

Friends of Mechanics Hall

Meeting Summary

June 14, 2012, 7:00 PM.
Princeton Town Hall Annex.

In attendance:

Larry Deblois, Sheila Dubman, Alex Fiandaca, Mark Fiandaca, Elizabeth Hammond, Anne Marie Hurley, Matt Lindberg, Phil Mighdoll, Faith Pistrang, Larry Pistrang, Karen Rossow, Ken Seims and Phyllis Booth.

NOTE: Faith requested a pre-meeting with the Executive Committee to address the plans to set up an FOMH account with the Town. Faith had spoken with Stan Moss who encouraged us not to follow the Hearts for Heat model. After some discussion, all agreed that we not ask the Town to set up an account and that we continue to maintain our own independent account with Barre Savings so we can spend the money we raise as we see fit.

The general meeting began shortly after 7 PM.

Phyllis Booth informed us that the July 5th issue of the Landmark will be going out free to all Princeton residents. The deadline for input to her for this issue is June 29th. Sheila and Phil agreed to coordinate our input.

An agenda, including a preliminary Mission Statement and preliminary Short and Long Term Goals, was distributed and much discussion followed. It was decided that the short-term goals would be considered 'Phase I' and the long-term goals; 'Phase II'. The Friends agreed to a time line of 18-24 months for Phase I.

Alex will incorporate comments and prepare a final version of the Mission Statement and Goals (attached).

Additional suggestions included:

- Establishing relationships with the Selectboard, State Senator and State Representative.
- Contacting schools with Graduate Programs in Historic Preservation Law.

The group was brought up to date on the Executive Committee's meeting with John Lebeaux on 5/22. FOMH is on the agenda for the 6/18 BOS meeting at 5:30 pm. Our goal is to update the BOS on our mission and goals and to seek their support of our efforts. We anticipate that they will designate John Lebeaux as their

agent to give rapid approval to work we would like to undertake at the site.

Mark provided an update of the Grounds Committee, which met Saturday, May 19th to determine which trees pose the greatest threat to Mechanics Hall in terms of potential damage to the building and squirrel access. The Committee mapped and prioritized trees for removal and trimming. A local tree service has offered to perform the work at a discounted price and a donor has offered to cover nearly half that cost. Before we ask the BOS for permission, Mark will verify that the contractor is insured for this kind of work.

Town-Wide Yard Sale

Faith recommended that FOMH take part in the Town Wide Yard Sale on Saturday, 9/29. She volunteered to register us and pay the fee. Since the event is rain or shine, it was suggested that we have a tent for inclement weather. We will solicit selective donations town-wide.

Orchard House Visit

Elizabeth suggested we shoot for a Sunday in August. She will contact Jan Turnquist for available dates and will contact the Friends accordingly.

Weather permitting, it was suggested that we hold our next meeting (Thurs., July 12th) outside of MH. This decision will be made just prior to the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Ken Seims
Secretary

Friends of Mechanics Hall

June 15, 2012

Mission:

Our mission is to save Mechanics Hall from further deterioration, restore its appearance and enable a transition to active use of the building.

Phase I:

Stop further deterioration and improve curb appeal (Prevent further rodent damage to windows, block rodent entry ways and remove trees that provide squirrel access. Prevent further damage caused by water run-off.)

Establish the Friends of Mechanics Hall as a non-profit organization

Develop stabilization plan (Seek engineer evaluation. Pursue grants to pay for structural engineering study and building stabilization.)

Raise seed funding from local sources

Identify and pursue funding sources (Refer to list of grant programs, contact agencies for copies of successful applications, contact successful applicants, seek guidance from New Salem restoration leader, write grant proposals)

Gather information and explore options for future use (Consult towns that have successfully restored/repurposed historic buildings. Meet with residents to determine unmet needs in community. Meet with town organizations to determine interest in building.)

Time frame: 18-24 months

Phase II:

Define future uses

Pursue historically sensitive restoration