



Programs & Services Committee Report

City of Newton In City Council

Wednesday, April 25, 2018

Present: Councilors Rice (Chair), Krintzman, Albright, Greenberg, Kalis and Schwartz

Absent: Councilors Baker and Brousal-Glaser

City Staff Present: Seth Bai (Veterans Agent), Phil McNulty (Director, Newton Free Library), Jill Graboski (Assistant Director, Newton Free Library), Lisa Dady (Director, Newton History Museum), Alice Ingerson (Community Preservation Program Manager), Bob DeRubeis (Commissioner, Parks & Recreation Dept.), Carol Stapleton (Programs Manager), Karyn Dean (Committee Clerk)

#221-18 Appointment of Leland Fisher to Jackson Homestead

HER HONOR THE MAYOR appointing LELAND P. FISHER, 954 Chestnut Street, Newton Upper Falls, as a Trustee of the JACKSON HOMESTEAD for a term to expire April 30, 2021. (60 days: 6/16/18)

Action: Programs & Services Approved 4-0 (Councilors Kalis and Schwartz not voting)

Note: Mr. Fisher joined the Committee. He explained that he has had a long time interest in history. His family would visit historical sites such as Williamsburg and grew up in an Erie Canal milk town in upstate New York. He moved to Newton with his wife in 1978 and bought a house in Newton Upper Falls that was built in 1831, and they have been renovating ever since. Mr. Fisher noted that he has respect for the workmanship found in older structures and appreciates the good architecture in this City as well. There is a concern with teardowns and the gutting of older homes. Builders and developers have to come before the Historical Commission for exterior changes, but the plaster, chimneys, doors and windows and other interior elements get torn out, ruining the historic nature of the building or home.

In looking for ways to try to contribute to the City, he found this opportunity with the Jackson Homestead and felt it was a good fit. Mr. Fisher said from a marketing and business development point of view, he feels he can be of assistance to the Jackson Homestead. Social media is a critical component in most institutions right now. Getting young people involved and interested in history is important, and his experience in business can help expand the reach of the Jackson Homestead. He also mentioned that there is a lot of representation on the North side of the City on the Board/Trustees of the Newton History Museums, but he would be the only South side member.

A Councilor noted that the Zoning & Planning Committee is working on a new zoning ordinance. The Committee and Planning Department will be looking for people to review the draft ordinance and she asked if he would participate in that process. His input on ways to deter the destruction of the historic structures would be beneficial. Mr. Fisher said he has an Engineering degree from

Brown University and a Masters in Management from the MIT Sloan School so he has the ability to understand both the technical and business sides of issues that might come forward as a Trustee.

He noted that he appreciates the historic fabric of what exists in the City right now such as buildings, landscapes, stone walls, bridges, etc. Having the resources to properly replicate something historic, such as the work on the railings of the bridge at Farlow Park, is extremely important. He has worked on that particular project for a year and a half now. .

Councilor Albright moved approval and the Committee voted in favor unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

John B. Rice, Chair