

Stratham Heritage Commission

Meeting Minutes

April 12, 2017

7:00 pm

Land Use Conference Room

Present: Rebecca Mitchell, Nathan Merrill, Wally Stuart, David Canada, Michael Houghton
Florence Wiggin, Tammy Hathaway

Guests: Peter and Dori Wiggin (7:00-7:45) Paul Deschaine (8:30)

Convened: 7:00 pm by Chair Mitchell

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

OLD BUSINESS

Membership: Michael Houghton and David Canada were welcomed as members representing, respectively, the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board.

Financial Report: No expenses were presented. The budget approved at town meeting is \$4,900.00 broken down in the following categories \$400.00 for operating expenses, \$4000.00 for survey and consultants, \$200.00 for training and conferences, and \$300.00 for brick and monument engraving in the Veterans' Memorial Garden. The CIP budget approved at Town Meeting appropriated \$50,000 for the Heritage Preservation Fund. That sum added to the \$43,489 balance at the end of 2016 leaves a current balance of \$93,489.

Bartlett-Cushman House: The Chair presented the estimates for storm windows that Mr. Canada received from Ron-Bet Co. A discussion followed on the merits of fixed panels (\$870 each, installed) vs. operable double track storms (\$1,425 each installed). The board decided to table this for a later discussion. Ms. Mitchell will look into further options and the relevant building code. Ms. Mitchell is waiting for a date from Chris Bickford to start the barn roof repairs and shingling. To bring Mr. Houghton up to date Mr. Canada reviewed the status of the RFP. Ms. Mitchell suggested that it would be useful for the current Board of Selectman to tour the home. She will send an email to the BOS Chair Bruno Federico to set a date.

National Register Nomination of 16 Emery's Lane (Chase's Tavern): Ms. Mitchell reported that she toured the house with consultant Lisa Mausolf and Peter Michaud, NH DHR National Register Coordinator. It seems likely that we will apply for the National and State Registers at the same time in case the property is not determined eligible for the National Register.

Planning Board: Mr. Canada said there are no relevant projects in front of the Planning Board at this time besides the proposed cell tower at 58 Portsmouth Ave. Mr. Merrill noted that Technical Review Committee is working on the Portsmouth Ave. layout in the Gateway District.

Barns: RSA 79-D and Barn Assessment Grant Applications: Ms. Mitchell reported that she is working with Stella Scamman to prepare an application for a barn assessment grant from the NH Preservation Alliance. The application is for a 30'x40' English style barn. Local photographer Linwood Wickett will be taking the photos to submit with the application. He will also be taking photographs for the Scamman's application for RSA 79-D barn easement. At the suggestions of Andrea Lewy, town assessor, the Scammans plan to include both the small barn and the larger Ynahee-style barn in their application. Ms. Mitchell proposed that, acting for the Commission, she send to the Board of Selectmen a letter in support of the Scamman RSA 79-D application. Mr. Merrill made a motion that the letter be sent and Mr. Stuart second the motion. All in favor.

Ms. Mitchell also reminded the commission that in 1998 the Scamman Farm was determined eligible for the National Register and announced that Doug and Stella Scamman plan to work with the Heritage Commission to follow through with the nomination process. Mr. Merrill reported that Matthew Bartel (158 Winnicutt Road) is also submitting a Barn Assessment Grant application and plans to submit an RSA 79-D application in 2018.

Veterans' Memorial Garden: Ms. Mitchell is working on a revised version of the application form, assisted by Mr. Stuart and Tracy McGrail. She also plans to consult with the Assessor's Office since they often interact with veterans applying for property tax benefits.

February Program Report: Mr. Stuart presented DVD copies of the February program to distribute to the Library and Historical Society. The commission thanked Mr. Stuart.

NEW BUSINESS

Wiggin Cemetery at Sandy Point: (Note: To accommodate the Wiggins this agenda item was discussed immediately following the Financial Report.) Mr. & Mrs. Wiggin brought the board up to date on the current status of the Wiggin burial plot that also includes the monument to Thomas Wiggin. Mr. Wiggin noted that the trail to the site that was constructed last year is temporary, permitted by NH Fish and Game in recognition of Stratham's 300th anniversary. Mr. Wiggin presented some history of the site and of the various related archeological work that has been done. He noted that the trail leads only to the cemetery site, skirting the archeologically sensitive area where dwellings were located. The commission shared its concerns for the future maintenance of the trail and its temporary status. Mr. Houghton will contact NH Fish and Game to explore the possibility that the trail may be made permanent. Given the Town's interest in the cemetery as a valued historical resource and Mr. Wiggin's familial interest, the discussion concluded that there is a shared interest in ensuring sustained care of the cemetery. To further that goal Ms. Mitchell suggested that Mr. Wiggin, who expressed a desire to keep maintenance responsibilities in the Wiggin family, submit an annual report of work done. The report can be in log or narrative form and may also include photographs. The report would be due to

the commission in January at the time when town reports fall due. A copy of the report should also be shared with other relevant entities such as the town Cemetery Trustees, the state archeologist, and NH Fish and Game.

Demolition Review: Ms. Mitchell reported that Cabernet Builders has submitted a application to demolish the house and barn at 291 Portsmouth Avenue, a property that has apparently been foreclosed. Ms. Mitchell stated that while normally the Demolition Review Committee must meet and make a determination of historical significance within five business days of receiving the application, in this instance it is not clear that the applicant has the permission of the owner to apply for a demolition permit. She will seek clarification from Mike Morang, town code officer. Ms. Mitchell stated that in the past it has been useful to have the commission's Planning Board representative serve on the Demolition Review Committee. Dave Canada agreed to serve in that capacity.

Next Meeting: May 10, 2017 at 7pm in the Land Use Conference Room

Adjourned: 9:05 (Mr. Merrill, Mr. Stuart, unanimous).

Respectfully submitted,
Tammy Hathaway