

Massachusetts Historical Society

Founded 1791



Heather Gill

Community Preservation Committee

141 Keyes Road

Concord, MA 01742

November 10, 2020

Dear Ms. Gill,

I write today in support of the town of Concord providing aid and support to the Wright Tavern Task Force. I do this, not just in support of the effort to preserve and restore a Revolutionary War era tavern, nor to commemorate the location of a keystone of Massachusetts history on the road to independence. I write in support of the people of Concord, a forward looking people who are eager to stand in support of the rights of others; a people inextricably connected to their past while at the same time passionate to make the world a better place for the next generation. The Wright Tavern, and its restoration, is that outward sign that Concord is, was and always will be an enlightened community, constant in its devotion to American liberty and freedom, and committed to passing on its ideals to future residents of Concord, Massachusetts, and the world.

The history of Wright Tavern is probably well known to you. The tavern's connection to the momentous events of April 19, 1775 should be enough, alone, to argue the case for preservation & restoration. However, the Wright Tavern should be revered not so much for the events of 1775, but rather the events of 1774 when it provided meeting and refreshment space for the members of the 1774 Provincial Congress.

In 1774, as one of the "Intolerable Acts," the Parliament of Great Britain forced the shut down the government of Massachusetts by forbidding Town meetings from taking place, and forbidding the towns from choosing representatives for a "General Court." The Towns, taking matters into their own hands, chose representatives to establish a "Provincial Congress," in essence an extra-legal representative legislature that would oversee the Province's business. The Provincial Congress was the first step that the people of Massachusetts took on the road to Independence.

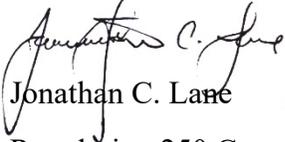
The Congress's president, Dr. Joseph Warren, chose Concord as the site of their earliest meetings and while the entire body met in First Parish Church, Wright Tavern hosted many of the numerous Committee gatherings to discuss the business of the Provincial Congress. Amongst the issues debated and discussed were the need to raise a defensive force in case the British Army marched out of Boston; a system of warning and communicating with communities

throughout the Province and other colonies; the moral implications of slavery amongst a people fighting for liberty; the care and feeding of the poor and dispossessed, particularly those suffering in Boston and Charlestown; and most importantly the means and methods by which freedom, liberty and the rights of the people could be defended, strengthened and sustained.

Revolution 250 hopes to work with the Wright Tavern Task force over the coming years to develop programming that will highlight the importance of the Provincial Congress, and the role of Wright Tavern in identifying and codifying the freedoms and liberties the we aspire to, not just for ourselves, but for all. One such program being developed would involve inviting representatives from High Schools from around the Commonwealth to come to Concord and to discuss, debate and deliberate over the issues that brought the people of Massachusetts together in 1774 & 1775.

Every community must decide how best to deploy their limited resources in support of the needs of the people. However, when a community holds a touchstone to the core principals of a nation, they have a responsibility to protect it and make such use of it as will best inspire the current and future generations to live up to the ideals discussed and debated long ago within its walls. Please do all that you can in support of the Wright Tavern Task force.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan C. Lane", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Jonathan C. Lane
Revolution 250 Coordinator