



Amherst Massachusetts

Amherst Human Rights Commission

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Mary Streeter, Chairperson
Amherst Community Preservation Act Committee
Town Hall
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002

Dave Ziomek, Assistant Town Manager
Town Hall
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002

Dear ACPA Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to express the full support of the Human Rights Commission for funding the Goodwin Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church [hereinafter "Goodwin Church"] CPA proposal. As an African American heritage site, it remains a significant part of the history of the peoples of Massachusetts and to the current fabric of our community.

The Goodwin Church is a critically important part of the history of our town and our peoples. The preservation of Goodwin Church will insure the continued contribution of this resource to the understanding of our cultures and strengthen the relations among all the peoples of Amherst. The Human Rights Commission has reviewed the Goodwin Church's proposal. We were advised of the need for a Capital Needs Assessment as the pre-development foundation for documenting costs, setting priorities, and making a plan. An archaeological surveys and recommendations also appears to be a necessary step for preservation. The plan is solid, thoughtful and achievable.

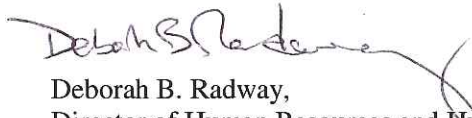
At a time when it is so important to unite and for our community to understand and share our joint history, we need to understand that the development of the self-identities of peoples of color may differ from other members of our community. Psychologists, such as William Cross and Beverly Daniel Tatum, teach us that the development of self-identity can be critical to understanding and improving race relations. We are commonly not taught about the development of self-identity in peoples of color, and it is not fully reflected in the curriculum in our schools.

But much of their history is the community's history and the Goodwin Church stands as its keenest and discerning representation. We have been told that Church parishioners, "...*envision and have embarked on a comprehensive project to recover and articulate more history of the African American community in Amherst through the history of the Church, spearheaded by an ongoing project with UMass History Department.*"

"*Goodwin Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church is a living example of hard work, heart, and spirit.*"
Clearly, it continues to contribute to improving community relations in Amherst. Goodwin Church's contributions will continue making Amherst a better place where our peoples can live with peace and dignity.

For these reason, The Amherst Human Rights Commission fully supports the Goodwin Church proposal for Community Preservation Act funding in FY 2016.

Respectfully,



Deborah B. Radway,
Director of Human Resources and Human Rights
For the Amherst Human Rights Commission