

Building Demolition Committee  
Minutes  
January 30, 2007  
7:30 p.m.  
Community Room, Longmeadow Police Station

**Members Present:** Kathy Berube, Craig Carr, Jan Dickstein, Betsy Port, Dan O'Malley, Brewster Sturtevant

**Members Absent:** None

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Betsy Port who welcomed the group to the first meeting of this newly formed Committee. She described the makeup of the Committee as consisting of 6 members: 2 who also serve on the Longmeadow Historical Commission and 4 at large members, not currently members of the Historical Commission. Betsy and Brewster are the Historical Commission members; Kathy, Craig, Jan and Dan represent the at large members.

The group reviewed a proposed meeting agenda and began by discussing, then appointing, a Committee Chair, Clerk and Co-Clerk. Following unanimous votes, it was decided that Betsy Port will serve as Committee Chair; Jan Dickstein as Clerk and Craig Carr as Co-Clerk.

The group next discussed operating process and unanimously agreed that any vote by the Committee that may lead to imposing the 9-month waiting period for issuing a structure demolition permit, or may lead to imposing financial penalties under the bylaw, will require a super majority vote of 5 votes of the entire Committee for passage. All other votes of the Committee shall require a majority vote of 4 votes of the entire Committee for passage.

With those matters resolved, the Committee discussed a National Trust for Historic Preservation publication entitled "Protecting America's Historic Neighborhoods: Taming the Teardown Trend". The Committee discussed a number of the cited trends as they apply to Longmeadow. In particular, it discussed the concept of utilizing easements to protect individual properties. The group acknowledged that it was likely not well known that individual property owners could place easements on their properties that would protect them from future subdivision and/or extensive renovation. Committee members agreed to consider this option individually and consider how they might educate others about this option.

Next the group discussed the Demolition Delay Bylaw and its stated purpose to:

- 1.1 Designate, preserve, protect, enhance and perpetuate those structures and sites within the Town that reflect outstanding elements of the Town's cultural, artistic, social, economic, political, architectural, historic or other heritage;
- 1.2 Foster civic pride in the vestiges and accomplishments of the past;
- 1.3 Stabilize or improve the aesthetic and economic vitality and values of such structures and sites;
- 1.4 Protect and enhance the Town's attraction to residents, tourists and visitors;
- 1.5 Promote the use of historical or architectural structures and sites for the education and welfare of the people of the Town;
- 1.6 Promote good urban design including the perpetuation of related private open spaces;
- 1.7 Promote and encourage continued private ownership and utilization of such buildings and sites now so owned and used: and
- 1.8 Provide owners of significant structures with time to consider alternatives to demolition.

The Committee discussed its role to hold a public hearing in response to receipt of a copy of an application for a Demolition Permit. Mark Denver of the Building Department will contact us if a building Demolition Permit application comes in to the Town Hall for a historic structure. The Committee reviewed the by-law and requirements to hold the hearing within thirty (30) days of such receipt. The Committee also discussed

ways to provide notice to structure owners about the Demolition Delay Bylaw so as to advise them that demolition of any structure built prior to 1901 would be subject to hearing and review.

Finally, the Committee reviewed the status of the Kane/Knox house on Longmeadow Street. It discussed its role and timing in consideration of this potential demolition and agreed that it would wait for the outcome of the Zoning Board meeting, scheduled for the next evening, before setting a second meeting date.

Betsy committed to contact the Town Webmaster to advise him that the Committee is now established and request space on the web page.

The meeting concluded at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Janice Dickstein