

# Historical designation sought for Pownal

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POWNAL — Pownal Historical Society representatives spoke to the Select Board Thursday about getting Center Street designated as a historical center by the state.

Fran Lampman said the society was exploring the idea of filing the application and wanted the board's input.

She said that after meeting the state Division of Historical Preservation, she understood that being designated a historical district was mostly an honorary matter and did not affect taxation, property values, or building permits.

Lampman said the society had been taking pictures of the homes on Center Street, with the owners' permission. She said any building older than 50 years could be considered historical, and the one home in the area under that would be 50 in a few years.

Lampman had reservations about Center Street becoming a historical district, saying federal restrictions placed on parts of old Boston made it difficult for homeowners to even paint their houses.

Board member Harry "Hap" Percey said more research should be done on as to how the designation would affect businesses on Center Street.

Historical Society member Wendy Hopkins said that while homes were not affected by the state designation, it might interfere with grants and state permits for businesses.

Percey said upgrades to electricity and sprinkler systems often required a state permit, and he didn't want the designation to affect the ability of any business to upgrade.

Brownell said the application was a good idea and that more research needed to be done. He said the 250th anniversary of the town was coming up in 2010, and if the society wanted to have the designation coincide with the anniversary, they had time to research the full ramifications.

\* In other business, the board voted to accept a card-holder agreement that would act as a policy for any town official using a town credit card, which the board also signed an application for.

Board member Steven Kauppi had brought up the issue of having a town credit card in previous meetings. He said the gas cards the town has been using weren't being accepted at stations in Pownal, and town officials had to drive to Bennington to buy fuel.

The town is applying for four cards, one for the wastewater treatment facility, one for the town constable and two for the Highway Department. Brownell said each card had a limit of \$1,500, but added he wouldn't have other details until the application process was complete.

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