



# **Town of Amherst, NH**

## **HERITAGE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

### **Brick School – Community Room**

### **Thursday, August 13, 2015 at 7:00 PM**

- I. Call to Order:** Chairman Will Ludt called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Attendees: Will Ludt, Andy Ouellette, Larry McCoy, Mary Mahar, and Lisa Montesanto. Also present: Paul Davis, John Harvey, Chairman of the Amherst Conservation Commission, Ruslyn Vear, Amherst town historian, and representatives from the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC), the town of Brookline and Suzanne Beauchesne taking minutes. Absent: Bill Veillette, Carolyn Quinn, Tom Grella and Eric Hahn.

Chairman Ludt welcomed and introduced newly appointed alternate member of the commission, Lisa Montesanto who is also involved in the Historic Society, Land Trust, and Lindabury Orchard.

## **II. Topics of Discussion**

- a. “MyTourGuide” Demonstration and Discussion with Paul Davis

Chairman Ludt introduced Paul Davis, CEO of MyTourGuide and Travel Brains, from Bedford. Mr. Davis is a graduate of Cornell and the Wharton School of Business. He has done a lot of consulting work in marketing. Chairman Ludt referenced an Amherst “walking tour” booklet and stated that many in the community have indicated an interest in applications that move us from paper to digital formats.

Mr. Davis provided a hard copy of Yellowstone National Park. A similar project is underway for the Minuteman National Park in Lexington.

Mr. Davis indicated that “Travel Brains” worked up audio tours and guide books on CDs which led to the development of MyTourGuide when iPhones came out. He provided an example of his work – the Yellowstone National Park. Field guides for have also been developed.

MyTourGuide provides an open platform for creating itineraries and tours that visitors can download and play on their mobile devices and personal computers. The application is compatible with smartphones, tablets or computers. The digital tours can be self-guided for driving or walking. Mr. Davis said the application starts with google maps and he worked up a few points of interest in Amherst. The application includes queries, tour stops, a collection of pictures, audio, and channels that allow organizations to showcase all of their points of interest in one location. Stories can be added to

photos and triggers can be set as one approaches a particular point of interest. Other features include interactive quiz games, augmented reality, customized maps, and social network integration. A feedback button can be utilized and ratings tracked.

Mr. Davis said that the application is in its final stages of development at which time he will officially launch a website. Between now and the end of the year, he is focused on marketing and looking for partners who will get a free business account for life in exchange. The application can be downloaded for free. Cost to subscribe is \$50 per month or \$500 per year.

There was brief discussion that Joe English at Old Peabody Mill may have old pictures that could be used. The Historical Society has lots of photos and information as well. Mr. Davis can be reached at [pcdavis@mytourguide.com](mailto:pcdavis@mytourguide.com). Chairman Ludt said he met Mr. Davis at a Department of Historical Society's quarterly meeting and felt

**ACTION ITEM: Chairman Ludt suggested putting a group together to work on a way forward and get back to Mr. Davis within the next month.**

**b. Lindabury Orchard Barn Preservation: Support to Amherst Conservation Commission**

Chairman Ludt indicated that he serves as Heritage Commission representative to the Conservation Commission. The Conservation Commission asked members of the Heritage Commission to go out and see the barn and help with ideas on preserving the barn and how it could be used. The barn was built in the 1950s or 1960s and needs to be stabilized. Chairman Ludt, Andy Ouellette and others did visit the property. An estimate of \$25,000 was received from a preservationist. John Harvey, Chairman of the Conservation Commission, said the Commission had some funds but not that much. Another estimate is being sought from a builder. Andy Ouellette stated that it may be cheaper to not salvage the barn. Chairman Ludt said that he would hate to have to demolish a man-made structure.

**c. Preparation for CLG Grant Presentation – September 10, 2015**

Chairman Ludt noted that the CLG Grant is in the final stages. Katy Holmes, consultant on the project, recently met with the Department of Historical Resources (DHR) who provided her with feedback that she is incorporating into her report. Overall, DHR is satisfied with her work. The goal of the survey was to document agricultural life in Amherst from the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century. All four farmsteads are eligible for the State Register. A requirement of the grant calls for publishing the results of the study and making a public presentation at the Commission's September 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. Chairman Ludt will invite interested parties and advertise the upcoming presentation.

**d. Updates from other Boards and Commissions**

No updates provided.

### **III. Approval of Minutes: April 9, 2015**

Mary Mahar moved to accept the April 9, 2015 meeting minutes. Seconded by Andy Ouellette. Vote 5-0.

### **IV. Commission Roundtable**

Larry McCoy provided an update on the most recent Historic District Commission (HDC) meeting. The HDC voted to approve an addition to the back of the first courthouse. Tracey Veillette sent a letter of resignation to the Board of Selectmen stating her reasons for resigning. The matter may be appealed to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. It seems the abutters had a grievance because the structure's roof is the only example of a pyramid roof in town. The vote passed by a 5-2 vote.

Mary Mahar said that the Zoning Board has not met recently but will be back in action soon.

Andy Ouellette indicated that, as stated at the previous commission meeting, the stone wall project will need some funds to further the project. For the last several years, during budget negotiations, funding for the stone wall project has been eliminated and the funds re-directed. Mr. Ouellette feels that specific funding elements must be identified, prioritized, and a compelling reason provided so that the budget is not again knocked out. .

Mr. Ouellette is trying to come up with different ways to approach "mapping" which has been slow and laborious. To date, Mr. Ouellette has been using the Registry of Deeds website to identify locations, and learned recently that the town has an account with the Registry of Deeds where copies can be requested at minimal cost. Mr. Ouellette has identified 125 to 130 subdivisions which could cost approximately \$100 to \$150. Mr. Ouellette will talk with Gail Stout and if the plans could be gathered into a readily accessible format, it would certainly speed up the process.

### **V. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.