

# **RYE HERITAGE COMMISSION**

**Thursday, July 11, 2019**

**6:30 p.m. – Rye Public Library**

***Present: Chair Bev Giblin, Mae Bradshaw, Peter White, Alex Herlihy, Gail Hughes, Phil Walsh, Selectmen's Rep Bill Epperson and Alternates Rich Davis, Elizabeth Sanborn and Anne Arnold.***

## **I. Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Giblin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and let the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **II. Announcement**

Member Herlihy announced there will be a Celebration of Life held for resident Peter Crawford, who died suddenly on June 17<sup>th</sup>. The event will be held on August 27<sup>th</sup> in the Rye Public Library meeting room.

The Commission held a moment of silence for Mr. Crawford.

Chair Giblin stated she did not know Peter for very long; however, her first impression was that he was very dedicated to Rye. He attended every town meeting possible and was always willing to show his support. He was very intelligent and a wonderful person. He will be greatly missed.

## **III. Member Introduction**

The members introduced themselves and all were present so alternates were not needed to be seated.

## **IV. Approval June Minutes**

**Motion by Peter White to approve the minutes of June 6, 2019 as presented. Seconded by Phil Walsh. Vote: 4-0 Abstained: Mae Bradshaw, Bev Giblin and Bill Epperson.**

Chair Giblin noted that Phil Walsh is now sitting as a full member of the Commission. The position of selectmen's rep also needs to be addressed.

Selectman Epperson noted that he has a commitment the first Thursday of every month, which is the night of the Heritage Commission meetings. He will address the issue with Chair Giblin after the meeting.

## **V. Graveyard Projects**

- **Guest Ms. Dubois – Foss Family Graveyard**

**Patricia Dubois, 40 Washington Road,** stated she has lived at this property for 29 years and has always kept her eye on the graveyard, which at times has looked pretty bad. She has not had the time to keep up with maintaining the site.

Member Herlihy noted a descendent of the Foss Family visited from Virginia and she met with Alan Bucklin to handle the mowing of the site. That was several years ago and was happening for a while. Member Herlihy commented he would be willing to contact Mr. Bucklin to follow-up.

Mrs. Dubois stated her gardener looked at the site for a possibility of cleaning up the site. The gardener felt the graveyard was too big a project and would involve equipment she didn't have.

Selectman Epperson asked the size of the plot.

Member Herlihy noted it is a long, narrow rectangle and is a good size.

Mrs. Dubois stated there are a few neighbors that would be willing to contribute funds for the care of the graveyard. She has been thinking about the costs and how this could be funded. If there are no town funds available, she thinks that if the site could be cleaned up, perhaps moving forward the abutters could maintain it because they are the ones that would benefit.

Chair Giblin asked who owns the property that the graveyard sits on.

Member Herlihy explained it is not actually on anybody's property. The law says that these family graveyards cannot belong to anyone privately. When a graveyard is adjacent to a property and a private property needs to be crossed to get to it, permission is needed to cross from that property owner. However, this graveyard is on a road and can be accessed without crossing private property.

Mrs. Dubois stated her plan is to fundraise money to try to get the site into shape. Prior to that, she would approach the abutters to see if they would be willing to maintain the site.

Selectman Epperson suggested talking to the local Boy Scout troop to see if they would clean it up as a community service project.

Member Bradshaw stated she spoke with Dennis McCarthy (DPW Director) about this site. Her recollection is that the Central Cemetery used to include this in their cleanups. They stopped cleaning it because they couldn't do isolated ones around the town and now just do the main cemetery. At that time, DPW was overextended with keeping up with public spaces and could not include this site. The budget has now been funded for a person to just take care of the town's properties. She noted there are 62 graveyards in town so she is not sure how they can do one and not all.

Member Herlihy noted he will write to the Foss descendent and will also contact Alan Bucklin. He will report back to the Commission and Mrs. Dubois.

Member Bradshaw suggested to Mrs. Dubois that she call James Tegeder who has a connection with the local Boy Scouts.

After discussion with Mrs. Dubois, Member Herlihy spoke about the plan for a walking tour of the oldest part of Central Cemetery, which is intended to be held sometime in October. He hopes to have more information for the Commission in August.

## **VI. Demolition Committee – David Choate/Alex Herlihy/Elizabeth Sanborn**

Alternate Sanborn noted the Demolition Committee is in need of some funds for things such as, postage, copying, transcription work and other minor incidentals. She suggested that since this is a subset of the Heritage Commission, a small pool of money could be used for the committee and anything that is left over would go back to the Commission at the end of the year.

Chair Giblin stated she spoke with Janice Ireland (Selectmen's Secretary) about who was responsible for the committee in the past. She responded that this falls under the jurisdiction of the Building Department. The cost of sending notices and letters would fall under that department and is their responsibility. She believes they are doing these things already. The only question now is about the minutes.

Member Bradshaw pointed out the Heritage Commission is not the umbrella for the Demolition Committee. The only relationship between the Demolition Review Committee and Heritage is that the chair of the Heritage Commission appoints the members. The statute is very specific that the Demolition Committee is not a committee of the Heritage Commission. It is a committee of the selectmen. The selectmen have delegated to the building office the responsibility of sending notices and taking applications because it relates to permitting. She continued the Building Department will say that they can't help because they are underfunded themselves and have their own staffing needs. She has the same problems with the Historic District Commission. She asked Janice Ireland to take over the HDC and she was able to do that. She may be able to do the same for Demolition.

Chair Giblin noted she spoke with Janice about this and she suggested speaking with the town's transcriptionist; however, there would be a charge and there is no money budgeted for this. Chair Giblin suggested that until something could be budgeted, the chair of the Demolition Committee should be responsible for making sure the minutes are done.

There was some discussion about the possibility of budgeting funds for the transcription of minutes for public hearings for the year 2020.

Chair Giblin noted her main concern was she did not want the money coming out of the Heritage Commission fund. She will follow-up with David Choate on the Commission's discussion.

## **VII. Treasurer Report, Funding & Billing – Peter White**

Member White noted that an updated treasurer's report for June was not available for the meeting. He summarized that at the end of May there was a balance in the Heritage Commission's checking account of \$26,711. There was very little activity in the account for June. Through the first half of this year, the Commission has spent half the budget; however, many things were frontloaded, such as the annual mailer. The Commission is well on track to be under the \$4,100 annual budget by the end of the year.

**Motion by Mae Bradshaw to approve the treasurer's report. Seconded by Phil Walsh. All in favor.**

## **VIII. Grant Application – Phil Walsh**

Member Walsh reported the LCHIP Grant application (for town hall windows) was submitted for the June 28<sup>th</sup> deadline. The Commission should hear back sometime in December on the final decision. There will probably be a review late this summer or early fall. As soon as he hears any information, he will pass it on to the other members.

There was some discussion about restrictions on the town hall that may come with accepting the grant. It was agreed that the town did not want to get into a situation where they would not be able to move forward with renovating the building. It was also agreed that more information is needed with regards to the restrictions. If the town receives approval of the grant, town counsel could then be contacted for further research before accepting the funds.

#### **IX. Windows – Gail Hughes**

Member Hughes stated she called the companies that have given estimates and told them that the project is on hold at the moment. She thanked them for their time and effort.

The window project is on hold until the outcome of the grant is determined.

#### **X. Goss Farm Event**

Chair Giblin noted there was an initial incentive to hold a Rye Day Event in the summer of 2019. It was decided there was not enough time to hold an event for this summer, as there was not enough time to put it together. There is now an informal committee to work on a Rye Day Event for next year.

The Goss Farm is town land that is managed by the Conservation Commission and is to be used for agricultural purposes. In order to introduce the farm to Rye residents, the Conservation Commission will be holding a celebration at the property. The Heritage Commission has been asked to participate in coordinating the event. A committee has been formed to work on the project and all are welcome to attend. The celebration is planned for Sunday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, from noon to 3:00 p.m. The event will be structured like a fair and will be called 'Farmer's Market'. Tate and Foss has agreed to be the main sponsor with a donation to help pay for electricity, tables and a tent. Any funds that are left over will be put into the kitty for Rye Day. Local vendors are being sought to set up booths for the day.

Selectman Epperson noted that Rye Magazine would be very interested in running a story about this event.

Chair Giblin agreed to contact the publisher.

Member Herlihy reported the Rye Day Committee met informally to begin discussions about an event for next year. The date for the event is tentatively scheduled for June 8<sup>th</sup>. The next meeting for the committee will be held in August. The plan is for a parade, race through Parsons Woods, food vendors, music and other activities in Parsons Field. There will also be events on the same day at the library, museum and church.

#### **XI. Old Business**

Member Bradshaw stated the town received the CLG Grant to put the town hall on the Federal Registry of Historic Places and the Parsonage on the State register. The money is now available. It is just a matter of paperwork and the selectmen deciding on a consultant to handle the work, which has to be completed by September of 2020. Having the Parsonage on the State registry would lead to getting a Preservation Alliance Grant to do a structural study.

Member Bradshaw noted the chair of the select board raised the suggestion of postponing the selection of the architect for the design of the interior of the town hall. The reason for postponing that expenditure, which received a \$10,000 grant, was that Selectman Winslow was interested in having a clearer vision of what the town will be doing with the town hall, along with the trolley barn, Parsonage and TD Bank

property. There seemed to be some consensus of the selectmen that there were some possibilities that would preserve the second floor of town hall for open space. It was felt that if something was done with the trolley barn, the Parsonage or the TD Bank property, the top floor of the town hall could be restored to its naturally beauty.

Selectman Epperson agreed this was the consensus of the selectmen. The overarching issue was why \$10,000 was being spent without a plan. He noted that on July 15<sup>th</sup> the selectmen are holding a charrette meeting. He is hoping to create a committee to look at the charrette, and the will of the people, to create a ten year plan. There are a lot of pieces involved with the town center, such as, the town hall, library and safety building. There are some very exciting ideas that have come up.

The Commission discussed the possibility of Selectman Roman being the selectmen's representative to the Heritage Commission, as Selectman Epperson has a conflict on the scheduled meeting nights. Chair Giblin agreed to contact Selectman Roman to discuss this with her.

- **Next Meeting of the Heritage Commission – Thursday, August 1<sup>st</sup>**

### **Adjourn**

**Motion by Rich Davis (*on behalf of sitting members*) to adjourn at 7:41 p.m. Seconded by Bill Epperson. All in favor.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dyana F. Ledger