

**STRATHAM HERITAGE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
November 11, 2015
LAND USE CONFERENCE ROOM**

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

Paul Deschaine joined the meeting at 8:15

Convened: 7:05 PM by Rebecca Mitchell, Chair

Minutes: The minutes of the October 14, 2015, meeting were approved

OLD BUSINESS:

Lane Homestead and February Program: On Oct. 21 The New Hampshire Preservation Alliance announced the inclusion of the Lane Homestead on its 2015 Seven to Save list of endangered historic properties. Mitchell attended and spoke at the ceremonies in Concord. She also prepared a display and handouts for the ceremony. The Seven to Save announcements were covered by a variety of media outlets and an article, *Stratham landmark named to 'Seven to Save'*, based on a press release written by Mitchell, appeared on the front page of the Exeter News-Letter on Nov. 3.

The LCHIP historical resources review panel met on 11/10/15 and the Board will announce the grant awards during the first week of December.

A staff member of the NH Preservation alliance will participate in the February program, both to speak on the statewide importance of the Lane Homestead and on preservation easements.

Donna-Belle Garvin (NH Historical Society publications director and editor of *The Years of the Life of Samuel Lane*) has offered to share text and illustrations from a talk she had presented on Lane. Stuart agreed to handle publicity for the event, and all agreed that the Morgera Room at the fire station would be suitable. The event will be scheduled Friday evening dates of February 5, 12, or 19. Mitchell will reserve the room for one of those dates and a backup date in case of stormy weather.

Mitchell proposed that a survey of the Lane property by Elizabeth Hengen or other consultant would be beneficial for the proposed easement and increase our knowledge of the property.

Merrill made a motion that the Commission may spend up to \$900.00 to begin a survey of the Lane Homestead between now and the end of the calendar year to come out of the survey and consultant line item in the 2015 budget. The motion was seconded by Stuart and passed unanimously.

Bartlett –Cushman House: The rehabilitation estimate should be in the week of November 16, 2015. Mitchell agreed to circulate the estimate as soon as it is available.

Budget: Merrill reported on the proposed 2016 budget. The total amount requested is \$3,750 - the same as our 2015 budget, adding \$100.00 to administrative and subtracting \$100.00 from the training and conference line items. Merrill has drafted the narrative portion of the budget with a

summary of 2015 objectives and outlining 2016 goals. Mitchell made a motion to approve the budget with the narrative. Stuart seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Merrill reported that the Heritage Preservation Fund, begun with \$50,000, now has a balance of \$40,781. Expenditures were \$3,719 for LCHIP grant preparation and \$5,500 for the Lane Homestead property appraisal.

300th Anniversary Committee: Wiggin reported that the auction raised \$10,000 to support town celebrations. Mitchell reported that she had proposed to the Conservation Commission chair that that group and the Heritage Commission collaborate on a float for the 300th Anniversary parade planned for September. The Conservation Commission will discuss the proposal at their next meeting.

Planning Board and Technical Review Committee: The board has approved the Rollins Farm site plan. The Verizon communications tower project is still pending. Paul Deschaine reported on a proposed sub-division next to the cemetery off Emery Lane. The chair announced that the Town will be hiring a new Town Planner to replace Lincoln Daley and that Selectman Dave Canada had requested suggestions for the interview process. The members agreed that it would be important for a successful candidate to have demonstrated ability to work and communicate not just with the Planning Board but with the full range of Town boards, commissions and committees. Commission members also gave high importance to the completion of an updated Master Plan including contemporary community input.

Merrill reported on the TRC meeting considering a 69 space parking lot proposed behind the BMW dealership on Rt. 33 which included demolition of a three unit condominium building. The project is not consistent with the intent or the design standards of the Gateway outer zone.

Agriculture: Merrill reported that the Agritourism topic was still moving forward with the Rockingham County Planning Commission.

Barn Easements: At its Nov. 2 meeting the Board of Selectmen approved two new barn easements: 148 Stratham Heights Rd. (the old Rollins Farm) and 2 Emery Lane (the former Hon. Paine Wingate property).

Merrill reported that he and Mitchell met with assessor Andrea Lewy to review the Town's current assessment of older barns.

Veteran's Gardens: Mitchell reported that volunteer Tracey McGrail had succeeded in getting five new bricks engraved and installed prior to the Veterans' Day ceremonies. McGrail will next draft a revised veterans' application form for engraving on bricks and monuments.

Stratham Hill Park: Hathaway reported that the Forest Management Committee has been working with Charles Moreno, a consulting forester, and reviewed the summary of his September 15 site walk with Seth Hickey. The committee discussed the best possible view sheds from the top of the hill, and all agreed that a view of Great Bay and also toward Newfields would be achievable. Further, the committee agreed that a site walk would be helpful to determine the scope of the project.

NEW BUSINESS:

Facebook: After a discussion of the merits of starting a Facebook page for the Heritage commission, Stuart said he would set up and administer the page. Hathaway agreed to assist. Merrill made a motion in favor of a Heritage Commission Facebook page. Mitchell seconded the motion and the vote was unanimously in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.

NEXT MEETING: December 9, 2015; 7 PM

Submitted by,
Tammy Hathaway
Rebecca Mitchell