



Amesbury Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: February 5th, 2026

Location: Amesbury Council on Aging Senior Center, 68 Elm Street, Amesbury MA

Commissioners Present: Jay Williamson (Acting Chair), Chris Akelian, Malcolm Rutter, Christopher Lane

Meeting called to order at 7:02 PM

1. Minutes for the January 8th, 2026 meeting were submitted by Jay for review. Only one correction was needed regarding the motion surrounding 5 School Street; this item required clarification on which commissioner seconded the motion. No further edits were called for, and it was decided to postpone submission of revised minutes until the March meeting with more of the commission members in attendance.
 - a. Malcolm made a motion to postpone submission of the January meeting minutes, seconded by Chris Lane. Motion passed 4-0.
2. Chris L had no additional items from Design and Review Committee (DRC) to discuss, noting significant overlap in agenda items covered later in tonight's AHC meeting.
3. Jay reported on the February Community Preservation Commission meeting; that commission did have an election for a co-chair. There is also a plan to schedule the community preservation plan for fiscal year 2026, pending further fiscal review and proposals / approvals for grant.
4. Amy Whitsall, Amesbury Library Director, confirmed she is applying for the MA Historical Commission Preservation Projects grant. If secured, the funds would help fund critical restoration projects for the library building. The library is seeking a letter of endorsement for the library's grant application, already drafted and reviewed by AHC.
 - a. Chris A motioned to endorse the letter and application on behalf of the Amesbury library, Malcolm seconded. Motion passed 4-0.
5. 234 Main Street – application for full demolition. This is in tandem with ongoing application at 230 Main Street (now proposed as a campus project.)
 - a. This proposal was available as subject of a public hearing. Chris L motioned to open public hearing at this time, seconded by Chris A. Motion passed 4-0.
 - b. Lisa Meade presented sketches of proposed 234 Main Street project to members of the public; she also clarified that demolition of 234 Main is in conjunction with the preservation of 230 Main, and the project as currently proposed cannot proceed unless the demolition of 234 is approved.

- c. Carlos Telles, owner of abutting property at 225 Main Street, had a question regarding which exact structure is proposed for demolition. Lisa further clarified that the Macris record for 234 Main is not correctly reflecting the existing structure, but rather another structure that was moved when Macy Street was widened.
 - d. Mr. Telles raised further concern about a potential approval for demolition of a structure without knowledge of what would replace it. Nick Cracknell responded with the definition of the scope of demolition ordinance and delay, which was already applied to 230 Main Street in 2023 and will expire in May of this year.
 - e. Mr. Telles also remarked he did not receive a notification of demolition for the prior application at 230 Main. Megan and Nick confirmed that abutter notices should have been sent out and will investigate this further.
 - f. Scott Hall, owner of abutting property at 223 Main Street, raised concern over planning for parking, which is not within the purview of AHC. Nick Cracknell confirmed this will be reviewed and addressed later under the purview of the planning board.
 - g. Lisa and applicant formally requested release of delay on 234 Main Street to proceed with demolition.
 - h. Chris L motioned to close the public hearing, seconded by Malcolm. Passed 4-0.
 - i. Chris L motioned that 234 Main street be deemed not preferably preserved, seconded by Malcolm. Passed 4-0.
6. 230 Main Street – HPSP application and determination of historic eligibility.
- a. Lisa Meade proposed that the addition of the carriage house in the rear of property and the proposed construction of other buildings in the place of 234 Main, in tandem with the proposed renovations of the structure at 230 Main, do not detract from the historic value of the structure at 230 Main and applicants are requesting AHC vote for historical eligibility and issuance of HPSP.
 - b. There were some further questions regarding other scope details including parking, landscaping, that Nick Cracknell confirmed would be addressed under purview of the planning board.
 - c. Malcolm motioned to deem 230 historically eligible and to approve application for HPSP, seconded by Chris L. Passed 4-0.
7. 5 School Street – application for demolition
- a. Malcolm motioned to open public hearing, seconded by Chris A. Passed 4-0.
 - b. Scott Brown and Brad Kutcher presented scope for AHC review, having previously presented to planning board and DRC.
 - c. Scott noted dilapidated state of 5 School Street; proposal is to demolish this structure and reconstruct a near replica in its place, with some minor adjustments to overall height and front door surround.
 - d. Nick had some questions regarding proposed foundation and chimney construction. Scott commented the finish will be styled in a method complementary to the historical nature of the original structure.
 - e. The new structure will also be offset to allow for construction of a 1 car garage in the rear of the building.
 - f. Malcolm motioned to close public hearing, seconded by Chris A. Passed 4-0.

- g. Chris A motioned to deem 5 School Street not preferably preserved, seconded by Malcolm. Passed 4-0.
- 8. 9 School Street (Ordway School) – review of draft preservation restriction
 - a. Due to timing of submission, AHC is unable to finalize/approve the HPSP draft in its entirety, only to review application formatting and reaffirm support for the preservation project.
 - b. Scott mentioned the ongoing discussion within DRC regarding the building’s main entrance and location of mechanical/utility equipment. Scott added that a roof plan will be provided to document location of mechanical, and a proposal for screening/obscuring from street view. He will also provide further detailed landscaping plans along School Street.
 - c. DRC is also currently in discussion with orientation and scale of front porch, exterior paint color, and window replacement/repair.
 - d. This item shall be revisited at March meeting following further discussion amongst DRC and planning board committees, as well as revision of draft PR to follow previously approved formatting (i.e. Gagliardi in Newburyport.)
- 9. 2-4 Elmwood – HPSP application and determination of historical eligibility
 - a. Scott re-presented previous project details; plan is to restore current 2-family structure and sub-divide lot for construction of additional structure to match what is currently standing (once restored.)
 - b. Restoration scope includes addition of historic windowsills, evaluating porch elements (stairs, columns) to match more appropriate Victorian style.
 - c. Chris and Nick noted need for a roof plan to confirm if addition of dormer is in fact required as part of restoration.
 - d. Applicants seeking designation of historical eligibility and approval of HPSP, both Jay and Chris L remarked on the unique construction of this property.
 - e. Malcolm motioned to deem this property historically eligible, seconded by Chris A. Passed 4-0.
- 10. 14 Maple Street (twins) – review of draft preservation restriction
 - a. Scott explained scope for preservation of existing structure, with construction of an additional, slightly smaller single-family structure next door (sub-divided lot.)
 - b. Additional scope items include double-hung windows, re-adding original “tower” element, upgrading from 1 car to 2 car garage.
 - c. Jay asked about serrated roof shingles on the twin house and if it would be replicated. Material for the prospective turret cap was also discussed, with a preference for zinc/lead vs. copper to match the feature on the existing turret.
 - d. This item shall be revisited at March meeting following further discussion amongst DRC and planning board committees, as well as revision of draft PR.
- 11. Chris L motioned to adjourn, seconded by Malcolm. Passed 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Malcolm Rutter