

TOWN OF AMHERST
Heritage Commission

November 12, 2020

APPROVED

In attendance: Will Ludt – Chair, Lisa Montesanto, Tom Grella – BOS Ex-Officio, Brenda Perry, and Conor Frain.

Staff in attendance: Nic Strong – Director of Community Development, Natasha Kypfer – Town Planner, and Kristan Patenaude – minute taker.

1. Roll Call to Order

Will Ludt called the meeting to order at 6:34pm., with the following statement. As Chair of the Amherst Heritage Commission, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, as extended by various Executive Orders, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are: Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means:

We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting.

All members of the Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone #312-626-6799 and password 880 5625 2494, or by clicking on the following website address: <https://zoom.us/j/88056252494> that was included in the public notice of this meeting. Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. Instructions have also been provided on the website of the Planning Board at: www.amherstnh.gov. Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access: If anybody has a problem, please call 603-341-5290.

Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote. Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to- Know law.

Roll call attendance: Will Ludt, Conor Frain, Tom Grella, Brenda Perry, and Lisa Montesanto – all present.

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TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:

2. “Throw Back” Thursday – Amherst Heritage

Will Ludt stated that he and Conor Frain went to the New Boston Air Force Station yesterday to see the Melendy foundation. He explained that anyone who wants to go onto the base can travel with him to see the foundation. He and Conor walked Old Mack Hill Road and Brook Road that were originally part of Amherst but are now part of New Boston Air Force Station.

Lisa Montesanto stated that, 100 years ago this month, the family that lived in her house at the time lost their six-year old daughter, Alex Elizabeth Johnson, to pneumonia. The little girl was buried in Meadowview Cemetery, but Lisa Montesanto noted that she hasn't yet been able to find her grave. Lisa Montesanto and her husband bought a brick for the little girl through the Historical Society walkway project as a way to remember her.

3. Update on Amherst Master Plan 2020

Will Ludt explained that the Commission gave comments about the proposed Master Plan survey that will soon be produced and sent out to the public.

Nic Strong noted that the survey should be available from December 1 – 20, 2020. The survey will be publicized prior to being sent out. The Master Plan subcommittee may also make YouTube videos to explain the Master Plan process to the public.

Will Ludt explained that two of the Commission's comments were removed from the survey suggestions: the metal detection policy and the demolition delay as being too specific for the broad survey that has been drafted. He stated that these two items will be brought up during the Master Plan working group meetings.

4. Approval of Amherst Heritage Commission's Rules of Procedure

The group reviewed the small list of changes to the document suggested by Town Counsel: a formatting error between pages 1 and 2; adding a missing section of RSA 674:44-b on page 3; and, deleting the word "strict" in two locations on page 6 with reference to compliance with RSA 91-A.

Tom Grella moved to approve the Heritage Commission's Rules of Procedure, as presented. Brenda Perry seconded.

Roll call: Will Ludt – aye; Conor Frain – aye; Brenda Perry - aye; Tom Grella – aye; and Lisa Montesanto – aye. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Update on Current Budget (FY21) and Planned Budget (FY22)

Will Ludt stated that the Commission's FY21 budget was \$2,572. The proposed FY22 budget has a small increase, totaling \$2,608. The Commission reviewed the proposed budget numbers.

6. Potential CLG Grant Submittal

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Will Ludt explained that he has submitted a letter of intent to the NH Division of Historical Resources for their CLG Grant. The proposed project, totaling approximately \$5,000-6,500, is to digitize QR codes and create signage for high priority heritage resource sites in Town. This would also allow for an updated map on the Town website, built with the QR code signs in mind. The intention of this project is to improve the public's access to Amherst heritage sites. He explained that the Commission would partner with NRPC for the technology integration. The primary goal is to get the Town's heritage data out of paper and into the hands of the public to enhance their knowledge.

Conor Frain noted that some of the targeted sites for this project are the Town Beach, the Baboosic Lake rail station, the corn crib, Town Hall/cemetery, PMEC Sawyer Cottage, Robert Frost house on Boston Post Road, bridge across the Souhegan River on Route 122, Jones Road, and the Route 122 rail station.

Will Ludt also noted that the Souhegan Valley Rail Trail non-profit organization is looking to create a 16.5-mile rail/trail bike path along the railbed that runs from Wilton to downtown Nashua.

7. Update on Potential Black History Event with NBAFS – January 2021

Will Ludt explained that there is a proposed walk in January/February with the NBAFS for Black History Month. A group would meet at PMEC, walk up Brook Road to the gate at the base, up Old Brook Road and to the Melendy foundation. There could be about 50 people on this walk and social distancing would be followed.

8. Update on Outbuilding at Corn Crib

Will Ludt explained that the ACC approached the Heritage Commission about 6-7 months ago regarding the status of the second building on the corn crib site. A certified archaeologist came to measure and document the building. The building itself is in bad shape. He will send a copy of the archaeologist's recommendation to the group.

In response to a question from Conor Frain, Will Ludt stated that it is unclear who owns the land that the building is on. The tax records make it look as though the Town owns the property and easement that the building is on. A gentleman near the site doesn't agree with this assessment though.

9. Minutes: 8 October 2020

Conor Frain moved to approve the minutes of October 8, 2020, as written. Lisa Montesanto seconded.

Roll call: Will Ludt – aye; Conor Frain – aye; Brenda Perry – aye; Tom Grella – aye; and Lisa Montesanto – aye. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Chair Topics and Discussion/Roundtable

Will Ludt stated that the Eagle Rock trip has been postponed to November 21, 2020, at 10am.

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Lisa Montesanto moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 PM. Conor Frain seconded.

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Roll call: Will Ludt – aye; Conor Frain – aye; Brenda Perry - aye; Tom Grella –

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aye; and Lisa Montesanto – aye. Motion carried unanimously.

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139 *Respectfully submitted,*

140 *Kristan Patenaude*

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142 Minutes approved: January 14, 2021