

West Newbury Historic District Commission

Notice of Meeting of the West Newbury Historic District Commission

Location: Town Hall, 491 Main Street, West Newbury, MA

Tuesday, November 28th, 2023, 6:00 pm

Agenda

1. Resident letter template
2. Recruiting new commission members
3. Meeting cadence
4. Training Field updates:
 - 4.1. Policy for placing a 'no scavenging' sign at the training field and town hall
 - 4.2. Shrub cleanup around monuments
 - 4.3. 'Liberty tree' replacement/upgrade

Notes & Minutes

Notice of Meeting of the West Newbury Historic District Commission

Location: Town Hall, 491 Main Street, West Newbury, MA

Tuesday, November 28th, 2023, 6:00 pm

In attendance : Jack Alden, Jeffrey Clewley, Alison Hardy, Jill Hudson

Resident letter template

The Commission is drafting a letter to send to both existing and new residents of the Training Field, to highlight that our commission needs to be alerted to any potential upgrades, changes, etc., to property. The letter would also serve to help us recruit a new commission member, as Dot Cavanaugh's passing leaves a vacancy that our bylaws require to be filled. The Commission was also not opposed to reaching out directly to Training Field residents as an option.

West Newbury Historic District Commission

Mr. Alden asked how to verify potential new residents are alerted to the stipulations of the district. Ms. Hudson will contact the Town Manager and peruse the state's websites for any information regarding this question.

Recruiting new commission members

Ms. Hardy knew of a potentially interested resident; she offered to reach out to this resident to see if of any interest. Ms. Hudson offered to follow up with a copy of the commission bylaws if necessary.

Meeting cadence

The commission has determined that it can meet quarterly or as needed, depending on any pressing items we need to address.

Training Field updates:

Policy for placing a 'no scavenging' sign at the training field and town hall:

The commission discussed placement and number of policy signs at the Training Field and the Old Town Hall. Mr. Alden suggested that as long as the signs weren't large or overly ostentatious, he was in favor of such signs. Mr. Clewley and Ms. Hardy agreed. Ms. Hudson will check the bylaws for any other guidance on the placement of such signs, as well as follow up with the Town Manager on progress of pulling any relevant language. Additionally, the commission will need to explore whether any notification of the presence of such a sign would be required.

Shrub cleanup around monuments:

The Commission unanimously agrees to remove the overgrown shrubs flanking both monuments on the Training Field. Next step is for Ms. Hudson to follow up with members of the Historical Commission on drafting a joint recommendation to present to the Select Board at an upcoming meeting. Ms. Hardy had the wonderful suggestion to see about enlisting Ms. Jennifer Munson's help (who sits on the Historical Commission) to use photoshop or other creative software to show a rendering of the monuments without the shrubs, possibly with grass added in place. This was a useful tool in some renderings of the Town Hall before it was repainted, and it was very effective. In discussing some additional details, the commission mentioned that we can likely enlist DPW (via the Town Manager) to pull the shrubs, and perhaps in a year to 18 months we consider replacements; grass could be planted at an appropriate time in the interim.

Ms. Hudson discussed the issue of replacing the current baby oak that was planted as a replacement to the "Liberty Tree" oak that died of Dutch Elm Disease, and the option raised by

West Newbury Historic District Commission

Ms. Grammer in July's Historical Commission meeting to reach out to Ms. Munson about procuring a disease-resistant elm to replace what is currently at the Liberty Tree monument. Ms. Hudson will also reach back out to the Town Manager to confirm what amount and from where potential funds for this replacement would come. The commission also discussed whether the liberty tree's current location is the most appropriate, and we agreed to evaluate where it currently sits in relation to the rest of the Training Field. Mr. Alden, for example, expressed concern about its proximity to the sidewalk and road, where plows or road salt might encroach too closely to it. We are not certain whether a relocation is feasible, but we would review it.