

Heritage Commission Meeting Minutes
Londonderry, New Hampshire
May 25, 2017

In attendance: Chairman Commissioner Martin Srugis, Vice-Chairman Commissioner Pauline Caron; Commissioners Tom Bianchi, David Colglazier, Sue Joudrey, Art Rugg; Alternate Commissioner Janet Cichocki; Town Council Ex-officio Jim Butler (7:10); GIS Manager/Planner John Vogl and Kent Allen, Sexton
Absent: Alternate Commissioner Roger Fillio and Krys Kenney.

Chairman Martin Srugis called the Historic District and Heritage Commission meeting to order at 7:00 PM in the Moosehill meeting room of the Town Hall.

Commissioner Rugg thanked the Secretary for the minutes that Mr. Rugg read while he was absent from several meetings. The Secretary thanked Mr. Rugg.

Vice-Chairman Caron moved and Commissioner Bianchi seconded motion to accept the minutes of March 23, 2017. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Chairman Srugis asked that we review the Sanborn Road sign. A photograph was supplied by the applicant, who was not present. Planner Vogl presented the image. The image is of another sign for a different development. It consists of letters applied individually to a stone wall of dressed stones with flat front surfaces that form a plane. The sign will read "Sanborn Station". This is a change from "Lithia Springs" which was presented at the March meeting. The image shows a single light at ground level. Mr. Vogl was not sure if the applicant was even going to light the sign. The Commission approved of the sign with little discussion.

Planner Vogl presented some color samples for the Cross-Farm project that was reviewed in March.

A presentation was made by Paul Chisholm, Project Engineer, Keach-Nordstrom Associates, Bedford, NH for Chestnut Realty Partners for a development at 24 Griffin Road, map 1 lot 26. The property is to be divided into four roughly one acre lots along Griffin Road and one large non-buildable lot. The large lot behind the front lots will contain a large portion of wetlands.

The applicant will provide some swales and 2 retention ponds along Griffin Road to take care of the run-off from the land. The proposed houses will have individual driveways from Griffin Road. The developer has house sites established, but no firm house plans. The developer will build custom houses on the lots for clients.

Commissioner Bianchi asked about using stone materials found on the land for building or reinforcing existing walls. Mr. Chisholm said that he does not know of any specific plans for found materials. The developer will retain stonewalls where possible and plans to use them around the houses where possible.

Commissioner Colglazier asked about the future use of the large stones that are part of the foundation for what was a barn. Mr. Chisholm did not know about any plans for their use, but said that the developer plans to keep them on site for some use.

Commissioner Colglazier said that he has been involved with the Historical Society and its interest in the old house at 24 Griffin. He said that a report by James Garvin (retired Architectural Historian for the New Hampshire Division of Historic Resources) on the house has been circulated to the Commissioners. Mr. Garvin thinks that the house may date back to the 1720's. It has been redone inside a couple of times, so the frame of the house is the most valuable part from a historic standpoint.

Mr. Colglazier said that the developer has said that they may take some of the foundation stones from the house. Also, they are willing to cut up some of the frame so that it can be analyzed to try to determine the age by dendrochronology. The Historical Society is interested in seeing the house as it is being taken down to document some of the frame materials that are hidden by plaster.

Councilor Butler said that he had been in the house as well. He asked if any of the interior materials might be used on the Rev. William Morrison house project. Mr. Colglazier said that there might be a few, but probably not many as a lot of them are covered by plaster or partially covered. Colglazier said that those materials can look good now, but once they are taken out of context they may not be suitable or strong enough.

Vice-Chairman Caron asked about vinyl siding for the houses. Mr. Chisholm said that it would be neutral colors, but it has not been chosen yet by the customers they hope to have. Ms. Caron asked about the roof colors. Mr. Chisholm said that those have not been chosen either since these will be custom homes.

Councilor Butler stated that they may be surprised about how much stone there is on the property for use in stonewalls. Mr. Butler asked about the demolition of the house and working with people for use of materials. Mr. Chisholm said that the house may be there for a while, but they do plan to take it down quickly and are willing to work with other people. He did not know when the demolition might take place yet.

Mr. Butler asked about having some portion of the barn foundation being left to show that there was a historic structure on the site. Mr. Chisholm did not know what could be left, but he felt that the owner was willing to work with the Town to have something note the old building site. It was suggested that a historic marker could be placed at the site. Mr. Butler said that he would appreciate being able to do something with the owner about this issue.

Commissioner Rugg asked about the rest of the land. Mr. Chisholm said that the remaining lot is about 36 acres, but it has a lot of wetlands on it. He said that there was a small portion at the rear that could be used with possible access from another street.

Chairman Srugis asked about keeping the character of the existing stonewalls when they are moved back to create the swales and retention ponds. Mr. Chisholm said that they would try to retain the rubble character of the walls as they exist now.

Councilor Butler asked about being able to keep the stand of lilacs that are in front of the house at 24 Griffin. Mr. Chisholm said that he would make a note to try to keep the lilacs on the property.

The Commission approved of the plans as outlined in the presentation with emphasis upon keeping the lilacs, retention of stonewall character, and keeping some evidence of the barn foundation along with swale work close to the road.

A presentation was made by Joe DeCarolis with regards to the development at 7 Litchfield Road, map 12 – lot 20. There are to be 3 buildings with 22 units in each structure. They will have three floors with two being at ground level on two sides as they are placed on a hill.

Planner Vogl suggested that Mr. DeCarolis describe the units. Mr. DeCarolis said that there will be handicap access on the lower level because of it being at ground level. The units will be about 800(?) sq. feet each. They are meant to be elderly affordable units. The units will be one and two bedroom units with many of them being two bedroom units. Mr. DeCarolis said that the architect has the plans and he hopes to have them back sometime next week.

Commissioner Bianchi said that he liked the concept of the project. He said that he would like to see actual plans. Mr. DeCarolis went on to talk about the financing and tax credits for the project.

Councilor Butler asked about having a special meeting for the project when the plans will be complete. Chairman Srugis said that it could happen, if we have enough people.

Chairman Srugis asked if there was a road from the property to Mammoth road as shown on the land plot. It was determined that there was no viable road. It was just a small road for cemetery access.

After some more give and take between the Commission and the applicant, it was determined that a special meeting on June 22nd was needed to deal with the project based upon a lack of details.

Chairman Srugis asked about having formal elections for the Commission. He envisions making it easier to have people be able to nominate others for the Chairmanship. Commissioner Rugg suggested that it is difficult to find people that want the position, so it usually takes some encouragement to have new chairs.

Sexton Kent Allen thanked everybody for their support in the naming of the Town Forest to become the Kent Allen Forest. He reported that he had worked with the grade schools to have children aid in planting American chestnut, black walnut, shagbark hickory, and butter nut trees at the edge of the forest near the historical society property. In the future, he wants to plant hazelnut and beech in the same area. He noted that the trees are planted fairly far apart to allow for growth in the future so that they will produce better because of ample spacing. These species reflect what was in the area 300 years ago when the general area was known as “Nutfield”.

Mr. Allen said that he has nearly finished clearing a path parallel to Mammoth Road from one end to the other of the forest. It is about 100 feet back from the road and is thus buffered from traffic site and noise.

Mr. Allen said that he has enlisted aid from Core-Flex, Ecco Group and Timberland companies who have been interested in supporting civic activities. He has also had contact with Orchard Christian Church who have worked in the woods with him before.

Mr. Allen said that he needs some help with getting rid of standing dead trees. He said that there are a number of medium sized dead ones and one very large oak that is also dead.

Mr. Allen said that with the long path cleared and other paths cleared it will be up to the people to decide how they use the Allen Forest. Mr. Allen would like to setup something at Old Home Day to poll the people on how they would like to use the forest.

Councilor Butler said that the Allen Forest is in the Master Plan. He said that there are discussions about a skating rink for that area that is also in the Master Plan.

Mr. Allen said that the stonewall along Mammoth Road could receive some attention because it has been pushed down by the widening of the road and the slow addition of dirt and sand from road operations. He said that some new stone could be added to increase the height of this rubble stonewall.

Commissioner Bianchi asked about taking some stone from under the high-tension wires. It was not clear who owned the property.

Mr. Allen said that the swale along Mammoth Road is fairly clean and he runs a trimmer along there every year before Old Home Day.

Chairman Srugis asked Mr. Vogl if there was a listing of historic markers in town. Mr. Vogl did not know of one. Mr. Srugis said that the Beautify Londonderry group was interested in cleaning up around markers, once they were identified.

Councilor Butler asked about the historic bridge over I-93. It was determined that the state was going to take down the Prowse Bridge and store it until they can find a place to use it.

Chairman Srugis asked about the 300th anniversary activity. Alternate Commissioner Cichocki reported that the 300th Committee was going to decide this year about what activities they were going to do.

Vice-Chairman Caron moved and Commissioner Rugg seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed 7-0-0 at 8:28 PM.

David Lee Colglazier,
Secretary