

Friends of Mechanics Hall

Meeting Summary

May 17, 2012, 7:00 PM.
Princeton Town Hall Annex.

In attendance:

Larry Deblois, Sheila Dubman, Elizabeth Hammond, Alex Fiandaca, Mark Fiandaca, Matt Lindberg, Teddy Lindberg, Tom Lynch, Phil Mighdoll, Faith Pistrang, Larry Pistrang, Temma Pistrang, Karen Rossow, Arlene Seims, Ken Seims, Mickey Splaine, Judy Tyler and Geoff Yaglou.

An Agenda and Subcommittee Summary were sent by e-mail prior to the meeting. Additional copies were available at the meeting. They are included after this summary.

- Alex opened the meeting by thanking everyone for their efforts on clean-up day. A change to the Executive Committee was announced. Phil will serve as Treasurer for the FOMH and Ken will serve as Secretary.
- A savings account for the FOMH has been opened at Barre Savings Bank.
- Phil explained that the Executive Committee met with David Cruise (Princeton Historical Society) to tap into his experience with registering as a non-profit with the State AGO and gaining Federal 501(c)3 status. What we've learned is that these procedures take time and have costs associated with their filings. While it is likely that we will pursue these efforts going forward to facilitate large sum fund raising, bidding and grant applications, the smartest and simplest way to quickly establish our legitimacy as a non-appointed Town committee and to allow us to raise funds is for the Town to open a FOMH account, thereby allowing us to use the Town's tax-exempt status for donations. The Executive Committee will meet with John Lebeaux next week to discuss this.
- Matt has been in contact with a tax attorney who is willing to help the Friends at a reduced rate.
- Sheila mentioned that at Town Meeting, money was allocated for toxic remediation in Town. Since the Town owns MH, it was suggested that these funds might be available to remediate the lead paint.
- Michele Barker of Preservation MA will visit with us on Tues., May 29th at 6 PM at MH.
- Faith provided estimates for the remediation of the lead paint and repainting of MH (David Cranford). Estimate is on file.
- A visit to the Old Academy building in New Salem, MA has been scheduled for Tues., June 5th at 7 PM. All are invited. It's approx. a 1 hour drive down Rte. 2.
- Elizabeth will try to set up a visit to the Orchard House with Jan Turnquist sometime in July.

- Judy drew our attention to the drawing of MH on the wall. She indicated that Mary Pratt would be willing to create a pen and ink drawing of MH gratis. Len Haug has also offered the use of one of his existing images of MH.
- Faith reported on her discussions with Steve Zottoli re: a possible awareness/fund raiser at the Mountain Barn. The loft can hold 55 people. Steve would need to know the expected attendance in order to quote a price. Discussion ensued as to what we would gain from such an event. Faith suggested that our current members underwrite the event, sharing in the cost. No decision was made on this item.
- Ken suggested that we “co-opt” the various annual events in town, perhaps even having a portable information booth that could be transported to each event. He also described a Neighbor letter that has been drafted to encourage current members to solicit interest from their neighbors and friends. When the letter is finalized, it will be e-mailed to all.
- Mention was made of having an artist’s rendering done of the future “look” of MH.
- Subcommittees:

Attention turned to the Subcommittee summary prepared by Alex. It was quickly realized that populating all these committees at this time would be daunting. Larry Deblois suggested that we develop one or two primary goals which would then have subcommittee support. The Executive Committee agreed to draft goal statements for review at our next meeting.

It was agreed to focus on three (3) subcommittees:

1. Grounds Planning and Maintenance (Geoff, Tom, Mark and Mickey)
2. Fundraising (Faith, Larry D., Judy, Sheila)
3. Community Outreach and Publicity (Karen, Larry P.)

The next meeting will be on Thurs., June 14th at 7PM in the annex (not the 21st).

Respectfully submitted,
Ken Seims
Secretary

FRIENDS OF MECHANICS HALL
Agenda
May 17, 2012

Updates:

- Clean-up day – Thank you Everyone!!
- Bank account, website, 501c3 status (Phil)
- Preservation Massachusetts (**Tuesday, May 29th, 6 PM at Mechanics Hall**)
- Exterior Paint estimate (Faith)
- Old Academy Building Visit (**Monday, June 5th, 7 PM in New Salem, MA**)
- Orchard House (Elizabeth)
- Princeton Arts Society (Judy)
- Mountain Barn (Faith)

Establish Subcommittees:

- Executive Committee (Chair, Treasurer, Secretary (Alex, Phil, Ken))
- Fund Raising
- Community Outreach/Publicity
- Future Use
- Historic Research/EP Village Outreach
- Grounds Planning and Maintenance
- Building Stabilization
- Restoration Planning

Next meeting: June 21, 7 PM

FRIENDS OF MECHANICS HALL

Subcommittee Summary

May 17, 2012

Fundraising

Three separate efforts:

- 1) **Event planning**, solicitations, (develop strategies for fundraising and Friendraising, estimate potential per year)
- 2) Creation and sale of **Promotional items** (work with local artists and photographers for use of images of Mechanics Hall, develop official logo)
- 3) Explore **Grant opportunities** for both planning and restoration grants (refer to list of *preservation funding sources*, contact grant providers for copies of successful grant applications.)

Community Outreach and Publicity

- Promote Friends' efforts through local newspapers, town news, postings, mailings, etc., working closely with event planning efforts.

Future Use

- Explore partnerships with existing groups in town, starting with our best tenant, the Friends of the Library.
- Identify unmet needs in community (meet with residents, organizations, clubs and committees in Town and beyond) to gauge interest in meeting/function space and desired programs/services (refer to Town Guide published by the Landmark and Town Board and Committee summary).
- Explore sustainable uses (consult other towns*; refer to *town hall adaptive reuse list*) and address the ideas that have been proposed in previous Mechanics Hall studies and forums (see UTAC report).

*Outreach toward other towns will be of value to more than one committees. It might be most efficient if one committee served as the main contact.

Historic Research/ East Princeton Village Outreach

- Research unanswered questions: original architect, builder, Farmers and Mechanics Association members, date lettering was installed, etc. using town documents, Historical Society records, American Antiquarian Society resources, etc.
- Interview long-time residents (past and present) and East Princeton Improvement Society members to engage residents in the Mechanics Hall effort, develop knowledge and enhance grant applications with a richer history about the building.

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Grounds Planning and Maintenance

- Establish property boundaries
- Assess and plan removal of problem trees
- Address short-term maintenance needs, plantings and long-term landscaping (consider access needs of for tree removal equipment, septic, etc.)
- Follow up with the Scouts' offer to provide ongoing maintenance

Building Stabilization

- Investigate rodent controls/barriers (tree removal is key, work with Grounds committee on tree concerns)
- Exterior paint and repair
- Reach out to preservation schools (see list of *schools with preservation programs*) for possible technical assistance
- Refer to UTAC report for prior assessments.

Restoration Planning

- Investigate process for Structural Assessment and Feasibility Study (example study on Sterling Town website for the Old Town Hall)
- Work toward long-term project scope (example: *Master Plan of Old Academy Building*) sketches, architect and structural engineer involvement (seek referrals from happy towns)
- Explore sources of low-cost labor including Monty Tech, inmate labor, volunteers.

See Alex for copies of documents appearing in italics