

# **Stratham Heritage Commission**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**January 11, 2017**

**7:00 pm**

**Land Use Conference Room**

Present: Nathan Merrill, Wally Stuart, David Canada, Tammy Hathaway, (Terry Barnes @ 7:40 pm)

Convened: 7:05 pm by Nathan Merrill filling in as Chairman. Tammy Hathaway assumed voting position in Rebecca Mitchell's absence.

Minutes: December 14, 2016 minutes were approved (Mr. Canada, Mr. Stuart, unanimous)

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Treasurer's Report: Mr. Stuart reported the following account balances as of 12/31/2016: Operating budget \$2.11; Heritage Fund \$4,550.28 plus the remaining \$2,256.00 balance from the 300<sup>th</sup> committee; and the Heritage Preservation Fund \$2,464.22 (net balance from 2016 appropriation less 2016 expenditure, does not include net balance from prior year of \$40,000+). Mr. Stuart noted that the Lane Homestead plaque was misallocated by the town bookkeeper under the Veterans line item instead of under Survey/Consultants, despite clear instructions from Ms. Mitchell. Because year-end books have been closed for the auditor, the error cannot be changed retroactively. However there is no problem with our total expenditures as they are within the total budget from 2016.

Lane Homestead: Mr. Merrill brought in The National Register plaque for approval and Mr. Canada will ask Colin Laverty of the highway department to mount the plaque at the Jabez Lane House. Mr. Merrill will authorize the town bookkeeper to release payment to the vendor.

Bartlett-Cushman House: Mr. Canada reported that the shutters are ready to be installed as soon as Ms. Mitchell is available to consult with Colin Laverty regarding the hardware and proper installation. Mr. Canada presented a proposal of interior renovations for two apartments to the Board of Selectmen. The Board decided to not pursue it at this time. Mr. Canada and the town administrator will re-issue our revised RFP out to brokers to see if there is any interest in the property. He will also consult with the Board of Selectmen about establishing a dollar amount for brokerage fees. Colin Laverty will clean up and mount the old Stratham Historical Society sign donated by Lucy Cushman on the front facade, opposite of the national register plaque. Mr. Canada reported that the proposal for replacing asphalt shingles on the barn roof was \$2,800.00 and for replacing the missing crown molding on the south side was \$150.00 for a total cost estimate of \$2,950.00.

Mr. Merrill noted that an estimate for repairing the barn windows along with storm sashes for the bay windows and the attic dormer windows on the house were forthcoming from Window Woman. Mr. Canada explained that all of the repairs will come out of the 2017 government buildings capital budget.

Mr. Merrill will work with Mr. Stuart on the presentation of the Heritage Commission budget for the Budget Advisory Committee meeting on January 17, 2017.

Planning Board: Mr. Merrill reminded the Commission that we need to make a statement to the town planner in regard to Section 106 review of the proposed Verizon telecommunications tower at 57 Portsmouth Ave. After discussion and review of Mr. Merrill's memo dated 1/5/2017 (attached as an appendix to these minutes) and photographic images of the Verizon balloon test, Mr. Merrill made the following motion: **After significant research and discussion, the Heritage Commission votes that the proposed telecommunications tower at 57 Portsmouth Avenue would have a significant adverse effect on the adjacent historic Scamman Farm by irreparably changing the character of the property's setting and introducing an incompatible visual element. This would adversely impact the integrity of the historic property's setting as cited in the 1998 determination of its eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A & C. Ms Hathaway 2<sup>nd</sup> and vote was unanimous in favor. (Mr. Canada and Mr. Stuart abstained from voting on this motion due to Mr. Canada's position on the Planning Board and Mr. Stuart's family connections with the property owner.)**

It was also noted that the Mitsubishi garage, while in excess of 50 years old, is not pertinent to Section 106 adverse impact due to the fact that it has not been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, and in our best judgment it would not be eligible due to heavy modifications of the building and signage over the years.

Town Planner Tavis Austin reported to Mr. Merrill that he is working on some concepts for the Portsmouth Ave. corridor zoning project. The cost estimate from Lisa Mausolf for the historical survey of the Portsmouth Ave. corridor is \$17,000.00 and this figure is currently carried in the Planning Department's 2017 budget in the "special projects" line item.

The Rte. 108 corridor committee (for the Gateway district) met for the first time this month, and Mr. Merrill is a member.

Demolition Review Committee: Mr. Stuart and Mr. Merrill completed documentary photographs of the rear barn at 271 Portsmouth Avenue and the three small barns/sheds at 3 Barker Lane and the demolition permits were subsequently granted.

Ms. Mitchell requested a copy of the new draft Manchester demolition ordinance to review. Manchester has also expressed desire for a regional or statewide program on this issue at the NH Preservation Alliance biennial conference or at the NH Office of Energy & Planning annual conference.

Stratham Community Church commemorative sign: Ms. Mitchell has been working with the church on editing the sign and has suggested that it should go on Parker Hall as it would be more visible to more people. She also hopes that the town will undertake future efforts to make the existing

commemorative sign at the old Baptist Church site more visible, with guidance from the Heritage Commission.

Wiggin Cemetery: Peter Wiggin will attend our February meeting for further discussion on long-term stewardship of the cemetery.

Old Town Hall: The NHDHR has determined that the building is eligible for listing on the state register of historic places. The next step is a signed letter from the property owner and then the nomination can go forward to the State Historical Resources Council for formal listing.

Chase's Tavern: In 2017 the Heritage Commission will hire Lisa Mausolf to complete a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Chase's Tavern/Emery's Farm at 16 Emery's Lane with permission from the property owner. The cost for this work is included in our 2017 operating budget.

February Program: The Morgera Room at the firehouse has been reserved for 2/17/2017 with a snow date of 2/24/2017. Ron Deane has agreed to show photos and discuss his rehabilitation of the Keniston Tavern. Historian Marcia Schmidt-Blaine of Plymouth State University will be the keynote speaker, with a focus on woman-owned taverns. Ms. Mitchell plans to issue a press release when she returns from vacation. The historical Society has also been notified to announce our program. Mr. Canada will coordinate the microphones, etc. and Mr. Stuart is looking into recording the event. Mr. Merrill will also contact John Hazekamp to see if he is available for recording if EXTV is unavailable.

Veterans Garden: Mr. Canada reported that the Selectmen have agreed to fly the POW/MIA flag on the current pole for the five dates as specified by the US Federal Government. The state and town flags will not be flown on those five dates as long as there is only one pole on site. The Selectmen also agreed to accept donations for a second flagpole to be erected at a future time, which would have the state and town flags, enabling the POW/MIA flag to fly at the existing pole under the US flag permanently.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

New Town Website: Still a work in progress but up and running. More work needs to be done to restore lost links and information.

Annual Report: Mr. Canada said there would be adequate time for the report to be written after Ms. Mitchell's return from vacation.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The NHPA will sponsor a presentation by Tom Visser at the Farm & Forest Expo, Feb. 17-18 at the Center of New Hampshire in Manchester. His topic is Carriage Houses, Carriage Barns and Cottage Stables. Date and time TBA.

The latest NHPA newsletter featured a large write-up of the Lane Homestead preservation easement success, including two color photos from the celebration event last October. Mr. Merrill sat next to NHPA executive director Jennifer Goodman at the state historic barns committee meeting yesterday, and he reported that Ms. Goodman and NHPA trustees are immensely pleased with the positive outcome of the Lane Homestead preservation project -- a happy ending for a Seven to Save property.

Next Meeting: February 8, 2017 at 7:00 pm in the Land Use Conference Room.

Adjourned: 8:40 PM (Canada, Stuart, unanimous).

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Hathaway

Nathan Merrill