

Stratham Heritage Commission

Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2017

7:00 pm

Land Use Conference Room

Present: Rebecca Mitchell, Nathan Merrill, Wally Stuart, David Canada

Guests: Tavis Austin (7:10), Paul Deschaine (8:15)

Convened: 7:05 pm by Chairman Mitchell

Minutes: February 8, 2017 minutes were approved as presented with corrections (Mr. Merrill, Mr. Stuart, unanimous)

OLD BUSINESS

Bartlett-Cushman House: Ms. Mitchell and Mr. Merrill met with Colin Lavery at the B-C house to discuss installation of the shutters. Mr. Lavery proposed screwing the shutters to the exterior siding of the house. However, after further discussion and inspection of the shutters at the highway garage, it was determined that the shutters do indeed have the hinges intact and can be mounted back on their original pins. The highway crew will continue painting and hanging the shutters as time allows, with first priority to complete the front facade.

Mr. Canada reported that the Board of Selectmen received an inquiry from a broker interested in listing and marketing the B-C house lease / RFP offer. The board agreed to proceed. Ms. Mitchell inquired about the status of communicating with the contractor about replacing the barn roof. Mr. Canada will forward to her the proposal he received from Chris Bickford.

Planning Board: Mr. Canada said there are no relevant projects in front of the Planning Board at this time. Mr. Merrill noted that Technical Review Committee has not met since our last Heritage meeting.

Discussion shifted to the topic of creating a historic preservation incentive zone. Numerous scenarios (along with their various advantages and disadvantages) were discussed. Mr. Deschaine joined the discussion near its end, ~8:15 pm. Mr. Merrill will work further with Mr. Austin in order to prepare next steps for working with the Planning Board and establishing the study committee. Also, after the budget is approved at Town Meeting, we will be able to get the area historical survey underway. Ms. Mitchell estimates this will take several months to complete.

February Program Report: The historic taverns program was a big success, with over 50 attendees and enthusiastic positive feedback from the audience. Mr. Stuart reports that EXTV-98 will be broadcasting the program and also posting it on their YouTube channel. **Motion by Mr. Stuart: The**

Heritage Commission will donate \$100 the town of Exeter with our appreciation for EXTV's services recording and broadcasting our annual educational programs over the past three years. Second by Ms. Mitchell, approved unanimously.

National Register Nomination of 16 Emery's Lane (Chase's Tavern): Ms. Mitchell has been in communication with Lisa Mausolf and Peter Michaud. If the town can supply deed research for the property it will speed the process and help to contain the consultant's fee. Mr. Canada said assessing assistant Jim Joseph could assist us with this work.

Veterans' Memorial Garden: An ad hoc citizens group "Friends of Stratham Hill Park" led by Marty Wool, has offered to donate \$1,200 for purchase and installation of a second flagpole at the VMG. The Selectmen voted to accept the donation. **Motion by Mr. Canada: The Heritage Commission will allocate up to \$800 to install electric lighting for the second flagpole at the Veterans' Memorial Garden. The funding shall come from \$1,000 donated to the Heritage Fund in 2008 by Amy Ross to be expended on suitable work at the Veterans' Memorial Garden in memory of her late husband, Joseph L. Ross. Second by Mr. Merrill, approved unanimously.**

Town Meeting and Warrant Articles: The chair proposed that the Heritage Commission take a stand in support of funding a conservation easement for Barker's Farm, and stated that she is willing to speak on behalf of that support at Town Meeting. **Motion by Mr. Canada: The Heritage Commission expresses its support for the proposed Barker Farm conservation easement that will be voted on at Town Meeting. Mr. Merrill noted that permanent conservation of working farms also fulfills the Heritage Commission's objective of preserving our local agrarian heritage and historic land use patterns. Second by Mr. Stuart, approved unanimously.**

NEW BUSINESS

Spring Conferences: Ms. Mitchell will be participating in a panel discussion at the upcoming Spring Planning & Zoning Conference sponsored by the NH Office of Energy & Planning on April 29th. She will be one of four panelists leading a workshop entitled "Highlighting Successful Historic Preservation Projects". Ms. Mitchell also noted another workshop of interest: "Time to Think Differently About Master Plans". Mr. Austin and/or Planning Board members are encouraged to attend the session if at all possible.

The NH Preservation Alliance conference will be on April 21 in Concord. Heritage Commission members are encouraged to attend.

Senate Bill 136: Mr. Deschaine spoke about a phone call and letter he received recently from Brian Hart, executive director of the Southeast Land Trust (SELT), pertaining to Senate Bill 136. Mr. Hart wrote to solicit opposition to the bill that would extend the existing RSA 121 to include federally funded conservation easements, add a burdensome layer of bureaucratic review, and violate the right of land owners to dispose of their land as they see fit. **Motion by Mr. Merrill: The chair will write to**

**Senator Innis expressing the Heritage Commission's opposition to Senate Bill 136, as amended.
Second by Mr. Stuart, vote unanimous.**

Next Meeting: April 12 at 7:00 pm in the Land Use Conference Room.

Adjourned: 9:20 PM (Merrill, Mitchell, unanimous).

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan Merrill