

# **Stratham Heritage Commission**

## **Non- Public Meeting Minutes**

**October 11, 2017**

**7:00 pm**

**Land Use Conference Room**

Present: Nathan Merrill, Rebecca Mitchell, Wallace Stuart, Florence Wiggin, Tammy Hathaway

Absent: David Canada, Michael Houghton

Guests: David Short 7:05-7:45 pm

Mr. David Short, owner of the Old Town Hall, explained to the Commission that, in his view, sewage disposal and the building's type of construction limit its potential for renovation. His original goal was to attract business and preserve the historic building but the current rental does not cover the maintenance, taxes and insurance. Commission members expressed our concern for the historic importance of the Old Town Hall, and discussed the possibility of a preservation easement that might lower the price to attract a buyer interested in maintaining the existing building. Mr. Short, although previously expressing some interest in an easement, replied that he just wants to sell the building sooner rather than later. Ideally he would like to see the Town purchase the building.

Ms. Mitchell said that she had discussed with the NH Preservation Alliance submitting an application for one of the NHPA's assessment grants. Since the structure has been determined eligible for the NH Register of Historic Places it is a good candidate for such a grant. Mr. Short expressed his hesitance in owning or selling the building with a preservation easement but gave his ok to have it assessed.

Mr. Short departed from meeting at 7:45 pm. Commission discussion continued. Ms. Mitchell reported that NHPA grant money sourced from LCHIP with a 50% match from our Heritage Fund could be used to pay for a conditions assessment of the structure and/or feasibility study for potential reuse(s) of the property.