge
Eleanor Small
Leo LaBonte (non-member consultant)
Item 6.

South Hadley North Main Street Area
Proposed Historic District

North Main Street
Carew Street
Cordes Court
Crescent Place
Lathrop Street

GHA/LPL
12/22/2017
55 North Main

55.5 North Main

58 North Main

63 North Main

65 North Main

66 North Main
Carew Street

8-12 Carew Street

16 Carew Street

21-23 Carew Street
29 Carew Street

30 Carew Street

GHA/LPL
12/21/17

1-2 Cordes Court

3-4 Cordes Court
1 Lathrop Street

3 Lathrop Street