



**Town of Amherst, NH
AMHERST HERITAGE COMMISSION MINUTES**

Town Hall- Landry Conference Room

Thursday, 10 December 2015 at 7:30 PM

- I. Call to Order:** Chairman Will Ludt called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Members of the commission in attendance included: Will Ludt, Mary Mahar, Lisa Montesanto, and Larry McCoy. Those absent included: Carolyn Quinn, Bill Veillette, Andy Ouellette, Tom Grella, and Eric Hahn.

II. Topics of Discussion

- a. Partnership Event- Sunday, 31 January 2016:** Chairman Will Ludt discussed the progress on the Amherst Heritage Commission support to a Freedom's Way National Heritage Area partnership event. Coordination has been made with the Amherst Recreation Department in having the PMEC available on Sunday, 31 January 2016 for a snow shoeing and hiking event. Snow shoes to be provided at the PMEC, with dogs allowed to be present if on and off leash. The Heritage Commission's participation will be headed by Mary Mahar in coordination of the morning and afternoon snow shoeing and hiking activities. Refreshments to be provided for a 10:00-12:00 session, as well as a 1:00-3:00 p.m. session. Mary Mahar to start coordination efforts after the holidays. Chairman Will Ludt provided information on a publicity flyer that will be completed by the Freedom's Way Heritage Association. Final plans and coordination will be discussed at the Heritage Commission meeting on January 14, 2016. All members are requested to participate.
- b. Updates from Other Boards and Commissions Attendance:** Chairman Will Ludt stated that he attended the Amherst Conservation Meeting on Wednesday, 9 December 2016 and had the following information for dissemination:

- i. Will ask the Historic District Commission to attend our 11 February 2016 meeting in an effort to have informal discussions and discuss any topics of mutual interest.
 - ii. Passed on information from a request from the Friends of the Orchard to identify heritage apple varieties that may have been grown in the Amherst area. Chairman Ludt discussed making contact with the Granite Grange in Milford and the Town Library Reference Librarian Ruslyn Vear for potential data. Data was received and forwarded on to Rich Hart, Friends of the Orchard. See attachment for data.
 - iii. Lisa Montesanto stated that the Friends of the Orchard are making great progress in stabilizing the Lindabury Orchard Storage Barn, new pressure treated foundations, new farming supports, plans for a metal roof, poison ivy removal, removal of the concrete flooring, and new restored doors are in progress. Plans are to have the barn stabilize prior to the onset of winter.
 - iv. The Upper Bragdon property, where the Amherst Ski Hill once stood, the ACC is removing post and standards where supports once stood. Will Ludt requested of the ACC to take photos of the structures and document as much as possible prior to removal.
 - v. Was reported that the recent purchase of the Bragdon Farm across from the LaBelle Winery by LaBelle owners met with the Amherst Planning Board to discuss possible uses for the 40+ acres and buildings. Potential use: Bragdon House- use as office space, Barn- use as a distillery, Land- develop into trails, vineyards and possible housing development. LaBelle to formally use the Amherst Planning Board process for final approval.
- c. Minutes: 12 November 2015:** Minutes were discussed with minor changes. The Partnership Event- January 30, 2016 was incorrect. Changed to 31 January, 2016. Motion to approve the minutes of 12 November 2016, with changes as amended, by Mary Mahar, seconded by Larry McCoy. Motion passed 4-0.
- d. Commission Roundtable and Public Social:** Attended members were asked to bring coffee, water, cookies to share with public and commission members. Informal discussions occurred.
- e. Adjourn:** Meeting was adjourned at 8:45PM.

Attachments:

a. Information from Ruslyn Vear, Amherst Town Reference Librarian:

I followed up on your question regarding possible varieties of apples that were common in NH (most notably Amherst) throughout history.

- A quick review of the *Farmer's Cabinet* (1802-1879) resulted in 5 mentions of Baldwin apples during the time frame 1853-1878. [And, in a review of The Hillsborough Co. Agricultural Society Meeting noted in the February 24, 1853 *Farmer's Cabinet*, "The Baldwin, every way considered, was the best winter apple to raise." The following were also spoken about in the same article (and often in connection with MA locations): Sweet Bough, Red Astracan, Porter, Foundling, Orange Sweeting, Kilham Hall, Red Cheek, Minister, Danvers Winter Sweeting, Hubbardston Nonsuch, Mother, and President.]
- In *New Hampshire, A History: Resources, Attractions, and Its People* (Volume III) (1927) by Hobart Pillsbury (pg. 1040): "Leaders of New England agriculture look for no miracles...But they do expect to top the New England market with deep red MacIntosh and Baldwin apples, to take full advantage of the broiler demand in New York City...Although no census on farm income has been taken since 1925, Granite State officials estimate the 1926 apple crop at one million dollars..."
- In *Transactions of the New Hampshire State Agricultural Society for 1850/52 – 1860* (Volume 1) (pg. 207): "The Baldwin apple, that is a staple fruit and easily raised in the southern counties, is scarcely grown in the northern counties, owing to the difficulty of keeping young trees alive."
- An interesting article on New Hampshire's Missing Heirloom Apples appears on the "Cow Hampshire" Blog: <http://www.cowhampshireblog.com/2013/10/07/new-hampshires-missing-heirloom-apples/>
- There is an excellent book, *Apples of New England: A User's Guide*, by Russell Steven Powell (2014) that is available in our consortium that I currently have checked out. It is a wonderful resource and has a large section on the history of apple growing in New England along with detailed descriptions and histories of the many apple varieties. You are welcome to come review it. On pg. 15 it is stated: "Discovered in Wilmington, MA, in 1740, Baldwin was New England's most popular apple for nearly two centuries before succumbing to a deep freeze in the winter of 1933/34."
- And, I will close with a fun apple fact: In 1904 at the St. Louis World's Fair, horticulturist J. T. Stinson introduced the phrase, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away," an updated version of a Welsh proverb, and it became the national slogan for the new era."

b. Information from Discussions from the Granite Grange Chair, Robert Glover, as recorded by Will Ludt:

- I had a nice visit to the Granite Grange in Milford to start my research. I talked for about an hour to Robert Glover, head of the Granite Grange. He only had roll call books of attendance from the Souhegan Grange (Amherst's one time Grange). He said all of the data that the Souhegan Grange had was either sent to the Historical Society of Amherst or the State Grange in Concord.
- Reference from the Grange Fair Premium List, August 1950. In the pamphlet, it talked about the variety of apples to be shown at Fairs from the individual Granges around the state. Below is the list of apple varieties:
 - Baldwin
 - Northern Spy
 - Gravenstein
 - Delicious
 - King Cortland
 - McIntosh
 - Wealthy

- Rhode Island Greening