

STRATHAM HERITAGE COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
September 10, 2014
Land Use Conference Room

Present: Rebecca Mitchell, Nathan Merrill, David Canada, Florence Wiggin. Paul Deschaine attended the meeting for the last half hour.

The meeting was convened at 7 PM by Chairman Rebecca Mitchell.

The chairman appointed alternate member Florence Wiggin to take the place of absent voting member Janet Johnson and to take the minutes for this meeting.

The minutes of the June 11, 2014 meeting were read; a motion to approve the minutes as written was made by David Canada and seconded by Nathan Merrill. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

Stratham Fair: Members Mitchell, Wiggin and Canada expressed their disappointment with the size and condition of the Celebrate Stratham tent. Canada and Mitchell both wondered whether a location near the Jack Rabbit Lane entrance would see more traffic. All were in agreement that in 2015 an effort should be made to involve more town organizations in the tent, expanding on this year's welcome participation by the Energy Commission.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Nathan Merrill reported that the balance in the Heritage Fund is \$21,653 of which \$4,220 is the Heritage Commission's share; the remaining \$17,433 belongs to the 300th Anniversary Committee. From the Commission's 2014 budget \$170.50 has been spent on Administrative (operating) expenses and \$1,000 on Survey (consultant) expenses. No money has been disbursed for Training or Veterans.

Bartlett-Cushman House: In August the NH State Historical Review Council approved the nomination of the house to the National Register of Historic Places and forwarded the nomination to the National Park Service. A final decision is expected in October. The nomination was based on the manner in which the house reflects patterns of development in Stratham and on the merit of its architectural form and style.

Mitchell informed the meeting that the Moose Plate grant for roofing expenses was not approved. Canada will get another estimate for roofing with the goal of completing the job before winter.

Work on the Request for Proposals from entities interested in partnering with the Town in rehabbing the house has begun with Canada and Paul Deschaine meeting with Peter Michaud of the NH Division of Historical Resources. Mitchell reported that she is meeting with Michaud on the 12th to work on a document identifying the building's character-defining elements that will inform the rehabilitation process.

Demolition Review: In August Demolition Review Committee members Nathan Merrill, Peter Wiggin and Dana Dowling reviewed an application to demolish a manufactured home and later addition at 70 Willow Brook. The committee's recommendation that the permit be issued was communicated by Mitchell to the offices of the Code Enforcement Officer/Building Inspector and Town Planner. Mitchell noted that it is particularly valuable to have the Planning Board

Representative to the Heritage Commission also serve on the Demolition Review Committee, making it especially urgent that the Planning Board appoints a replacement for MJ Werner. Canada stated that he would like to see a means of informing builders at the start of a project that demolition may entail a thirty- day review period. Mitchell reported that she had discussed demolition review with Lincoln Daley and that she would like to see a discussion among other towns in our area that have implemented demolition delay and review.

Three Hundredth Anniversary Committee: Mitchell informed the meeting that Florence Wiggin is writing the introduction to the updated town history. The Committee has circulated the draft of the book for corrections and suggestions.

Planning Board: Lincoln Daley has asked Mitchell to suggest appropriate styles of streetlights for the Town Center and there was a discussion of sidewalk pavement options. There was a discussion of recent newspaper articles about the Town Center, and Canada stated that a reporter had been hired to write informative articles about the streetscape improvement project.

Mitchell reported that the Planning Office and committee working on the Master Plan hopes to have UNH Extension facilitate broad, public visioning sessions in later October.

Mitchell reported that she will attend the Sept. 17 meeting of the Planning Board to explain to the Board the importance of appointing a representative to the Heritage Commission and to answer any questions board members may have about that role.

Mitchell reported that she had discussed with Lincoln Daley the \$9,000 due from Varsity Wireless, mitigation for the communications tower to be erected at 313 Portsmouth Avenue. There was a discussion of the size, format and content of the outdoor display that will have both text and graphic material covering the history of Stratham Hill Park and the northeast end of Portsmouth Avenue.

Mitchell shared an overview plan of the Rollins Hill Development on Rollins Farm Drive. Lincoln Daley has asked for input from the Commission concerning any historical resources on the site. The Commission noted that the plan shows several sections of stone walls on the site, but noted that any more informed view would entail a site walk.

NEW BUSINESS

PARKER CABIN: Mitchell reported that she was approached by Cory Riley of NH Fish and Game asking her to participate in a meeting of all concerned parties about a property off Linda Lane that was purchased by NH F&G. The NH Division of Historical Resources has determined that the c. 1930 cabin on the property is eligible for listing on the National Register. While it was the initial intent of NH F&G to demolish the cabin and restore the habitat, the discussion now involves alternatives to demolition. The Commission discussed several options for moving the structure, recognizing the value of keeping it close to the bay and accessible to the public as a rare remaining example of once common structures around Great Bay. The consensus of all Commission members present was that all possible alternatives to demolition be vigorously pursued. Canada and Merrill expressed an interest in attending the meeting. Mitchell will communicate the agreed upon date and time.

Rockingham Planning Commission Master Plan: Scott Bogle of the Rockingham Planning Commission sent the Chair a link to a questionnaire that the RPC designed to seek contributions to the new Historical Resources chapter in the county Master Plan. The chair led a discussion of the questionnaire and urged members to respond to the questionnaire by the September 19 deadline.

Meeting Day and Time: Noting that Commission by-laws require that the meeting day and time be reviewed and agreed upon at the Commission's September meeting, the Chair asked if there was any disagreement with continuing to meet on the second Wednesday of the month at 7 PM. There were no objections.

Farmers' Market: The chair noted that Lincoln Daley had told her that the 300th Anniversary Committee was exploring the idea of a farmers' market to be held at Scamman Farm. There was a general discussion of the viability of the project. Mitchell suggested that the Committee consider using the rear of the Bartlett-Cushman property, putting the market on Town- owned land and making the Municipal Center lot available for parking. Flossie will report this suggestion at the next meeting of the Anniversary Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Minutes prepared by Florence Wiggin and Rebecca Mitchell

**NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 8
7 PM LAND USE CONFERENCE ROOM**