

Stratham Heritage Commission

Meeting Minutes

May 10, 2017

7:00 pm

Land Use Conference Room

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

Absent: David Canada, Terry Barnes

Convened: 7:00 pm by Chair Mitchell

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

Nomination and election: Ms. Mitchell nominated a slate of officers with thanks for their willingness to serve: Mr. Nathan Merrill, Chair; Mr. Wally Stuart, Treasurer; and Ms. Tammy Hathaway, Secretary. Ms. Mitchell made a motion to move for a vote on the nominations and elections (Ms. Mitchell, Mr. Stuart, unanimous). Ms. Mitchell then turned the meeting over to incoming chair Mr. Merrill.

OLD BUSINESS

Financial Report: Mr. Stuart reported that there were no changes to report since the last meeting. Ms. Mitchell will be submitting expenses from the Preservation Conference and OEP Spring Planning Conference and made a suggestion that if money is left in the training and conference line of the budget it could go towards a membership with the Preservation Alliance. Ms. Mitchell reported that she had a \$10.00 Samuel Lane book sale and that the Lane book supply was getting low and made a motion to purchase another 10 books if she could get them at a similar price (Ms. Mitchell, Mr. Stuart, unanimous).

Bartlett-Cushman House: Ms. Mitchell and Mr. David Canada will continue to oversee this project going forward. On May 1, 2017 Ms. Mitchell and Mr. Merrill gave the Board of Selectmen a tour of the property. Ms. Mitchell said that on that occasion she had forgotten to raise with the Selectmen the Commission's concerns about changes to the Portsmouth Ave./Bunker Hill Ave. intersection that might impinge upon the setting of the house. The Heritage Commission voted at a prior meeting in favor of a turning lane leaving Bunker Hill to turn right onto Rte. 108 which would create two egress lanes, but not in favor of creating a new turning lane off of Rte. 108 onto Bunker Hill in front of the Bartlett-Cushman house. Mr. Houghton said he would inquire on the status of the turning lanes and report back at the next meeting. Mr. Merrill (reporting from the TRC) explained how a future expansion of Rte 108 in the Gateway district would align Frying Pan Lane with River Road by a

roundabout and that Market Street would connect Bunker Hill to Frying Pan Lane so that there would be no left turn from Bunker Hill onto Rte.108.

Ms. Mitchell gave two additional tours of the house in the past month: Mr. Gregory Colling of Merrimack Design, and Colleen Lake with a colleague of hers from the Bean Group. A discussion ensued on the clarity of intent for the property, with the possibility of it being used as extra town office space in the future, or the possibility of selling the building after protecting the property with a preservation easement.

Ms. Mitchell also mentioned the possibility of establishing a small historic district that would include the Bartlett-Cushman House and the adjacent Ridge School, which would make the town eligible for Certified Local Government (CLG) status. CLGs are eligible for technical assistance and matching grants for a range of preservation activities including survey, National Register nominations, preservation planning, and educational projects. She will contact the property owners to gauge their interest in this possibility, with all agreeing that their support and cooperation would be necessary for moving forward with the idea.

National Register Nomination of 16 Emery's Lane (Chase's Tavern): Ms. Mitchell reported that she and consultant Lisa Mausolf visited the property, took photos, and consulted resources at the Historical Society to work on a draft nomination which is due by May 15, 2017 to Peter Michaud (NH DHR National Register Coordinator) for review prior to final submission.

Planning Board: Mr. Houghton reported that the telecommunications tower application in the back lot behind the Audi garage was approved by the Planning Board. Two house lots at 16 Emery Lane have been approved and there are now three others proposed at that site. He also discussed some issues facing the board, one being the need for a rigorous review of cell tower regulations. Another concern is that as availability of developable land diminishes the Planning Board is seeing an increasing number of proposals for subdivisions served by new, short roads that present maintenance challenges to town crews, especially with snow removal. He further expressed the need for a new master plan.

Technical Review Committee: Mr. Merrill noted that a new restaurant has been proposed in the lot in front of Shaw's.

Barns: RSA 79-D and Barn Assessment Grant Applications: Stella Scamman, assisted by Ms. Mitchell, submitted an application for a barn assessment grant from the NH Preservation Alliance The Scammans have expressed interest in a future application for the large Yankee barn as well. Mr. and Mrs. Scamman also wish to proceed with applying for National Register listing for the entire farm and its historic buildings. The farm was determined eligible for listing in 1998 but an updated nomination will be required. Both of the Scamman barns are eligible for RSA 79-D, and are scheduled for a June public hearing along with Mr. John Decker's Barn at 2 Emery Lane.

Jenn Gunn (173 Winnicutt Rd) and Matthew Bartel (158 Winnicutt Rd) have also expressed interest in submitting RSA 79-D applications in the coming year.

Demolition Review: The application to demolish the house and barn at 291 Portsmouth Ave. has been withdrawn by the applicant. After a discussion of the Demolition Review Committee appointments that are to be made by the chair, the three members from the Heritage Commission will be David Canada, Rebecca Mitchell, and Nathan Merrill as chairperson. The two at-large members will be Dana Dowling (pending confirmation of his willingness to continue) and Fred Emanuel with Bruce Scamman as an alternate. (Mr. Houghton, Mr. Stuart unanimous)

Wiggin Cemetery and Access trail: Mr. Houghton has nothing to report.

Old Town Hall: There still has been no communication from the current owner on paperwork for application for the NH Register of Historic places. Much time has passed without a sale, so it might be worth reaching out to him again.

NEW BUSINESS

Lane Homestead: The Exeter Chamber of Commerce held a meeting at the Lane Homestead and Ms. Mitchell attended and set up a display table on the history of the Homestead with handouts.

NH Preservation Alliance Annual Awards: Ms. Mitchell attended the award ceremony on May 9, at Concord City Auditorium along with Town Administrator Paul Deschaine, Selectman Joe Lovejoy and his wife Rep. Patty Lovejoy along with property owners Greg Pruitt and Lionel Loveless. On behalf of the town Ms. Mitchell accepted the Elizabeth Durfee Hengen Award for “excellence in preservation planning, education and advocacy” in the town’s protection of the Lane Homestead through a preservation easement..

Reports from Spring Conferences: Ms. Mitchell and Mr. Merrill both attended and were speakers at the NH Preservation Alliance spring conference, “Preserving Community Character,” on April 21, 2017. Ms. Mitchell attended and spoke at the Office of Energy and Planning (OEP) Spring Planning and Zoning Conference on April 29, on the topic of preservation easements as a tool for preservation and achieving community support.

Next Meeting: June 14, 2017 at 7pm in the Land Use Conference Room

Adjourned: 8:30 (Ms. Wiggin, Mr. Stuart, unanimous).

Respectfully submitted,
Tammy Hathaway