

Stratham Heritage Commission
Meeting Minutes
April 8, 2015 7:00 pm
Land Use Conference Room

Present: Rebecca Mitchell, Nathan Merrill, Tammy Hathaway, Wallace Stuart, David Canada and Florence Wiggin.

Convened: 7:00 pm by Rebecca Mitchell

Minutes: March 11, 2015 minutes were approved as presented

OLD BUSINESS

Treasurer's Report: Nate reported that at the end of February \$225.00 of the commission's operating budget was spent on printing barn history books. There is a \$4,220.00 balance in the Commission's share of the Heritage Fund and \$23,986.00 in the 300th Anniversary Committee's portion of the fund.

Becky spoke with the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance about an appropriate use of a donation in honor of John Porter's volunteer work in preparing the Stratham Historic Barns presentation and booklet. Of the options presented the members agreed that the commission would direct our donation toward reprinting Preserving Old Barns: Preventing the Loss of a Valuable Resource by John C. Porter and Francis E. Gilman. The total donation will be \$200 with the expectation that the Exeter Heritage Commission will contribute half of that amount. Nate will follow up with the Exeter HC chair Julie Gilman.

Wiggin Cemetery: The Chair reported that Peter Wiggin has cut and cleared the big trees and will be cleaning up the smaller saplings and stump removal.

Town Center: Dave reported that the revitalization project is moving forward despite some DOT setbacks that have been worked out. The Commission continued the discussion of seeking National Register listing for the Old Town Hall. Nate spoke with Dave Short, the current owner, and he is open to continuing the discussion. The Chair spoke with Peter Michaud, NH Division of Historical Resources, and was advised that the commission may move forward with a National Register nomination and receive a determination of eligibility without a property owner's consent. The commission agreed to begin preparing a nomination, doing as much work as we can without hiring a consultant. Wally agreed to assist Becky with the research.

Planning Board: On April 14 and 28 there will be meetings to review and discuss zoning and how to best support agriculture in Stratham. Theresa Walker and Glenn Greenwood, Rockingham Planning Commission, will lead the meetings.

Rules of Procedure: The chair reported that she had met with Paul Deschaine and drafted language for Section III covering the use of the Heritage Preservation Fund. Dave Canada proposed that the Heritage Fund be labeled a special revenue fund.

Nate's motion to approve the procedures with the changes and additions was seconded by Wally and all voted in favor.

Bartlett –Cushman House: The RFP is with Paul Deschaine for review and Dave will bring it up for a vote at the April 27 Selectmen's meeting. Becky will work to complete the character defining features report. Seth Hickey is working on more painting quotes, and the commission discussed the importance of appropriate materials and methods for dealing with potential rot that might be encountered in the painting process.

Veterans' Garden: Becky is meeting on April 22 with Nancy Hansen and Tracey McGrail to review the procedures for engraving the bricks and monuments at the Veterans' Garden.

Commission Web Page: A review of the basic outline and content of the Heritage Commission web page was discussed. The Chair will make the immediate corrections and prepare a draft statement of the commission's mission and activities.

NEW BUSINESS

New Hampshire Five Year Preservation Plan, 2016-2020: Becky will be attending a listening session in Portsmouth on April 28 and will communicate the commission's view that improved communication and support from the DHR is needed by Heritage Commissions statewide. Nate also suggested that DHR could take a leadership role at the state level in building awareness with the NH Office of Planning and with Regional Planning Commissions about the importance and legal responsibilities of Heritage Commissions. DHR should educate and advocate for Planning Boards and Town Planners to improve communications and working relationships with their Heritage Commissions.

Stratham Fair July 16-18th: The commission decided to use this year's barn program and the book produced by Nate as a display topic. Becky, assisted by Nate and Wally, will prepare the posters. Tammy will set up and take down the display. Within the Celebrate Stratham tent Florence will be working at the 300th Anniversary Committee's display and will keep an eye on the commission's table and display.

NEXT MEETING MAY 13, 2015 7 PM

Meeting Adjourned at 9pm

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Hathaway

Rebecca Mitchell

