

# ***Goshen Historical Commission***

## ***Meeting Minutes***

January 14, 2016

### **1) Call to order**

- a) The regular meeting of the Goshen Historical Commission was called to order at 7:05PM on January 14, 2016 at the Goshen Fire Station. It was 20 degrees outside, clear skies and 2" of snow on the ground.

### **2) Roll call**

- a) The following persons were present: Bob Labrie, Margaret Waggoner, Floyd Merritt.

### **3) Approval of minutes from last meeting**

- a) The minutes of the December 10, 2015 meeting were approved as presented.

### **4) Finance Report**

- a) Expended \$385.27 year to date leaving balance of \$3,214.73.
- b) No change in Book Fund or Gift Fund balance.
- c) One George Propane bill or \$187.99 for January received today.

### **5) Report on endangered historical properties – Williams / Boltwood House**

- a) On 12/14, BL, FM and MW visited the Williams / Boltwood House to continue labeling and packing books from the upstairs library. Ran out of slips. Will continue after more slips are printed and the weather warms up.
- b) Pictures were taken of the outside of the building. More photos of the interior needed.

### **6) Status of completion of and summary of MHC inventory forms on historical properties**

- a) No change in status.

### **7) Report of GHC representative on CPA Committee**

- a) No change in status since there was no meeting of the CPA Committee

### **8) Report of the Curator**

- a) Processing of the museum collection continues at FM home with research to determine family vitals / relationships of people in photos.

- b) GHS Ice Cream Social is official. Will be held in June.
- c) BL met with Goshen Select board on 12/21 to discuss the condition of the museum attic space (see attached). Select board suggested I forward the report to Dave Cristopolis (Green Communities) to see if there were any funds that could be used to replace the insulation in the building. They also recommended that we contact Curt Golek (Electrical Inspector) and ask that he inspect the wiring in that space. BL to follow up.

**9) New Business**

- a) Alarm system – need to bring someone in to discuss the current system to determine if any upgrades are necessary.
- b) Reed Organ – discussed the possibility of getting the reed organ repaired. MW suggested we contact Grant Moss (Smith College Organist, Music Department) for advice.

**10) Adjournment**

- a) Meeting was adjourned at 8:45PM.
- b) Minutes submitted by: Bob Labrie



# TOWN OF GOSHEN, MASSACHUSETTS

Goshen Historical Commission  
40 Main Street  
Goshen MA 01032

December 21, 2015

To the Members of the Goshen Selectboard,

During a recent Selectboard meeting, I raised a concern the Historical Commission had regarding a possible leak in the roof at the Historical Museum located at 13 Main Street. This was the result of stains we noticed in the ceiling at the museum. As a follow up to that concern, I decided to investigate further by going up into the attic to see if I could get a better sense of its cause.

The only access to the attic area at the museum is through what could be best described as a hatchway in the ceiling of our first floor closet. After unlocking the latch and lowering the door, I was showered with what could best be described as a facefull of 'little surprises' left by mice and other animals that now called the attic their home.

Attached are several pictures that were taken during my journey into the unlit attic. Let me assure you that it was quite the experience. These pictures also contain captions with descriptions of what is being looked at.

Here is a summary of my findings:

- The attic is currently home to a family of flying squirrels
- There are signs of mice EVERYWHERE you look
- There were several electrical junction boxes that were not properly covered
- Mice have eaten away at electrical insulation leaving copper wires exposed
- There is a large beehive located where the propane fuel line enters the building
- Animals are chewing away at rafters and other wooden supports in the attic
- It appears that the stain in the ceiling was the result of animal urine rather than a leak in the roof
- Insulation in several areas was not properly secured and is now falling down
- It appears that the attic insulation was installed hastily leading it to be installed incorrectly in several areas
- It was not obvious to me how or where the squirrels got into the attic. The only clear opening to the attic area is from the exhaust vent and that area looked tight.

The following actions are being taken in order to address our immediate concerns:

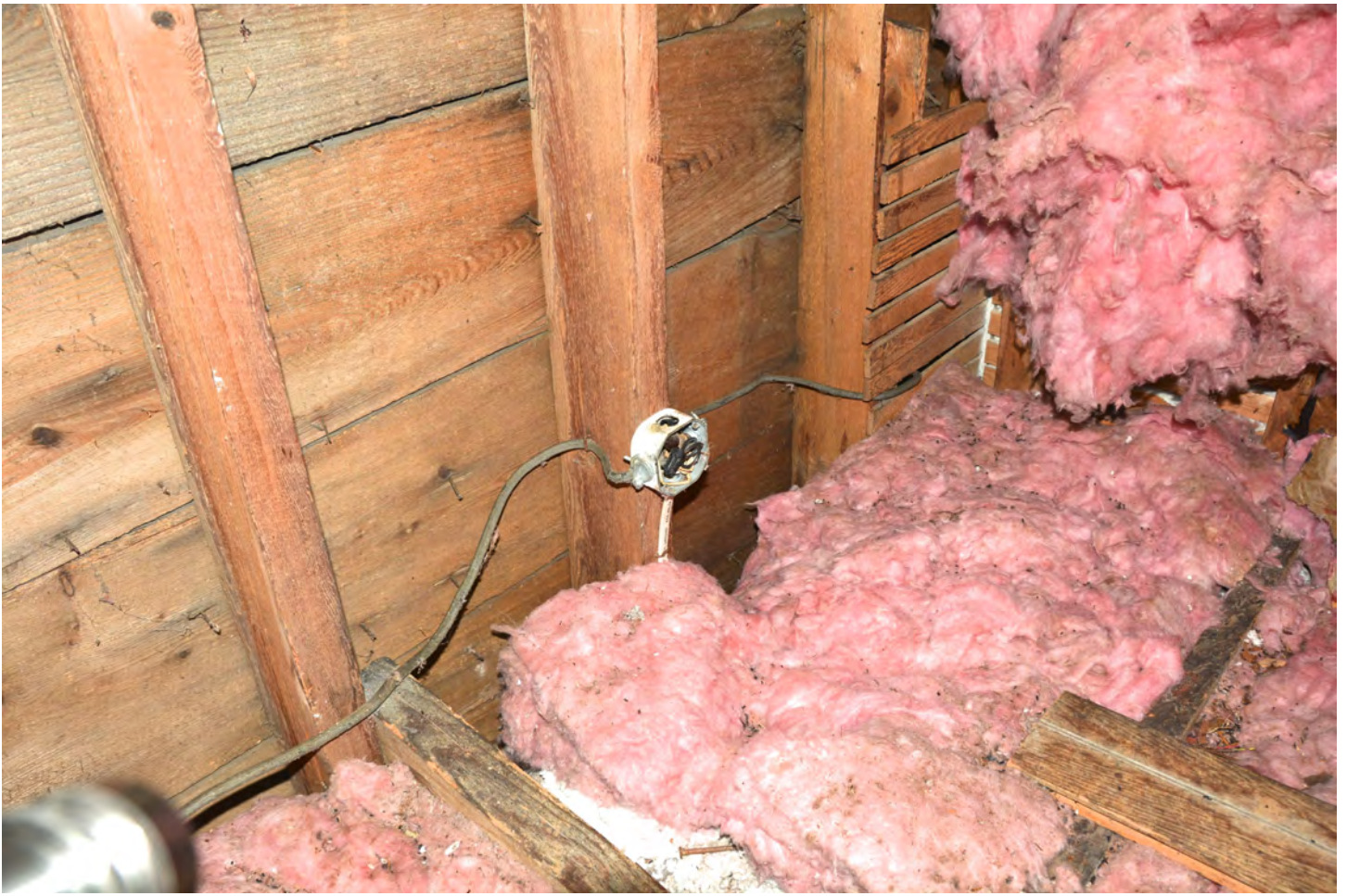
- A 'Have a heart' trap has been placed in the attic and it baited with peanut butter.
- I will be using the Fire Department 'hot stick' to determine if any of the exposed wires are live. If so, I will be cutting off the power to the lighting circuit as soon as I crawl out of the attic.
- We may have to hire an electrician to inspect the attic wiring and provide us with their advice on our findings and solutions to remedy them.
- We could also use the advice of someone more knowledgeable than me in regards to attic insulation. Do we have a little problem or a big problem and what are the costs to remedy?

I am copying Dawn Scapparotti on this letter because of her role on the Capital Planning Committee and the potential need for capital funding associated with these repairs.

Sincerely  
Bob Labrie  
Chair, Goshen Historical Commission



This is the ceiling above the entryway to the museum. Notice how the mice have chewed away pink insulation and scattered it over the yellow insulation. Also notice how the yellow insulation has been matted down as a result.



This is a junction box located above the front door which has no cover on it leaving wires exposed.



This is a junction box located above the closet ceiling that is also missing a cover. Notice how the wiring insulation has been chewed away exposing the copper wire. There is also a black grounding wire that is not connected to anything.



This is a view looking towards the back of the Museum (towards the West) from the front of the Museum. The rafters on the left of this picture face south. Note the 'hump' in the insulation on the left side of the picture. That was caused when the installers placed the insulation directly over electrical wires that are located on top of the ceiling joists.



This is a corner of the ceiling above the closet. Note the mouse hole in the insulation in the center of the picture.





This is a picture of the ceiling area above the closet in the northeast corner of the building.



This is the area above where the stain was identified in the ceiling. Note the animal fur in the center of the picture and how the insulation in this section is matted down. Also note the electrical wires that are nailed to the top of the ceiling joists in the bottom left corner of the picture and how the insulation was placed directly on top of it.



Stains from animal excrement.



In this picture, you can see how the mice have eaten away at the insulation that was placed on top of the electrical wires and exposing the white insulation (blown in?) below it.



Beehive located at the Western wall of the Museum where the copper tubing that supplies propane fuel to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor burner enters the building.

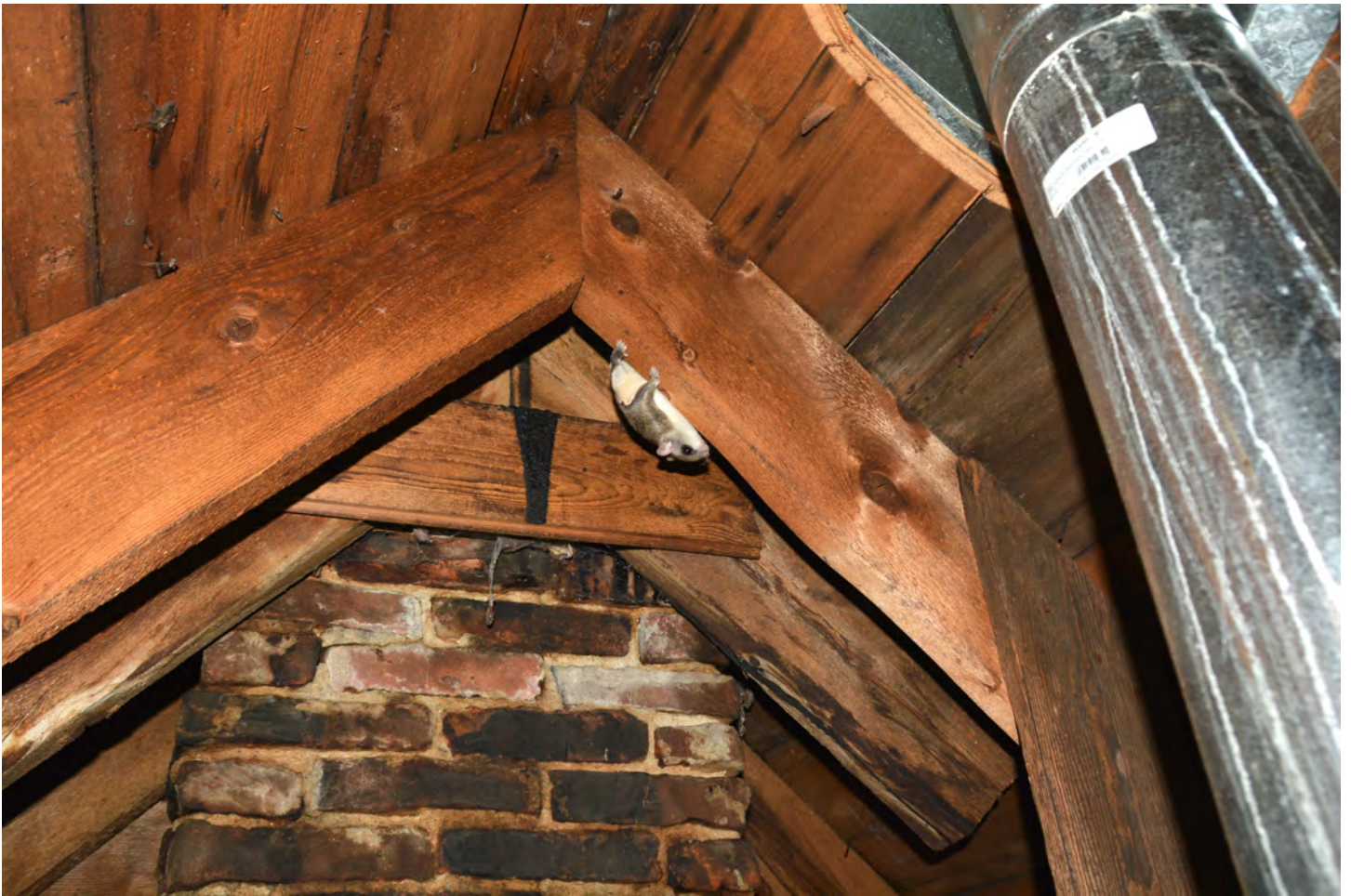
If you look closely at the base of the beehive, you'll see one of the flying squirrels that have taken up residence. I'm calling this one Scott because he seems to like propane.



This is the vent pipe for the propane heater that's in the ceiling of the Museum. My main concern here is whether or not there is an appropriate separation between the exhaust pipe and the wooden framing around it. I will follow up with the Building Inspector to seek his opinion.



Here is a closer view of 'Scott' – the flying squirrel.



Here is a picture of one of 'Scott's friends near the peak of the roof.





I'm not certain if this was 'Scott' or one of his friends. I got confused after a while because they were scrambling around in the dark as I was taking these pictures. However, notice how the rafters and wall framing in the upper left section of this picture is being chewed on by these critters - not to mention the excrement they're leaving everywhere.



I'm guessing that this was a stovepipe that was a leftover from a previous conversion. It will be removed when I can get someone else there to help me get rid of it.



Attic area to the north of the building. Again, notice the animal waste on top of the insulation and the 'hump' where the insulation was placed on top of electrical wires.



This is the attic area above the closet. As you can see, wall insulation is falling down and needs to be replaced.