**Wiscasset Historic Preservation Commission**

Minutes, 5/16/17

Present: John Reinhardt, Wendy Donovan, Gordon Kontrath, Jim Kochan, Susan Blagden

1) Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm

2) Consideration of minutes

Susan moved to table the discussion of the minutes from 5/4/17 to the next meeting as Wendy needed clarification on one of the items. Passed 5-0

3) Public Comment

There was no public comment.

4) Old Business

Discussion and drafting of letter to the Selectmen regarding the proposed demolition of Haggett’s garage:

Jim prepared a draft letter for the commission to consider. John restated his position that the letter should be sent to the Select Board rather than directly to MDOT, although Jim felt that the standard procedure would be for the letter to go directly to MDOT.

Al noted that the Select Board has deemed that the Historic Preservation Commission needs to follow the rules. If the Select Board does not follow the same rules, they will be in violation of the ordinance. We have been told that Haggett’s Garage does not meet the national standard for a contributing structure, but we are here to protect the local standards. If MDOT does not respect the local ordinance they are doing the town a disservice.

Ben pointed out that if MDOT applied for a Certificate of Appropriateness today, their application would be deemed incomplete because the design elements have not been finalized.

Susan commented that when the letter is ready, we need to get on the Select Board agenda so that the letter will be part of the public record.

A few changes and corrections were made to the submitted draft letter. Susan moved that the letter be approved with the corrections and amendments, and Al seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

6) Other business

Ben informed the commission that an appeal had been filed for 4 Fort Hill St. The appeals board will meet in late May or early June. Ben will let us know when the process is complete.

A few of the commission members spoke in memory of Richard Thompson, who passed away earlier this month. John stated that Richard was an integral and important part of the Historic Preservation Commission. John had learned to regard him as a gentleman and an intellectual. Susan had known Richard for 45 years, and said that we had lost a valuable friend to ourselves and the town.

John noted that Al has agreed to take Richard’s place on the commission, and that we need to look for alternates.

Jim suggested that we send a questionnaire to property owners in the historic district to determine if they find the Historic Preservation Ordinance worthwhile. He knows someone who would be willing to cover the cost of postage.

Susan suggested that we also send a follow-up questionnaire to COA applicants, so we can make improvements to the process.

Neither Susan nor Al are able to attend the next meeting on June 1. It was decided to reschedule to the 8th.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm

The next commission meeting will be Thursday, June 8 at 5:00 pm.