

April 24, 2014 Minutes

Enfield Heritage Commission

The April meeting of the Enfield Heritage Commission was held in the Whitney Hall Conference Room. Those in attendance were: Linda Jones, Marjorie Carr, Suzanne Hinman, Shirley Green, Celie Aufiero, Mary Ann Haagen, and Meredith Smith, Chair. Special guests also attending were Lee Carrier, Alv Elvestad, and Town Manager Steve Schneider.

The March minutes were approved as written. Chairman Smith gave a brief review of current Heritage issues. Mary Ann Haagen has drafted a letter to the new owner of the Langley House/Currier Shop and will proceed to send the letter. Smith also reminded the Commission of the up-coming Shaker Forum and progress with Old Home Days. The meeting was then turned over to a general discussion of the old motel property and state owned land adjoining.

To begin discussions of the lands in question, Steve Schneider gave a synopsis of what has happened to date regarding NH DOT, the Rail Trail alliance, and NH Historic Resources. Smith had also provided a copy of a recent email from Alex Bernhard, President of Merrimack County Rail Trail Alliance (RTA) for discussion purposes. All agreed that this issue was vital to Enfield and that a solution needed to be found. The land in question is an area the town would like to create a waterfront park. Currently, it is owned by the State of NH and under the control of DRED. Many suggestions of how the town might come to a solution for the lands in question followed.

Steve Schneider mentioned that Ken Warren of Lebanon RTA frequently called him to have the town assist with trail management issues such as grass mowing. It would seem that a meeting with Ken Warren, who is also involved with lake issues, might be useful.

Linda Jones suggested that a name should be used in referring to the land in question such as Mascoma Waterfront Park. At least for the time being, it was agreed that this would be a good "working title".

Alv Elvestad suggested that we focus on mutually beneficial goals (RTA and Town) instead of current arguments. All felt that the town's plan for a park would certainly benefit the RTA in providing parking, toilets, picnic area, etc.

Mary Ann Haagen suggested that we broaden our message to include other groups and organizations such as Upper Valley Land Trust, Mascoma Lake Association, NH Lakes Association, Mascoma Watershed Council, and other such groups. Steve Schneider said that both the NH DOT and the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Office supported Enfield's plan. It was agreed that some type of marketing plan was needed to promote the park proposal.

Lee Carrier said that going to the RTA and asking them what they would like to see might be a good approach while also pointing out the benefits they would see with a waterfront park.

As the meeting concluded, it was agreed that a task force would be formed to try and come to a solution to the current differences between the RTA and NH Historic Resources and the town. Until a mutually agreeable solution to the problem can be found, the Main Street work cannot be completed and the land in question will remain in limbo. Smith and Carrier will meet after Lee returns from traveling to map out the next steps.

Respectfully submitted,

Meredith Smith, Chair