

Stratham Heritage Commission
Stratham Municipal Center – Hutton Room
Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2021

Present: Nathan Merrill, David Canada, Michael Houghton Forrest Barker, Rebecca Mitchell, Tammy Hathaway, Florence Wiggin

Guests: David Moore Town Administrator, Mark Conners Town Planner

Convened: 7:05 PM

Secretary's Report: Mr. Merrill distributed the minutes of the February 11, 2021 meeting. *Mr. Canada moved to approve the minutes as presented; Ms. Mitchell seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

Treasurer's Report: Ms. Barker had nothing to report

Committee Reports

Planning Board: Mr. Canada, Planning Board representative to the Commission, reported that nothing new of interest to the Commission was discussed at the last Planning Board meeting but that there was continued discussion on the Rte. 33 Legacy Highway. In attendance to discuss this subject were Town Administrator David Moore and Town Planner Mark Conners. Mr. Conners extended an invitation to the Heritage Commission members to attend a joint meeting with the Planning Board April 7, 2021 to discuss how to move forward with new zoning for the area. A discussion ensued with all in agreement that continued community outreach was essential. Property owners within the proposed Rte. 33 corridor and abutting properties should be invited to share their thoughts and receive updates throughout the process. Mr. Moore noted that there were 100 property owners and 400 abutters to engage. Mr. Merrill thought it might be best to do a multi-step approach targeting the property owners within the Rte. 33 corridor first followed by the abutting property owners and finally a town wide discussion. Mr. Conners distributed preliminary comments from the Planning Board including a public outreach timeline and some photographs of examples of older housing which had been adapted for a variety of business uses. A discussion was held on the possibility of Zoom meetings for public input, which would need a good moderator to be productive, along with home visits if necessary. Mr. Houghton remarked that the Zoom platform provided more engagement as was evidenced in the recent candidates' night held prior to town voting.

Technical Review Committee: No report

Demolition Review Committee: Mr. Merrill and Ms. Mitchell reported that the DRC met with the property owner at 305 Portsmouth Avenue and saw no reason to delay his demolition permit. The house is a 1950's ranch built of cinderblocks. DRC member

Fred Emanuel noted that it might be the only such house in Stratham. The owner reported that the structure, both walls and roof, is not sound. He plans to rebuild with a two-story home on a slightly larger footprint. He is saving and reusing the 1950s mid-century modern style front door.

Select Board: Mr. Houghton reported that the board had been working on preparations for voting day on March 9 which was a success. Wiggin Memorial Library's annual voter information night was held via Zoom and Facebook Live, and saw more engagement than in previous years at a typical public meeting. He also noted the board is reviewing the mosquito spray contract and is waiting for more information from the provider and that the curbside collection is operating reasonably smoothly. Jeff Hyland's application for joining the Heritage Commission will be formally under consideration at their next meeting.

Old Business

Historic Register Nominations:

Old Town Hall: Mr. Merrill reported that Ms. Mitchell has ordered a plaque and Mr. Perlowski will reimburse the town for the \$60 cost. Ms. Mitchell will advise on the placement of the plaque and a photo shoot for a press release will follow.

River Road: Mr. Merrill reported that the property owners of 21 River Road were interested in joining with the project and he has reached out to Lynne Monroe of the Preservation Company for a revised scope of work and price quote. Ms. Monroe was excited to add the property to the project, and she will also be including the approximately 80 acres of open conservation land now owned by the Society for Protection of NH Forests that was once part of the farm. ***Mr. Canada made a motion that the Heritage Commission approve the expanded scope of work at a total not-to-exceed cost of \$9,950; to be paid out of the Heritage Preservation Fund with the Select Board's approval. Ms. Mitchell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*** Mr. Moore said he would bring this to a future Select Board meeting for discussion and approval.

Town-wide Survey: Ms. Mitchell reported that Lisa Mausolf has had surgery and is currently immobile. She suggests offering to extend the project deadlines. ***Ms. Mitchell made a motion to extend the Town-Wide Survey deadline contract with Lisa Mausolf to a Draft due on Oct 30, 2021 that would not include photos and the final document due including photographs on December 31, 2021. Mr. Canada seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*** Mr. Moore stated he would execute the contract modification with Ms. Mausolf.

Barn Easement renewal: Mr. Merrill sent out information letters to 16 known current Stratham historic barn owners explaining the RSA 79-D "barn easement" and tax incentive program. He reported that he has had two responses so far, and is aiding in the application process for both property owners. He noted that the Goodrich barn on

Stratham Heights Road recently lapsed from the easement program. It is a rare monitor style barn and the interim town assessor is working on contacting the owners. Mr. Merrill will also attempt to follow up on this.

Town Historic Marker Project: Ms. Mitchell had nothing to report.

State Highway Historic Marker Project: Ms. Mitchell had nothing to report.

Membership: Mr. Merrill reported that Jeff Hyland has applied to join the commission. We are looking forward to having his deep-rooted Stratham perspective at our table.

House Bill #164: Mr. Canada had nothing to report.

Master Plan: Ms. Barker reviewed the summary of action items from the Master Plan. Some of the scenic and historic roads in town were discussed. More focused work should ensue after completion of the town-wide survey by Lisa Mausolf.

New Business

Scamman Barn: Mr. Merrill reported that Stella Samman has reached out to him and Ms. Mitchell regarding applying for a barn assessment grant from the NH Preservation Alliance for the large barn on the property. Ms. Mitchell has notified the Preservation Alliance staff of their interest and is working on completing the application forms with Ms. Scamman and Mr. Merrill.

Introductory meeting with Town Planner Mark Conners: Mr. Merrill reported that he and Ms. Mitchell and David Moore met together with new Town Planner Mark Conners. We all look forward to working with him in the future, and he said he would be glad to attend a meeting whenever requested. Mr. Conners expects to be working with us extensively in the coming year on the Legacy Highway rezoning effort, and we welcome this involvement.

Adjourned: With a motion from Mr. Canada, seconded by Ms. Barker, all present voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Hathaway

Secretary