

Town of Stow
Gleasondale Neighborhood Area Subcommittee of the Stow Planning Board
(hereafter referred to as "Gleasondale Subcommittee")

Minutes of the October 25, 2017 meeting of the Gleasondale Subcommittee

Gleasondale Subcommittee members present

Laurel Cohen, Meg Costello, Jeri DiPietro, Rosemary Monahan, and Dot Spaulding

Gleasondale Subcommittee members absent

None

Stow Planning Department staff present

Jesse Steadman and Valerie Oorthuys

Rosemary Monahan called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Minutes from previous meeting

Minutes from the September 14, 2017 meeting were unanimously approved.

Public Comment

None

Member updates

None

Debrief on Presentation by Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC):

The Subcommittee discussed the presentation that Chris Skelly of the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) gave on October 11th at the Pompositticut Community Center. It was well attended, with about 30-40 participants, including residents of Gleasondale, members of the Stow Historical Commission, and representatives from other communities including Worcester, Hudson, and Littleton. We agreed that it was very helpful that Mr. Skelly was able to get to Stow a little before his presentation so that members of the Subcommittee and Valerie Oorthuys could give him a quick tour of Gleasondale. Valerie also said that it was helpful to have given him questions in advance that we wanted addressed in the presentation. Members of the Subcommittee gave their impressions of the presentation and response from participants. These included: people felt they learned something new; it was helpful to learn about different approaches to public outreach; it was a good overview of historic preservation and regulatory and non-regulatory approaches; people were very interested in the Historic Homes Inventory and other materials available; there are still some questions about compliance with the Americans with Disability Act requirements in a historic district. It

was agreed that the Gleasondale Subcommittee should still go cautiously in working toward determining what actions might be supported by the neighborhood and rest of the town. Members of the Subcommittee discussed which techniques they would feel most comfortable pursuing, if there is neighborhood support, including a Demolition Delay, designation on the National Register Historic District, or adoption of a Local Historic District. Each has pluses and minuses that the Subcommittee discussed briefly, but it was generally agreed that continuing to build local knowledge about the options is critical, through forums, panels, a neighborhood survey, and other venues. Bill Byron, audience member, contributed some information about how the Zoning Board of Appeals works, and the kinds of requests they get that might be relevant if a Local Historic District is adopted. Valerie agreed to ask Chris Skelly for examples of bylaws from other Local Historic Districts that might be similar to Gleasondale, and the Subcommittee will review those and discuss at a future meeting.

Draft Neighborhood Survey

The Subcommittee reviewed a draft survey that Valerie Oorthuys and Jesse Steadman developed and revised, in part with some comments from Subcommittee members. This survey and accompanying map are intended to gauge interest within Gleasondale about moving forward with actions to preserve our neighborhood's character. With one minor revision, the Subcommittee strongly supported using the survey, and developed plans to distribute the survey within the week, asking for responses from the neighborhood by November 20th.

Next Meeting:

The Subcommittee agreed to a date for the next meeting, which will take place on Monday, November 27th at 7pm in the Town Building. The focus of this meeting will be on the results the neighborhood survey and planning future activities.

Meeting adjourned, 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Rosemary Monahan