

RYE HERITAGE COMMISSION
Thursday, February 11, 2021
3:30 p.m. – Via ZOOM

Members Present: Chair Philip Walsh, Gail Hughes, Anne Richter Arnold, Alex Herlihy, David Choate, Peter White and Alternate Elizabeth Sanborn.

Chair Walsh called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

I. READING of ATTESTATION

Statement by Phil Walsh:

As a Chair of the Rye 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. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

- a) 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 Historic District 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 through dialing the following phone number: 646-558-8656 and Password:254125 or by clicking on the following website address: www.zoom.com ID #646-558-8656.
- b) Public notice has been provided 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 Town of Rye website town.rye.nh.us
- c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access.
If anyone has a problem, call 603-964-5523 or e-mail at JIreland2@town.rye.nh.us.
- d) 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.

Roll call attendance of Commission:

- Gail Hughes
- Anne Richter Arnold
- Alex Herlihy
- David Choate
- Elizabeth Sanborn
- Phil Walsh (Grandparents are in the house)

Note: The Members stated where they were located and confirmed that they were the only ones in the room for the meeting.

II. Welcome

III. Member Introductions

IV. Review of Minutes from January 2021

Motion by David Choate to accept the meeting minutes of January 14, 2020 as written.

Seconded by Gail Hughes.

Roll Call Vote: Phil Walsh – Aye; Gail Hughes – Aye; Anne Richter Arnold – Abstain; Alex Herlihy – Aye; David Choate – Aye; Elizabeth Sanborn – Aye.

Motion passed.

V. Treasurer’s Report: February 2021 - To be discussed at the March Meeting.

VI. Demolition Review Committee Update

Member Choate reported that there has not been a Demolition Review Committee meeting since the last Heritage Commission meeting. The Planning Board voted to send to the warrant the request to have a notice sent to abutters prior to any Demolition Review Committee public hearings. There are currently no applications pending before the Demolition Review Committee.

VII. Historic Structure Taskforce Update:

Member Choate reported that they have met twice by phone and have another meeting scheduled Monday. There are nine people involved. They have solicited information from the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance. They are trying to do three things. One is how to distribute the pre-1900 house building information that has already been assembled through Alex Herlihy and Lydia Tilsley’s efforts, in a form that is readily accessible on the internet. Second, would be to accumulate, assemble and digitize information on structures from 1900 to 1950-ish. There is currently no information in this area yet. Third, would be to come up with ideas to incentivize people to maintain their historic buildings in a way that does not so alter them that they are unrecognizable from their original history, or in the worst case demolish them.

Member Herlihy thanked Janice Ireland for pointing him in the right direction in getting documentation on all homes built between 1900 and 1950. She told him that the Assessing Office has that information. He asked Joanne in the Assessor's office for the information and she was able to print off three documents that give the address and date built of all houses in Rye. The first document was pre-1900. There are 287 properties in this category. He and Lydia have about 210-215. So, they are continuing to work on that. The second document is 1900 and 1950. During this period there are 800 house that were built in Rye that are still in existence today. Homes built between 1950 and 2021 was 1,973.

Member Choate pointed out that the challenge will be what type of incentives, recognitions or non-legislative things will encourage people to maintain, preserve, and enhance their house that has historic value, rather than just taking on a renovation project that alters it from its original style.

VIII. New Business

A. Any updates re: Gazebo repairs/Restoration Costs

Member Herlihy reported that he should have some information for the March meeting. He is trying to get some estimates from some local builders.

Chair Walsh suggested that they hold off any further discussion on this matter until March and then move ahead with finalizing the fundraising mailer.

Member Choate congratulated Member Arnold on her article in Rye Reflections on the Gazebo. He suggested that when the Commission does the fundraiser, they consider the cost of buying and installing a street-side historic marker.

Chair Walsh pointed out that this leads into the Discussion that he has on the agenda regarding the plaque for the Town Hall: re National Register of Historic Places. He will hopefully have more information as to who does this type of thing by the March meeting. He added that the State was not really very helpful in the matter. They gave him a few names of companies, but either they did it for larger projects or were extremely expensive. He has reached out to a few companies and is now waiting to hear back from someone in Swanzey, NH, that sounds promising.

Note: *Selectman Epperson joined the meeting at this time.*

B. Finalization Fundraising Mailer – To be discussed further at the March Meeting.

C. Graveyard Adoption

Chair Walsh reported that Mr. And Mrs. John and Renee McCune have reached out to Member Herlihy and are looking to adopt grave yard #38 at Brackett Road. They are excited to take over this graveyard; to clean it up and to see that it is maintained.

Member Arnold asked Member Herlihy if the McCunes would be willing to be interviewed for an article she will write on the Adopt a Graveyard Program.

Member Herlihy promised to reach out to them and ask and give them Member Arnold's contact information.

Motion by Alex Herlihy to approve John and Renee McCune to adopt Graveyard #38 at 500 Brackett Road. Seconded by David Choate.

Roll Call Vote: Gail Hughes – Aye; Anne Richter Arnold – Aye; Elisabeth Sanborn – Aye; Alex Herlihy – Aye; David Choate – Aye; Bill Epperson – Aye; Phil Walsh – Aye.

Motion passed.

D. Plaque for Town Hall: re National Register of Historic Places – To be discussed further at the March Meeting.

E. Update Re: House Bill 164

Chair Walsh reported that he sent a letter to Representatives Grote and Murray regarding the Heritage Commission's support of the Bill. He confirmed that the Bill has passed the Committee and will now go on to the House, where it is expected to pass. It will then go onto the Senate. Both Representative Grote and Murray are in favor of this Bill and will keep the Commission updated.

Adjourn

Motion by Elisabeth Sanborn to adjourn at 4:22 p.m. Seconded by Gail Hughes. Roll Call Vote: Gail Hughes – Aye; Anne Richter Arnold – Aye; Elisabeth Sanborn – Aye; Alex Herlihy – Aye; David Choate – Aye; Bill Epperson – Aye; Phil Walsh – Aye.

Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted
Dyana F. Ledger