

RYE HERITAGE COMMISSION

Friday April 10, 2020

1:00 p.m. – via ZOOM

Members Present: Chair Phil Walsh, Frank Lagana, Gail Hughes, Elizabeth Sanborn, Anne Richter-Arnold, Selectmen's Rep Keriann Roman, Bev Giblin (joined after roll call) and Alex Herlihy (joined after roll call)

Guests Attending: David Choate and Patricia Weathersby

I. Call to Order

Chair Walsh called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

II. Member Introductions

Statement by Chair Phil Walsh:

As chair of the 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, 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 and other electronic means. We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the Heritage Commission 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 by clicking on the following website address: www.zoom.com ID #477-957-356. Password: 3fiVbv

We previously gave notice to the public for the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom telephonically. Instructions have also been provided on the website of the board at: town.rye.nh.us

If anybody has a problem, please email the Executive Assistant at kdrago@town.rye.nh.us

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.

Roll call attendance of members:

- Elizabeth Sanborn
- Gail Hughes
- Anne Ritcher Arnold

- Frank Lagana
- Keriann Roman

(Each commission member confirmed that there was no one else present in the room with them for the meeting.)

III. Review of Minutes from March 5, 2020 meeting

Motion by Phil Walsh to approve the March 5, 2020 meeting minutes as written. Seconded by Frank Lagana.

Roll Call: Frank Lagana – Aye; Gail Hughes – Aye; Phil Walsh – Aye

Motion passed.

Note: Bev Giblin joined meeting.

IV. Reappointments:

Voting on Member/Alternates for Heritage Commission; Demolition Review Committee

Full Members: Gail Hughes & Mae Bradshaw

Motion by Keriann Roman to recommend Gail Hughes to the Selectmen for another term on the Commission as a full member. Seconded by Bev Giblin.

Roll Call: Phil Walsh – Yes; Frank Lagana – Yes; Elizabeth Sanborn – Yes; Bev Giblin – Yes; Anne Richter-Arnold – Yes; Keriann Roman – Yes Abstained: Gail Hughes

Motion passed.

Motion by Phil Walsh to recommend Mae Bradshaw to the Selectmen for another term on the Commission as a full member. Seconded by Elizabeth Sanborn.

Roll Call: Phil Walsh – Yes; Frank Lagana – Yes; Keriann Roman – Yes; Elizabeth Sanborn – Yes; Bev Giblin – Yes; Anne Richter-Arnold – Yes; Gail Hughes – Yes

Motion passed.

Alternates: Elizabeth Sanborn & David Choate

Motion by Phil Walsh to recommend Elizabeth Sanborn to the Selectmen for another term on the Commission as an alternate. Seconded by Keriann Roman.

Roll Call: Phil Walsh – Yes; Frank Lagana – Yes; Keriann Roman – Yes; Bev Giblin – Yes; Anne Richter-Arnold – Yes; Gail Hughes – Yes Abstained: Elizabeth Sanborn.

Motion passed.

Motion by Phil Walsh to recommend David Choate to the Selectmen as an alternate to the Heritage Commission. Seconded by Keriann Roman.

Roll Call: Phil Walsh – Yes; Frank Lagana – Yes; Keriann Roman – Yes;

Elizabeth Sanborn – Yes; Bev Giblin – Yes; Anne Richter-Arnold – Yes; Gail Hughes – Yes

Motion passed.

V. Discussion and Review of RFP for Pulpit Rock Tower

Chair Walsh noted that he has asked Patricia Weathersby, Friends of Pulpit Rock Tower, to join the Commission for this discussion. While the Heritage Commission will not have a final say, they do have the opportunity to weigh-in on the proposals and vote to make a recommendation, which will go to the Selectmen. Speaking to Selectperson Roman, he asked if this is something that they could expect to happen within the next month or two or would they have to just wait and see at this time.

Selectperson Roman stated that this is not going to require meetings or groups of people to be together. It is also not going to require the Town to spend any money, as this is being funded by the 'Friends' group. There is no reason that this could not move forward.

Chair Walsh opened to the Commission regarding their thoughts on the two proposals that have been received.

Member Hughes stated that she read through the two proposals and her choice would be the Boston firm. She noted that it is only a matter of about a \$1,500 difference between the two proposals.

Member Richter-Arnold agreed that the Boston firm seemed to be more descriptive in their details and that made her feel more confident.

Member Giblin commented that the firm seemed to be more detailed and more professional.

Chair Walsh concurred. The Boston firm seemed to be a more professional option. It is not a large difference in terms of overall costs. He asked Patricia Weathersby to give her thoughts on the two proposals.

Patricia Weathersby, Friends of Pulpit Rock Tower, pointed out that the Newmarket firm said in their proposal that if selected, they will develop a detailed inspection plan and analysis to be reviewed by the Town. It looks like they intend to provide this information. She agrees with the group that the Boston firm's proposal was more thorough; however, there were a couple of misstatements, which gave her some concern. She pointed out that they are suggesting some analysis that she is not sure is necessary, which probably drives the cost. The 'Friends' have yet to discuss these proposals, so her statements are not the consensus of the group. The next 'Friends of Pulpit Rock Tower' meeting is on May 6th so she will not have feedback from them until then. Mrs. Weathersby stated that she was shocked at the cost. The first evaluation done in 2011 was much more thorough and the cost was much less. For a less comprehensive analysis, for herself and she believes for the other members of the 'Friends' group, they would be anticipating something in the \$3,000 to \$5,000 range. The proposals received are double and this is a concern. She is not sure what the 'Friends' members are going to say. A study is the next step in moving forward. However, the group does not have unlimited funds and the \$5,000 difference is about five years of their fundraising.

Referring to the firm used in 2011, Member Giblin asked how they compared in terms of what is in the actual proposal.

Mrs. Weathersby noted that the firm in 2011 was much more comprehensive. She continued that she was also disappointed that neither of the firms that sent in proposals made an effort to get into the tower, as no one contacted her to get inside. She wonders if the proposals would be different if they had visited the tower and seen the work that has been done. She reiterated there are concerns with the proposals on her end. However, she is only speaking for herself and she is not sure what the group will want to do.

Member Sanborn asked if it would make sense to point out to both firms these points and to ask them to make a visit to possibly refine their proposals.

Member Giblin commented that she is baffled that they would do an estimate without actually going to the site.

Note: *Alex Herlihy joined the meeting by telephone.*

Chair Walsh asked Member Herlihy his thoughts on the two proposals.

Member Herlihy confirmed that he reviewed the proposals. He commented that it would be good to have a recommendation from someone who is familiar with these kinds of organizations.

Selectperson Roman suggested that the 'Friends' group take the two proposals and take out things that they feel are not necessary. This information could be drafted in the form of bullet points or a letter that would come from the Heritage Commission. The letter could be reviewed at the Commission's next meeting and sent to the firms to see what their responses would be.

The Heritage Commission Members agreed.

Mrs. Weathersby pointed out that the Heritage Commission had requested the electrical be looked at as well, which added \$1,000 to the RFP. She commented that an electrician could give them a price on the electrical outside of the proposals.

Selectperson Roman stated this can be taken out. The Commission wanted to see the cost but it was not the focus. It might make sense to have a conversation about whether this should come out and dealt with separately.

Chair Walsh agreed.

Mrs. Weathersby summarized that the 'Friends' group will develop a list of items in the proposals that might not be correct or needed. They will put this into some sort of draft or memo for clarification. The group will also discuss the bids and discuss other possibilities that might achieve the same results.

Chair Walsh stated that this has been a helpful discussion. His earlier thought was for the Commission to take a vote on a recommendation. However, given the discussion, he does not feel they are in a position to say which one and at this time, he would feel more comfortable waiting until after the 'Friends' group has met to discuss this in further detail. It would also allow the Commission a chance for further review.

The Commission agreed.

Chair Walsh noted that the Heritage Commission stands ready to help 'The Friends of Pulpit Rock Tower' to take this to the next step and shepherd the responsibility. The Commission agrees this is an important historic asset of the Town.

VI. Further Discussion

There was some discussion in regards to putting the meetings on hold until the group is able to gather and meet in person, as the Commission does not have any pressing issues at this time. There was also discussion about holding the election of officers until it can be done at an in-person meeting.

Adjournment

Motion by Elizabeth Sanborn to adjourn the meeting at 1:41 p.m. Seconded by Phil Walsh.

Roll Call: Roll Call: Keriann Roman – Aye; Elizabeth Sanborn – Aye; Bev Giblin – Aye; Anne Richter-Arnold – Aye; Gail Hughes – Aye; Frank Lagana – Aye; Phil Walsh - Aye
Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dyana F. Ledger