



Town of Amherst, NH

HERITAGE COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

Town Hall – Landry Conference Room
Thursday, February 11, 2016 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 Andy Ouellette, Carolyn Quinn, Larry McCoy, Lisa Montesanto, and Tom Grella. Those absent included: Bill Veillette, Mary Mahar, and Eric Hahn.

II. Topics of Discussion

a. “Throwback Thursday – Amherst Heritage”

Chairman Ludt opened the meeting by suggesting a “Throwback Thursday” discussion of the Pavilion at Baboosic Lake. Tom Grella remembered being on the Fire Department when dances were held at the Pavilion on Saturday nights. The pavilion legally accommodated 500 people so even though they sold 600 tickets to the dance, it was all legal so long as people kept dancing. The Saturday night dances were always crowded but particularly so on the Saturday night before school started and vacations were over. Carolyn Quinn said “it was wonderful and the whole community was there”. Around 1974 the dances stopped when the platform fell into the lake. Tom Grella said the roof caved in after a big snowstorm. Carolyn Quinn remembered those days fondly and said it would be nice to resurrect bringing people together for dancing or other get-togethers during the summertime. Chairman Ludt said he wished Amherst had something similar to what Hollis has in the Lawrence Barn that holds 300 people and is a very nice facility. He also felt that a good gathering place might be by Freestyle Farm up on Mack Hill where there is a small lake to the left of the farm. Ms. Quinn said if something was available perhaps “we could get something going”. Chairman Ludt said if a property were located, it would have to be placed or moved where there is parking. Tom Grella mentioned that the Martin property would have been nice. It was mentioned that Steve and Susie Warren tried to get something going awhile back. Chairman Ludt said that in the spring the Commission should hold a meeting at the Lindabury Barn that has been restored by volunteers.

Larry McCoy suggested bringing the guy back who had a sign that read “Eat Here and Get Gas”. Andy Ouellette suggested taking a look at a film produced

by him and his brothers entitled “Bridge Over River Cloaca” which can be viewed on YouTube. Chairman Ludt was unable to upload the film due to low battery on his laptop and will include it on next month’s meeting agenda.

b. Results of January 31, 2016 Event at PMEC/Joe English

Chairman Ludt thanked everyone for their help with the partnership event held as part of the Freedom’s Way “Connecting Communities” initiative. The hiking event on the Joe English Reservation was attended by eight or nine hikers in the morning and another 9 or 10 for the afternoon hike. It was a nice event. A number of people came from outside Amherst; one family came from Pepperell, MA and a couple came from Weare. Chairman Ludt wrote a letter of appreciation to the Recreation Department for their help.

c. Heritage Commission Volunteer for Historic District Commission Subcommittee

Chairman Ludt mentioned that the Historic District Commission (HDC) was establishing a subcommittee to look at rules and regulations. Colleen Mailloux, Director of the Community Development Department, has asked that a member from the Heritage Commission participate on the subcommittee along with a representative from the Planning Board and a few citizens at large. Lisa Montesanto and Carolyn Quinn expressed an interest in serving.

Ms. Montesanto stated that the work of the subcommittee was to go through regulations, get public input, and approved. Director Mailloux expects a six to 12 month commitment from subcommittee members. Meetings will be held once a month beginning after the March 9th election. Meetings are expected to be held during the work day. Three people from the HDC have resigned over the last several months and it appears that establishment of the subcommittee stemmed from the Savino incident on Foundry Street. HDC members who have joined the subcommittee are Sue Clark, Christopher Hall, and a third member.

Larry McCoy read through a document noting that HDC regulations were overhauled over the last decade and there is a question of whether statutory authority is being followed. Mr. McCoy said there are varying opinions on accommodation versus preservation regarding the regulations and he feels those HDC members on the subcommittee favor accommodation rather than preservation. Tom Grella said the regulations are determined by the Commission and approved or disapproved by the Board of Selectmen. In response to a question posed by Mr. McCoy, Chairman Ludt said it will be up to the subcommittee to determine their standards of operation. Carolyn Quinn decided she would prefer to do something else. Lisa Montesanto feels it is important to have the Heritage Commission represented on this subcommittee

and she is leaning toward being willing to serve but will think about it and let Chairman Ludt know of her decision within the week.

d. Updates on Potential Grant Opportunities

In follow-up to last month's meeting, Chairman Ludt suggested applying for a Bertha Rogers grant that if granted could help with the vault data cataloguing, the stone wall scenic road project, and the Brick School Foyer clean-up that could serve as a mini-museum. Chairman Ludt said the Commission has been successful in the past with Bertha Rogers grant; got money for the Brick School celebration and also got aid from them for the front porch. Larry McCoy suggested cleaning up Amherst's 22 miles of scenic roads and improve the signage along scenic roads. Chairman Ludt has met with Ruslyn Vear about the vault data collection and cataloguing.

Andy Ouellette suggested the need to hire a firm to do aerial photography to get good images of the terrain where the stone walls are. Chairman Ludt mentioned hiring intermittent staff to cut and clear brush along scenic roads that could be picked up by the Public Works Division. Andy Ouellette suggested getting in touch with Rick Katzenberg to hire a "teen bank" which could provide a good labor pool for clean-up. Chairman Ludt agreed to write the rationale for the vault project. Andy Ouellette and Larry McCoy will draft up verbiage on the Stone Wall Scenic Road project. The deadline for submission of applications is March 25th. The draft application will be reviewed at the Commission's next meeting. In response to Mr. McCoy, Chairman Ludt and Mr. Ouellette stated that Bertha Rogers had a farm on Green Road and a trust was established where trustees fund project for the betterment of Amherst.

e. Updates from Other Boards and Commissions Attendance

Chairman Ludt attended the Conservation Commission meeting. They had a speaker from NH Fish and Game to talk about trapping practices and regulations and opening up some of the conservation trails to mountain biking. Chairman Ludt said personally he wished the Conservation Commission would limit some of the joint hunting/hiking trails. All conservation land is open to hunting. Carolyn Quinn and other Commission members were surprised and concerned that hunting is allowed where children and families walk or hike.

Chairman Ludt said the Conservation Commission is looking to purchase land along Spring Road, Lynch Farm Road, and County Road. He went over a slide of the three pieces of land, 227 acres, which includes the Upham Farm and excludes one house that burned. It's a fairly decent property that would not be developed. They are proposing the town share be \$450,000. Tom Grella said

there were a lot of contingencies involved, and the town could vote it down. It is on the town warrant at a one time cost of \$95 per household.

III. Minutes of January 14, 2016 Meeting

Chairman Ludt brought up the distribution of Commission meeting minutes. Going forward, the draft minutes will be sent to all Commission members and posted to the website. Once approved, the approved minutes will replace the draft minutes on the website. The minutes of the January meeting will be approved at the next meeting on March 11th.

IV. Commission Roundtable

Carolyn Quinn expressed concern about guns and hunting on conservation trails and is particularly concerned that residents are walking the trails unaware that hunting is allowed. Chairman Ludt said he suggested that two trails not allow hunting but he felt the suggestion fell on “deaf ears”. Lisa Montesanto suggested updating the signs on the trail heads and said that while hiking recently, she and her family could hear the whizzing sound of bullets which was very disconcerting. Andy Ouellette said he wasn’t sure that hunting could be limited. Areas are posted and it is allowed during hunting season.

Chairman Ludt will not be in attendance on March 11th and asked Andy Ouellette to convene the meeting.

V. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.