

Becket Historical Commission

May 5, 2010 7 p.m.

Present: Rob Gorden, Chairman; Barbara Stuhlmann, Secretary; Rita Furlong, Treasurer; Aaron Beatty, Harry Roff

Before the meeting proper began Rita directed our attention to a package of materials from Louise Trudeau who had donated an album of newspaper clippings of Becket doings beginning in 1963; other material deals with the Bicentennial. Mrs Trudeau was the daughter of Charlie Rice, a well-known police chief in Becket, and the sister of Donna Rice who was the Bicentennial Queen.

Old Business: Again, as last time, the discussion moved directly to Ballou Park and the structure/railroad ties installed last fall. There was a definite difference of opinion as to the attractiveness, or lack of same, of the structure, especially after the winter. Three members felt the whole thing should be dismantled and removed. But two members thought that even though it doesn't look as we intended, it's up and worth working on to save it. "Once the sign is on it, it will spring to life," said Rita. Aaron said he likes the way it looks - rustic - and suggested that we explore costs of rigging up the support system that Bill Girard recommended, go ahead and assemble it and see what feedback we get from the townspeople. We can always consider it temporary until we can think of a more permanent solution to display the sign, keeping in mind that it weighs 40 pounds.

Rob therefore authorized Aaron and Rita to follow up and get information on such items as strength of cable, size of eye-bolts (for the support apparatus); Rita said she would donate the sonar tube for the cement pier to which the rigging would be bolted. Harry had suggested, for securing the sign to the "wall" of railroad ties, that perhaps we could weld the bolts behind it to prevent theft, so Rita will explore that. By our next meeting it is hoped that some answers will be forthcoming. In any case, the sign won't be installed by Memorial Day.

Minutes of previous meeting were read and approved.

Before any more time elapsed, and to catch Aaron before he would have to leave by 7:45, we went upstairs to remove the precious silk dress from the glass cabinet in the hallway and boxed the dress for safekeeping. Two years ago the historical commission had purchased special filters to go over the fluorescent bulbs in the ceiling, but they got thrown away recently when the lights were replaced by energy efficient bulbs.

Correspondance.

Barbara read Rob's letter to WSP Sells concerning the planned repair and rehabilitation of bridges on Route 20, thanking them for alerting us to their plans. (see minutes of April 7)

Visitor's Maps. Aasron brought out the latest incarnation of the directional maps which will replace those at the Becket Athenaeum, Becket Center and West Becket locations. This time color has been added, blue and red for the listings, corresponding blue and red dots on the map itself. Nice green lettering identifying "Becket" on the top.

Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway Centennial.

As one of the ~~two~~ representatives from Becket on the JLT Committee, Barbara shared a brief notice (to all the towns on the Trail from Lee to Russell) concerning JLT's Centennial, planned for September 25, 2010, at the Summit. JLT requests stories and folklore of life on the "trail" to be included in a souvenir booklet. With the Historical Commission's acquiescence, Barbara will go through Becket's Bicentennial book and select a few representative "tales" from the past. Due date is June 1, 2010

Rita is still trying to make contact with the town's accountant about our funds but town budgetary concerns are taking up all available time.

Adjourned 7:55

Respectfully submitted: Barbara Stuhlmann

Clean-up at the Town Pound, Friday, May 7 at ten a.m.