

September 27, 2012 Minutes
Enfield Heritage Commission

The September meeting of the Enfield Heritage Commission was held in the Whitney Hall Conference Room. Those in attendance: Linda Jones, Celie Aufiero, Shirley Green, Suzanne Hinman, and Meredith Smith, Chair. Mary Ann Haagen and Marjorie Carr were excused. Steve Schneider, Town Manager, attended the first 10 minutes of the meeting. The July minutes were approved as written (August meeting was canceled).

Meredith Smith gave a brief review of the new Shaker Bridge opening.

Steve Schneider updated the Commission on the on-going issues with the removal of the old railroad bridge. It is hoped that a decision in favor of the Town's preference (removal of bridge to maximize waterfront area) will be made in the near future, so the eventual access to the bridge and rail trail can be completed. Steve asked the Heritage Commission to write a letter of support in favor of the town's plan to remove the railroad bridge and create an at-grade crossing.

A lengthy discussion of the historic marker wording was held, following the receipt of another rejection letter from Mary Kate Ryan. In response to Ms. Ryan's remarks that there was not sufficient documentation to support the Shakers influence in bringing the railroad to the opposite side of the lake, Linda Jones suggested we throw it back in her court, asking her what changes she would like to see. Linda commented that the Shakers paid \$10,000 to put the railroad on the other side of the lake. Meredith will work to resubmit the marker wording and check with Mary Ann Haagen for further documentation on the connection between the Shakers and the railroad.

Mary Ann Haagen had asked that the issue of restoration of the oil painting of the original Shaker Bridge, donated to the town, be addressed by the Heritage Commission. All felt that estimates should be obtained before proceeding with any restoration. It was suggested that we start with Bob McQuade, Red Roof Frame Shop, for suggested restoration specialists in the area. Meredith will ask Mary Ann to follow up on this.

Meredith Smith opened a discussion of a possible camp easement program, similar to what some other lake communities have in place, for Enfield. Such a program would allow camp property owners to place a conservation-type easement on their property, preventing it from ever becoming a year round residence or developed in any way in exchange for a reduced property tax rate. The benefits to the town would be less impact on the town's overall budget (children in the school system and other infrastructure costs) and further protection of the watershed with less development. Meredith suggested that the Heritage Commission partner with the Conservation Commission in this effort. She stressed that this idea was strictly in the information gathering phase and would take a great deal of study. Members voted to proceed with studying this idea. Shirley Green will attend a NH Lakes meeting in October and will try to gather more information. Meredith will follow up with the Upper Valley Land Trust.

Meredith reported that the Shaker Museum will be offering specific programs in the fall aimed at children, adding to the summer Shaker educational program. Also, the Shaker Forum was held from September 7 through 9. The Museum provided a wonderful venue for the post-bridge dedication with a delicious lunch and comprehensive exhibits of the Shaker Bridges. The free admission to the Museum on the day of the bridge opening brought many townspeople to the Museum for the very first time. A good time was had by all!

Meredith Smith asked for a volunteer to serve on the EVA Greeley House Committee. Celie agreed to serve. The committee will be assessing ultimate uses and renovations to the Greeley House, now owned by EVA

Linda Jones, Program Chair of the Enfield Historical Society, asked if we might be interested in co-sponsoring programs with the Society. Meredith mentioned that we have done so in the past and would be happy to continue.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Meredith Smith, Chair