

STRATHAM HERITAGE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
December 9, 2015
Land Use Conference Room

Members Present: Rebecca Mitchell, Nathan Merrill, David Canada and Florence Wiggin (moving into a voting member position in the absence of Wallace Stuart).
Paul Deschaine was present and departed at 7:15.

Convened: 7:04 PM by Rebecca Mitchell, Chair
Minutes: the minutes of the November 11, 2015 meeting were approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

Treasurer's Report and 2016 Budget: Merrill reported that he had submitted the 2016 budget request along with the narrative, the latter to be considered draft until warrant articles are decided. He further reported that as of Nov. expenditures were \$318 (Administrative expenses), \$388 (Survey and Consultants), \$105 (Conferences and Training), and \$120 (Veterans' Garden), totaling \$931. Canada reported that he had been assured that the Bartlett-Cushman House rehabilitation cost estimates would be completed and invoiced (\$700) before the end of the year. Mitchell submitted an invoice for \$42 for purchase and shipping of 10 paperback copies of *The Years of the Life of Samuel Lane*.

Lane Homestead and February Program: Mitchell reported that she reserved the Morgera Room at the Fire Station for the evening of Friday, February 12 and a storm date of February 19. She will present the NH Historical Society's power point on the life of Samuel Lane and Maggie Stier from the NH Preservation Alliance will be available to discuss preservation easements. Mitchell will work on getting an additional speaker to talk on the architectural history and features of the homestead. Mitchell reported that on December 15 LCHIP (the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program) will announce that the Town has been awarded \$100,000 to support a preservation easement on the Lane Homestead. Canada and Mitchell will attend the announcement event at the State Legislature Building in Concord. Canada reported that he will be meeting with the representative of a buyer interested in the property.

Bartlett-Cushman House: As mentioned above Canada reported that he has been assured that an estimate of rehabilitation costs will be in his hands before the end of the month. All agreed that immediately in the new year the next step is to undertake marketing the property with the assistance of commercial realtor David Choate.

300th Anniversary: Wiggin reported on the progress of various anniversary projects. Mitchell said that the Conservation Commission decided to have its own float in the parade. Mitchell also reported that she has asked Brett Walker, shoemaker at Colonial Williamsburg, for a photo of him in costume as Samuel Lane. The photo could be used to publicize the commission's February program as well as future anniversary events.

Planning Board & Technical Review Committee: Canada announced that the Town expects to have a new Town Planner hired and at work on January 4. Mitchell reported that Chris Merrick has resigned from the Planning Board and hence the commission lacks a representative from the Board. She further added that in the past the Planning Board representative had also served as a member of the Demolition Review Committee and that experience with building had been useful. Merrill reported from the Technical Review Committee that the Porsche dealership expansion project is on hold. Merrill spoke further concerning the BMW expansion that was discussed at the commission's

November meeting, saying that TRC members made it clear that the proposed plan does not meet the Gateway requirements, neither in its site regulations nor in the intent of the Gateway Master Plan. Responding to Merrill's report that area residents attending the TRC meeting spoke unanimously against the proposal, Canada reported that there is a citizens' petition warrant article to return the two affected lots on Raeder Drive behind the BMW dealership to the Residential/Agricultural zone from the Gateway Commercial District. It was the sense of the meeting that the pressure for expansion of the auto dealerships has become unrelenting, exceeding what could be reasonably acceptable for the town of Stratham, its Master Plan, and particularly the residential neighborhoods that abut the commercial area.

Agriculture: Merrill reported that the agriculture committee is still waiting for Glenn Greenwood's (Rockingham Planning Commission) final draft of agricultural land use regulations and his preliminary draft of agritourism definitions.

Parker Cabin: Mitchell reported that in response to her query Cory Riley (NH Fish and Game) replied that she would have a draft document outlining possible options for the cabin available by Christmas for distribution to all involved parties. The commission members present agreed with Merrill's proposal that if nothing satisfactory is forthcoming the commission should compose a letter to be sent to all high-level officials of every agency involved. The letter would stress the local historical importance and rarity of the structure as confirmed by the NH Division of Historical Resources' determination that the structure is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Facebook Page: Mitchell reported that Wally Stuart, assisted by Tammy Hathaway, has successfully launched the Commission's Facebook page and that it has proven useful for sharing photos and preservation news, both local and beyond.

NEW BUSINESS:

Annual Report: Mitchell announced that as usual the commission's annual report to be included in the Town Report will be due in January and that she will circulate a draft well in advance of the due date. She acknowledged, with gratitude, that Merrill's budget narrative had gone a long way toward providing a summary of the commission's activities in 2015.

Membership: Mitchell reported that Nancy Hansen had submitted her resignation to the Board of Selectmen. Consequently there is now an alternate member position open.

January meeting: Mitchell stated that she is unable to attend the January 13 meeting. The members present agreed that it is important to meet as usual and Merrill will chair the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM

NEXT MEETING: January 13, 2016

Submitted by:
Rebecca Mitchell
Nathan Merrill