

RYE HERITAGE COMMISSION

**Thursday, March 5, 2020
5:30 p.m. – Rye Town Hall**

Present: Chair Phil Walsh, Treasurer Peter White, and Alex Herlihy

Alternate: Frank Lagana

Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Walsh called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. and led the pledge of Allegiance.

I. Member Introduction

Chair Walsh introduced Frank Lagana. Mr. Lagana was recently appointed as an alternate to the Heritage Commission and this is his first meeting.

Chair Walsh seated Frank Lagana for this evening's meeting.

II. Review and Approval of February 6, 2020 Meeting Minutes

**Motion by Peter White to accept the Meeting Minutes of February 6, 2020 as presented.
Seconded by Alex Herlihy. All in Favor.**

III. Port Way Cell Tower – Michelle Tyminksi

Michelle Tyminski, 121 Parsons Road, asked if the members had all received a copy of the history of the cell tower proposal and if they had an opportunity to review it.

The members all acknowledged that they had.

Ms. Tyminski explained that what she primarily wanted to talk about this evening was the Section 106 review process. She stated that she understands that this site was approved by the Town's people last year as a cell tower site and the desire is to increase cell coverage in town. The Town will also benefit from the revenue generated by the lease. It is inevitable that the project will move forward. However, her concern is that this area of town is one of the most beautiful, scenic vistas on the national coastal route from Maine to Key West Florida. There are also a lot of historic locations around it. Where the cell tower is proposed to be placed is very visible and there have been no attempts to camouflage it in any way. She is looking for support from the Commission to gain more voice in this matter.

Member White asked how many other boards and commissions are currently involved.

Ms. Tyminski named the Conservation Commission, Zoning and Planning Boards. She has not heard back from the Historic District Commission yet.

Member White clarified that zoning will require variances.

Ms. Tyminksi agreed and stated that zoning will require several variances. She added that there are trees that will be cut down in the 75-foot wetland buffer and they are trying to determine how many need to be cut. There will be a site walk next Saturday, March 14th at 9:00 am. The Planning Board will be meeting March 10th and the Zoning Board will be meeting on March 18th. She was not sure when the Conservation Commission will be meeting again with Verizon.

Chair Walsh pointed out that the Heritage Commission is much more than preserving historic buildings. This issue seems to fall right into the Heritage Commission's purview.

Ms. Tyminksi pointed out that there are a number of ways to camouflage cell towers in order to make them less offensive; such as plantings.

There was further discussion regarding the tree clearing. Verizon will be cutting right up to the wetland buffer and the Town will be clearing additional trees for liability reasons. The Town wants to eliminate any possibility that town owned trees could fall into the compound and create damage to the compound.

Ms. Tyminksi also reported that Mr. Shawn Crapo of the Zoning Board is pushing to make the base of the substructure ready for a 150-foot tower, in case the tower needs to be expanded in the future. Currently, the tower is 126 feet.

Chair Walsh stated that he cannot see why, at the very least, the Town could not have some camouflaging. He felt that this is something that the Heritage Commission should be pursuing and fighting for.

The letter from Verizon was addressed to the Historic District Commission in error. The Heritage Commission does not have a copy of the letter. Chair Walsh will contact Mae Bradshaw, chair of the Historic District Commission, to get the letter in order to respond to it with the Heritage Commissions concerns. In the meantime, it was recommended that Chair Walsh ask the Historic District Commission to respond to Verizon to let them know that this is not in the purview of the Historic Commission's affairs and that it has been turned over to the Heritage Commission.

Member White recommended that the Heritage Commission waits until the April 2nd meeting to discuss how they want to move forward on the issue.

IV. Treasurer Report – Peter White

Treasurer Peter White stated that the Commission's cash balance as of February 29th is \$26,532. Of that amount, \$19,017 is allocated to the restoration of Town Hall and approximately \$7,500 is unrestricted. The 2019 budget was \$4,100 and the Commission only spent about half of it. The 2020 budget was approved at the same amount.

Motion by Alex Herlihy to accept the Treasurer's report as presented. Seconded by Phil Walsh. All in favor.

V. Storm Windows Project

Chair Walsh reported that he has submitted to "The Friends of Rye Town Hall" a proposal for the partnership between the Friends and the Heritage Commission on this project. He has also been in

contact with Selectman Roman. At this point, the Selectmen want to wait until after the election before anything is started.

VI. Rye Day – Meeting April 7th

Chair Walsh reported that the Heritage Commission has been invited to the Rye Day Meeting on April 7th. It will be a brainstorming session to discuss what will be happening. Alex Herlihy is on the Rye Day Committee.

Member Herlihy explained that they will be discussing what committees, boards, commissions and others will be participating in the event and where. He also pointed out that there is an opportunity for Rye Heritage, Rye Historic District and Rye Historic Society to work together to show what they do. It will be a good civic engagement opportunity.

VII. Pulpit Rock Update

Chair Walsh gave a brief update on the Pulpit Rock Tower. He reported that he spoke to Patty Weathersby recently and they are planning get together to talk sometime next week. At this time, they are waiting on an RFP which should be due to the Selectmen in April. When that comes in, the Heritage Commission will have an opportunity to weigh-in. He added that Ms. Weathersby has offered to attend one of the Heritage meetings in May or June to answer any questions that the Commission may have and to discuss next steps. She has also recommended that when the tower opens up for tours in the spring, as many of the Heritage Members that can volunteer would be a wonderful learning opportunity for them.

Member Herlihy stressed the importance of the Tower. He recommended that in the future the Tower be referred to as a World War Two Museum Pulpit Rock Tower.

VIII. Old Business – Graveyard Project (Next Step Map Creation)

- Chair Walsh announced that the graveyard records are now posted on the Town's website.
- Member Bradshaw came into the meeting at 6:21 pm. She was asked about the letter from Verizon. She replied that she had already responded back to Verizon and had just stated that the issue was not in the Historic Commission District jurisdiction.
- Chair Walsh recommended that the next step for the graveyards will be for the Commission to encourage people to adopt the graveyards and to take ownership for them in any compacity. He reminded the members that the discussion at the last meeting suggested a clean up session later in the spring. He stated that he will reach out to Member Tegeder about taking the lead to get the process started. The goal is to make this a town wide awareness issue because these graves are here and they need sponsors. He added that Member Sanborn and he will be getting together to create a more formal map.

IX. Next Meeting – April 2, 2020 – 6:30 pm

X. Adjournment

Motion by Peter White to adjourn at 6:45p.m. Seconded by Phil Walsh. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dyana F. Ledger