

Minutes of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Bradford M. Field Library

September 29, 2022

DRAFT

Committee Members present: Richard Nathhorst, chair; Ann Ferguson, Judy Todd, Maureen Ippolito, Silas Ball, Andrew Vlock (from Japan), Kari Ridge, Van and Kathy Stoddard, Donald and Sara Robinson

Anne Schuyler was absent

Guests: Carol Heim, Danielle Barshak (representing the CPC), Pat Duffy, Susan Mareneck, Carole Desanti

Richard opened the meeting at 7:38 pm

Ann F. had sent Richard an agenda, instead of is generic agenda. If the group approves, we try to have some approximate time limits. We have two guests and we have a lot to cover. She's happy to be the time keeper. Her suggestion is that we let Danielle go first with the discussion of the CPC history, then the paid building inspector who will be inspecting the Field building. That would be 20 minutes. Then Susan Mareneck can discuss the past survey. Then look at the map of the wetlands and the rest of the documents sent out since the last meeting. Kari and I would like 5 minutes at the end to bring up a sub-committee survey proposal. It would be a survey committee.

Richard and Ann's agenda on his screen so we could all view it.

Richard stated that we have a hard stop at 9:00. Let's try to stay on track and get done at 9:00.

## Ann Ferguson's agenda

- Minutes (5 min)
  - Discussion with CPC chair Danielle Barshak (20min) : Questions
  - History of Past Grant Proposals: Why the grant proposals of the LHS and FOTS were turned down last time and discussion of future funding possibilities through CPA money.
  - Paid Building Inspection: Discussion of when the building consultant should be called in who will be funded by CPA money (the 30K already allotted for this purpose by Article 21 of the last Town Meeting)
  - Other questions
  - Susan Mareneck, chair of the Historical Commission (10 min) re earlier historical survey (Field museum?)
  - Discussion of Introduced Documents (Richard) (20 min total)
  - Map of Wetlands (5 min)
  - Septic requirements, Town of Leverett and MA (5 min)
  - Past SB position on Field building (5 min):  
Richard's summary of discussion with Margie McGinnis of the 2007 and 2008 SB minutes and why the SB decided they wanted to sell the building then. The main considerations seemed to be the B
  - Eva's visual map and narrative (5 min)
- New Business:**
- Survey Subcommittee Proposal (Ann and Karl) ( 5 min)
  - Other?

Someone mentioned that we had to review the minutes from the September 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Minutes were reviewed and the following changes were suggested:

Pat—Pat wanted to make sure that everyone understood that she was not representing the Select Board. She can't do that unless the Select Board had voted on that. She is here on her own. She's here in a personal capacity.

Discussion of what Pat had said to introduce herself at the last meeting.

Ann F. typos—on page 3, a chorus of 'aye' when we voted. Page 5—Anne S. said we'd have to have a public forum. One word left out on Page 7, that Anne S. would send it to all of us.

Judy was unsure of part of the discussion about an architectural survey between Silas and Richard. It was decided that section could be removed from the minutes.

Van wants his introductory statement about himself to be "I have built many houses in Leverett and in the surrounding area and many studios and restorations in the Pioneer Valley".

Ann F. moved that the minutes be accepted and Richard seconded it. Vote was unanimous.

Richard—now we can get on to Danielle.

Danielle--With all due respect to your agenda, the more relevant thing I should talk about is what Town Meeting approved.

The CPC felt that whatever happened, whether it was purchased by another party or another option. What would the scope of the work needed, what would the Identify any issues with the building. The proposal for the building came out of tm when a number of people came up with ideas for the building. Once you have some ideas about what people want to do with the building, th

It's not a building inspector. If we look at the document for the LCA, before they renovated their building, it was a team of people that had egress, fire safety. Architect, historic preservation. T

An article in today's newspaper will help (page A3 of the gazette) Creating a survey, they have a building comm which will draft a survey. Essentially, they have figured out a way to easily survey towns people, making sure that everyone votes only once. Our committee was form to really get the feelings of the town people. If anyone has questions about the CPC grant or something else that is relevant.

Richard—opened the floor for questions

Don—just a question about past requests to fund in 2010.

Danielle—this isn't the appropriate forum for me to answer that question.

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Don—we are looking for background information in regards to this building.

Danielle—asked if is this a proper use for this committee’s time?

Richard—he’s inclined to go along with Danielle. You are representing the CPC. Let’s try not to go into back applications to the CPC.

Don—I certainly disagree.

Richard—I understand.

Ann F.—I know that there are some people on the committee that are confused about what the CPC funds can be used for. Like can the CPC money be used for maintenance? If there was a request to fund painting the building, is that something that the CPC can do?

Danielle--The line between maintenance and restoration is fuzzy. The CPC does have money to restore buildings. Whenever a building needs to be restored, the CPC can propose to the town that the town can vote for that. What is needed for the Field building is still unknown. The \$30,000 is to be used to find out what exactly is needed and how much it will cost. It’s also to find the intended use of the building.

Ann F. I understand you to say that the CPC grant will come into play when this committee reports the options. The committee get the facts, raises public opinions, and then the consultants can go to work.

Danielle—you are basically right. If the chimney is leaking, if the building is going to be preserved just for its exterior, that can be done. If people are going to be in the building, will plumbing be needed? Once the actual use of the building is determined then the CPC money can be used.

Richard—please take your hand down if you have been called on.

Don—Danielle referred to past applications as not having specificity about what needed to be done. The December 2016 application that was put in by Margie McGinnis on behalf of the town, there was a list of what needed to be done and the cost.

Danielle did not feel a need to respond.

Richard—any other questions? The one thing that he’d like to add is that we are collecting a lot of documents and information concerning the field building that we will have archived to pass along to the consultants. This will inform the coming survey. Are you all set Danielle?

Danielle—I am, unless anyone has more questions for me.

Richard—the next thing on the agenda is Susan Mareneck. You have the floor.

Susan M.—I'm only here at the request of Don Robinson who wondered if there were any questions about the attempts over the last couple of decades to reuse the building. She sent the materials to us. They had been given to Susan by Edie Field. If anyone has any questions that I may know about, I am happy to help.

Richard—We also got the Select Board minutes on the 2007 and 2008 meetings about the Field Building and we've included those in the record.

Andrew—I just want to know what limitations or roadblocks that we'd run into. At one point there was an idea to have it become a candy shop. I just want to know the roadblocks so we don't retread those.

Susan M—We wanted to make a bathroom there, the consultant was Don Gibavic, who was a selectman and a builder at the time. He came back with an estimate of \$40,000 which was a bit steep. Then Dave Field died and then his wife died, and then Annette Gibavic died. There were a bunch of things that just happened. Edie Field tried to continue on leading the charge to make it more active to the committee. She had an after-school program there and a summer program there. She got older and wasn't able to do these things anymore. We had talked about the Field Tavern and if you look into the Field Family Assn minutes, they talked about bringing things over from the tavern. They had given items to the museum. The Tavern is a significant building, in disrepair right now. One suggestion was that the Tavern become elderly housing. That would solve the problem with the septic, you can put a septic system anywhere now.

Richard called on Maureen.

Maureen—so kind of in line with what Andrew was asking. The survey documents that Anne Schuyler sent all of us. One of the ideas from the historical commission was a coffee shop. She was surprised to learn that a coffee shop would be ok with the historical commission.

Susan—it was Annette Gibavic's idea. The downstairs would be accessible. She thought that would work. It was one way to get the bathroom installed. It would be a nice amenity for the center of town. It would be an enticement to get people to the museum. We wanted to know what people would react to it.

Kathy—I think it's a misstatement to say "you can put a septic system anywhere". Secondly, the Field Tavern is a different property that is not owned by the town. It's not really a part of the discussion today.

Susan—I wasn't saying it was part of your discussion today. I was just talking about what happened in 2007.

Sara—is it interesting that the Field Tavern has come up. Sara had brought it up in a prior meeting. It is known that the Field property that involves the tavern and the land will be going up for auction, per the Leverett tax collector, within a few months.

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Richard—interesting information, but off topic for this meeting. If there are no other questions for Susan, we'll move onto the next agenda items.

Ann F.--The next agenda item is the list of documents.

Richard—Let me get the documents up.

Ann F.--the first is the wetlands document.

Ann F.--Her question is really about the wetlands. There are lots of wetlands on the lot. Is there anything else that we need to know?

Richard—there are lots of wetlands. There are setbacks in title 5 that pertain to this. Van can speak to that.

Richard shared the Department of Environmental Protection document. Commonwealth of Massachusetts regulation 310.

It's an extensive document that has been sent to every member of the committee. We've had discussions about septic systems. This is the law and what pertains to it. Leverett also has requirements. Richard shared the regulations for Leverett. Leverett Board of Health's Chapter 218 of the Leverett code. Sewer systems, Individual. Richard read through part of the regulations.

**218-1 Authority:** These regulations are enacted by the Board of Health under the authority which includes but is not limited to one or more of the following: MGL Ch. 111, sections 31, 122, 187, 188, 310 CMR 11.02 and 310 CMR 15.000 (Title 5).

These are the two controlling documents that pertain to the constructions of wells and septic systems in Leverett. These are the laws. These are what a sanitarian will use to construct a sewer system. Keep in mind that there is no plumbing in the Field Library Building and never has been. There is no well on site. There can be no appeal to grandfather or anything else because there is no existing system. We will have to follow all State and Leverett regulations. We won't spend any time going through this page by page. It's not relevant to our discussion tonight. It clearly is the regulation.

Ann F. the relevant requirement is it 150 feet from a wetland and 25 feet from an abutter?

Richard--Yes you are correct. We don't need to spend time on this. As Don Robinson has said many times this will have to be looked into by a sanitarian.

Van—I would like to state one thing, between 150 feet setback, according to the map you showed us. We need to be able to have 200 feet between the system and the well. The lot will not support those dimensions.

Kathy—I think I remember from a previous discussion that it's not allowed by law for a septic system to be on another property.

Richard—that is true. There are exceptions when you have a non-compliant septic system. There are certain exceptions that allow easements on another property. That would not apply here because there is no septic system to mitigate. This needs to be a new septic system and it is not compliant. The fact that they never put a septic system tells you something about the site, it just isn't going to happen.

Don—first off that I wouldn't make any declarative statement one way or the other. The regulation is 150 feet between a system and a well.

Silas—a couple of things. I don't think there was any septic system regulations in 1916. It was not a wetland in 1916.

Richard—it was irrelevant.

Silas—it is relevant, the pond was raised by 5 feet after the 1938 hurricane. He agrees with Van, we need to stop talking about the septic.

Ann F. – there are two more documents on the list. We have the minutes from the 2007 and 2008 Select Board meetings. We could go over these or assume people have read them. Then there is Eva's map which shows the boundaries. Do people want to go over them?

Kathy—we should just look at them on our own time between meetings.

Richard—that is a good idea. They will be part of the documents that will be given to the consultants.

Kari—before we move on, as we read them, and I did read them, if we have questions, how should we proceed.

Richard—if you have questions, put them in writing and I will put them on the agenda. He encourages people to read them. Questions are relevant and should be addressed. Let's get them in writing so everyone can see them. Ann you wanted to talk about a town survey.

Ann F.—Kari and I did talk about this. Move the building, leave it in place—whether or not with a septic and request that the town do proper maintenance, or sell the building to a non-profit. We can have sub-questions. Ann and Kari could start the process for the survey and send everyone a draft that could be considered at the next meeting. The idea would be, if we can agree on a survey, then it could be placed on the town website. The town administrator can do a robo call to ask people to fill out the survey. We can discuss the timeframe. The previous surveys have been interesting, but they haven't dealt with the question of whether the town should keep the building or sell it. These are questions in front of us.

Kari—Ann and I are happy to work with anyone else that wants to be on the sub-committee for the survey. This is just to get this rolling.

Carol Desanti—I think that getting the ball rolling and getting more involvement from people in town is a good idea. She'd had a hard time about making a decision with prior survey options because she doesn't have enough information.

Maureen—this is something that I wanted to bring up at the last meeting. We keep saying that we want to sell that building, but she feels the non-profit has not been named. Can we get the name of the non-profit?

Ann F.--feels that Danielle can speak to this. There was a reason why the non-profit wasn't named in the warrant.

Danielle-this is what she got from Margie when it was put on the warrant in 2007. The entity or the request for bids that it could only be met by the Leverett Historical Society and it was felt that it wasn't legal to have only one entity that could meet the requirements of the bid. Can I add one comment about the survey. She also doesn't know what her answer would be, should we move the building, sell the building, keep the building. In the survey, she feels we should ask questions like "Do people value having the building as a meeting place?" Do they value the place where septic can be possible? Do they value somewhere the artifacts will be stored?

What I am suggesting is that there be something that can be a little more open ended. Use as a model of what the co-op did. They had a meeting that was held at town hall. There was brain storming. People had little sticky dots they could put on an idea to voice how they felt. People may feel it's important to have a place where older people can gather. Then you can talk about access.

Don—I want to respond to Maureen's question. This is per an email he received from Margie McGinnis. This is in response to his question about past articles about what would happen to the Field Family Museum. Margie said that in 2008, article 16. Donald read from the email from Margie.

Richard—that is incorrect.

Don—according to Margie, this was passed in 2008.

Ann F.--he's not talking about the warrant from last year.

Richard—I know that. Those documents have been distributed to everyone on the committee.

Don—so you are disagreeing with the town administrator.

Richard-yes, I am.

Kathy—was the question posed to Danielle about the 2021 vote or was it the 2007 vote? I thought we were talking about the current situation.

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Danielle—I understood the question from Ann to be referring to the warrant article in 2007 or 2008. She doesn't have a memory of it, it can only be answered by Margie.

Ann F.—I was talking about this year.

Danielle—Oh, I'm sorry.

Ann F.—can I answer a question about the survey. Maybe we should be doing a more open-ended thing. Maybe it should be after we get to it. Having a forum like the co-op did. Getting people's values. She feels this is a good point. If we are interested in us working out a survey that could come after such a forum. We could try to frame a survey that could bring in some questions about possible use. We've agreed we want a public forum.

Kathy—I think that point that you say there is just three options, you are already framing it too narrowly. She likes having questions in the survey about how they value things.

Van—When you build a building, and in this case it's building a building in the State of Massachusetts. First, you do a perk test. You have to find out if the property is viable to build on. You have to have a well drilled for potable water to the building. You can't build anything that can't be public occupancy. We still have to meet all the requirements of Massachusetts laws. We need to do a perk test. We need to have a well drilled. Start with does the lot meet the specifications of the town. Does it have a perk test? When we buy a lot as builders, we ask if it has a viable perk test.

Richard—that's beyond the scope of this committee to do. It's possibly in the scope of the CPC survey. We have no budget.

Van—I just think in the effort of not wasting time, we need to get specific facts before we include "what would you like to have in a perfect world".

Richard—I am in the process of approaching the Board of Health and the Conservation Committee.

Pat—I do agree with what Van said, it's good to know what the limitations are with the spot as it stands right now. With certainty. Back to the discussion of the survey, I like the idea of assessing values. I worry, I remember filling out a survey from the Historical Commission, it was a values survey. She feels that the survey didn't assess very well what people thought. Yeah, I want a place to store documents. I want these to stay the way they were. Like Van said, it's sort of meaningless if we don't have the facts. She feels that a fact-based survey is a good idea.

Silas—a couple of points...the building has never had plumbing or a septic and it doesn't necessary need one.

Richard—that's not true.

Silas—it's not a residence.

Richard—it's a public building.

Silas—there is some of us here at the table who want to preserve it as it is. It is a museum with very limited hours and a non-full-time staffing. The other point is that it's not the first time it's come up in conversation. Mrs. Rivers was the last librarian. She'd have to go up to the town hall to use the restroom. The hours are limited. It is what it is. It will never be a restaurant, a residence, a Disney World, a casino.

Kari—this goes back to a couple of topics. A survey is evolving. We need to gather facts.

Andrew—unrelated to the survey. It was a library and now it's a museum. Things changed. Leverett didn't have high speed internet, now it does. We had town meetings inside, but now we hold them outside. Having discussions doesn't mean we'll choose a specific option. The reason we are deliberating about it is because people care about it, and it is why we keep coming back again and again — to determine if something is going to be an option. Let's just try and work in the spirit of collaboration.

Richard—called on Don.

Don—I want to echo what Van said, he's absolutely correct about getting the information. When he was trying to determine the boundaries for this particular site, Don met with Harold Eaton. Three things are necessary—wetlands delineation, to have it properly surveyed, and to have a septic designer involved. We haven't done those things. In conversation with Larry LaClaire, he informed me that he did perform a perk test and it passed.

Richard—can you produce it? We'd have to talk with the B or health. That is something that the CPC survey would address.

Ann F. We are at the end of the meeting. If people are interested, I'd like to have Kari and I come up with a survey. We are offering to do a little extra work on the opinions we've heard about various options and take into account Danielle's suggestion of values.

Richard—does anyone have any objections to them doing that? No.

We are past 9:00. Our next meeting is October 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:30. It's time we bring this to stop tonight.

Motion to adjourn. Seconded. Vote was “aye”

Richard—I think we can all agree that we want to save the building.