



GARDNER HISTORICAL COMMISSION FEBUARY 17, 2026 MEETING MINUTES

The monthly meeting of the Gardner Historical Commission was held on Tuesday, February 17, 2026 in the Mayor's Conference Room, City Hall, 95 Pleasant Street.

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Commission Chair Chris Pera. Also in attendance were Commission members Scott Huntoon and Alan Agnelli (participating remotely). Vice Chair Chuck LaHaye was unable to attend. Associate Members Steve Rockwood and Marcia White and residents Ottavio Canu, Heather Mount, and Nancy Brown were also in attendance. Mr. Agnelli transcribed the Minutes.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF OPEN MEETING RECORDINGS

The Chair announced that any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting, or may transmit the meeting through any medium, subject to reasonable requirements of the chair as to the number, placement and operation of equipment used so as not to interfere with the conduct of the meeting. Any person intending to make such recording shall notify the Chair forthwith. All documents and exhibits used or referenced at the meeting must be submitted in duplicate to the Chair, as they become part of the Meeting Minutes. No one informed the Chair of their intention to record the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING(S)

On a motion by Mr. Huntoon and seconded by Mr. Agnelli, on call of the roll, it was voted three (3) yeas Messrs. Agnelli, Huntoon, and Pera, to accept the Minutes of the January 20, 2026 Meeting, as printed.

PUBLIC COMMENT AND PRESENTATIONS

There were no public comments or presentations.

COMMUNICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

There were no communications or correspondence.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

FY2027 Budget Request

On a motion by Mr. Agnelli and seconded by Mr. Huntoon, on call of the roll, it was voted three (3) yeas, Messrs. Agnelli, Huntoon, and Pera, to authorize the Chair to prepare the Commission's FY2027 Budget Narrative and Funding Request and submit it to the Mayor by Friday, February 20, 2026.

Membership/Status of Appointments/Volunteer Recruitment

Mr. Agnelli reported that the Mayor's appointments of Ottavio Canu, Linda Rice, and Marcia White have been submitted to the City Council and that interviews will be scheduled this month.

Law Department Review of Rules & Regulations Regarding Historic Preservation Special Permits Advisory Opinions.

Mr. Pera informed the Commission that it should be ready to take action at the next meeting on the proposed Rules & Regulations Regarding Historic Preservation Special Permits Advisory Opinions. He added that he is opposed to the provision that requires abutters' notices since the ZBA already has the requirement in its special permitting hearing procedures.



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In relation to the adoption of Historic Preservation Rules and Regulations, Mr. Pera mentioned that he and Mr. Agnelli identified Earle & Fuller of Worcester, Massachusetts as the architects of 100 Central Street, the “Henry Heywood House”, as sought by the owner. The Commission also provided the owner with documents and newspaper articles that highlighted the stages of surveying, the ongoing construction of the house, and its completion. The documents covered the period May 19, 1874 through December 31, 1875.

PROJECTS

Old Burying Ground Assessment of Graveyard Conditions

Mr. Pera informed the Commission that the assessment of on-site conditions continues as weather permits and that the contractor’s report will be submitted to the Commission upon completion.

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (“MACRIS”) Update

Mr. Pera informed the Commission that Preservation Massachusetts released a training video about historic inventories and Mr. Agnelli previously provided digital copies of the following:

- Documentation Resources, Western Mass Historical Commission Coalition, November 2025.
- How to Jump Start Your Community's Inventory of Historic Resources, Western MA Historical Coalition, November 19, 2025.
- Library Resources for Local History & Genealogy, Presented to the Western Massachusetts Historical Commission Coalition
- Technical Guidelines for Electronic Files in MHC Surveys
- "Technical Standards for MHC Inventory Form Preparation" by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (hard copies will be distributed at the March Commission meeting).

Mr. Pera continued by saying that the next step will be to schedule a special session to train volunteers to update/add to the MACRIS Inventory. He added that the Commission should set aside a period of time during the next meeting to discuss procedures to implement a training session for both GHS history students and volunteers from the Brewer Center at MWCC.

Historic Markers and Artifacts Documentation

The Commission is awaiting volunteers to edit photographs of historic markers and to prepare corresponding narratives.

Semiquincentennial of the United States Anniversary Programs for 2026

Commissioners discussed potential local activities for the Semiquincentennial such as Liberty Tree Program and the Bicentennial Time Capsule. The issue will be included on the March Agenda for further discussion.

Master Plan Priorities

Mr. Pera reiterated that the City’s Master Plan consultant identified the City’s MACRIS Inventory as being outdated and that the city lacks any locally-designated and protected historic districts; a Demolition Delay Ordinance; the adoption of the Community Preservation Act; or, lack of Community Development Block Grant funding to assist with preserving or rehabilitating local historic buildings.



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NEW BUSINESS

Greenwood Memorial Pool Pavilion Project

Commissioners questioned the status of the Greenwood Memorial Pool Pavilion construction and the Commission's goal to incorporate into the Pavilion various artifacts that were salvaged from the demolished pool building. The CD&P Director and Assistant Director will be contacted.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next Regular Meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 17, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.** in City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Huntoon and seconded by Mr. Agnelli, on call of the roll, it was voted three (3) yeas, Messrs. Agnelli, Huntoon, and Pera, to adjourn at 6:39 p.m.



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City of Gardner, Massachusetts Historical Commission

MEETING AGENDA

for

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2026

6:00 P.M.

MAYOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM 128, CITY HALL
95 PLEASANT STREET

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

II. ANNOUNCEMENT OF OPEN MEETING RECORDINGS

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III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING(S)

Review and approval of the January 20, 2026 Meeting Minutes.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT AND PRESENTATIONS

V. COMMUNICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

VI. BUSINESS

1. Administrative

- a. FY2027 Budget Request
- b. Membership/Status of Appointments/Volunteer Recruitment.
- c. Law Department Review of *Rules & Regulations Regarding Historic Preservation Special Permits Advisory Opinions.*

2. Projects

- a. Old Burying Ground Restoration Project
- b. Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) Update
- c. Historic Markers and Artifacts Documentation
- d. Semiquincentennial of the United States Anniversary Programs for 2026
- e. Master Plan Priorities

VII. NEW BUSINESS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Items listed on the Agenda are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair to be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.