

**RYE HERITAGE COMMISSION
MEETING
October 15, 2021
3:30 p.m.
Rye Town Hall**

Present: Chair Phil Walsh, Vice-Chair Gail Hughes, Treasurer Peter White, Alex Herlihy, Frank Lagana, David Choate, and Mae Bradshaw (arrived at 3:40 p.m.)

Welcome/Call to Order

Chair Walsh called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

David Choate was seated for Bev Giblin.

- **Review of Previous Meeting Minutes**
 - **September 9, 2021**

The following correction was noted:

- On page 2, last paragraph, last sentence should read: **The committee has forty-nine days to talk the owners out of tearing it down, if they feel it's an important structure, or to salvage some of the items from the structure.**

**Motion by Peter White to approve the minutes of September 9, 2021 as amended.
Seconded by Alex Herlihy. All in favor.**

- **Treasurer's Report – Peter White**

Member White noted that as of September 30th, the Heritage Commission's general fund balance was \$20,599. This is a slight increase from last month, due to the sales of hats at the Goss Farm Event. Of that balance, \$10,416 is restricted for town hall, \$6,160 is allocated for the gazebo project and \$4,022 is unrestricted. The annual budget for 2021 is \$4,850 and to date only \$1,564 has been spent. The Commission will come in well within the budget this year.

Member White will be attending the Select Board's budget meeting on November 4th to present the 2022 Heritage Commission Budget. He recommends submitting the same budget as 2021 for 2022 in the amount of \$4,850.

It was noted that there is an estimate of \$11,105 for the gazebo project. The Commission currently has funds available of approximately \$6,000. That leaves a balance of \$5,000 for the project. There was brief discussion about whether that remaining amount could be put into the 2022 budget.

Member Bradshaw pointed out that the Select Board agreed to accept the gazebo with the understanding that any expense would fall on the Heritage Commission to raise through fundraising or grants. It was agreed it would not fall on the burden of the taxpayers.

Member White noted that with the budget remaining at this time, the gazebo project could almost be paid for in full with about \$1,000 remaining, which would need to be made up through a fundraiser.

Referring to the 2022 Budget, Member Bradshaw suggested adding some seed money for seeking grants. At some point next year, the spiral staircases in the Town Hall building will need to be addressed. An architectural study will have to be done first for this project. She recommended applying for a 60/40 grant through CLG to do the architectural study, which would require the Town's share to be budgeted. The Commission might want to consider adding \$3,000 to the budget for the match.

After some discussion, it was agreed to add seed money to the 2022 budget to cover grant seed money. Member White will be presenting the budget to the Select Board on November 4th.

Motion by Phil Walsh to approve the 2022 Heritage Commission Budget as proposed. Seconded by Gail Hughes. All in favor.

- **Pay Invoice: House Plaque**

Chair Walsh reported that there have been new requests for house plaques in the past few months. An invoice has been received from Timberline in the amount of \$65.00 for plaques that have been completed thus far.

Motion by David Choate to pay Timberline in the amount of \$65.00. Seconded by Gail Hughes. All in favor.

- **Demolition Review Committee Update**

Member Choate reported that the Demolition Review Committee held a public hearing for the property at 1481 Ocean Blvd. The owner is replacing a secondary structure on the property with an art studio. The committee was not able to convince the owner to not tear down the cottage. However, the property owner has agreed to photograph and document items that may be of historic interest. The owner will be reaching out to Alex Herlihy in regards to these items for the Rye Historical Society. There were no other demolition public hearings within the last month.

Member Choate noted that there is a real need for a land use administrative assistant for the town. He emailed the building inspector and the building department's assistant to ask if they would let the owner of 1481 Ocean Blvd know that a public hearing had been scheduled for October 13th. Per ordinance regulations, the property owner is then required to post a sign in front of the property noticing the public hearing. The property owner was not notified, as of October 12th, as the building department had not read the email. The property owner did attend the public hearing; however, a sign was never posted on the property. This email

communication probably would not have been overlooked if there was a land use assistant specifically in charge of notices and owner contact for the boards, commissions and committees.

Member Choate also noted that the property owners are being able to replace these historic structures because they are receiving variances from the BOA.

Vice-Chair Hughes asked if the Heritage Commission needs to go to the BOA and say that the granted variances go against the Commission's principles of preserving these structures.

Member Choate commented that this needs to be discussed with the Long Range Planning Committee. He encouraged the members to attend the master planning work shop, so their voices can be heard.

- **Demolition Review Committee, Resignation/appointment**

Chair Walsh noted that Alex Herlihy will be stepping down from the Demolition Review Committee. Frank Lagana has agreed to fill that seat.

Motion by David Choate to accept the resignation of Alex Herlihy from the Demolition Review Committee. Seconded by Peter White. All in favor.

Motion by David Choate to make a recommendation of appointment to the Select Board for Frank Lagana to fill the seat on the Demolition Review Committee. Seconded by Peter White. All in favor.

Chair Walsh will send a letter of recommendation to the Select Board.

- **Rye Advocates Update**

Member Choate reported that Rye Advocates will be holding a strategic planning session in November. They have received 65 responses to the survey and it seems that might be a final count. There has not been any interest in an internship position from U.N.H. to help organize and document the information for the historic homes. Rye Advocates will continue to work on this project. The intent is to have the full history of the homes available through a search on the town's website.

New Business

1. Approval of Graveyard: Bob Blanchard (Graveyard #10)

Chair Walsh reported that Bob Blanchard has made an adoption request for graveyard #10, which is located off Ocean Blvd near 1483 Washington Road (Foss Graveyard).

Motion by Alex Herlihy to approve the graveyard adoption request by Bob Blanchard. Seconded by David Choate. All in favor.

Old Business

- **Town Hall Windows**

Vice-Chair Hughes noted that the installation of the storm windows at the Town Hall has been completed. A final invoice will be sent to the Commission within the next few weeks.

Member Bradshaw stated that she asked the gentleman who is doing the restoration work on the windows if he would be able to repair the gouging of some of the sills and woodwork. He confirmed that he will be able to do the work; however, a new estimate is needed to include that work. It seems that the costs will be less than what was originally anticipated. A new estimate is being prepared at this time. The work on the windows is expected to begin by December.

- **Gazebo: Repair Costs/Next Steps**

The Committee had a discussion in regards to the recent estimate received for the gazebo restoration in the amount of \$11,105. It was agreed that this estimate was more than what was expected. There was discussion about where the Commission should go with this project and whether to continue to move forward. At this time, it seems that the Library does not have an interest in the gazebo.

It was agreed that Member Choate should reach out to the Preservation Alliance to see if they have a list of names of people who do this type of work and may be interested in the project. He will also reach out to Bruce Valley to see if it would be possible to store the gazebo in the trolley barn for the winter. It may be possible for work to be done on the gazebo inside the trolley barn during the winter months.

The discussion was tabled until November until further information is received.

- **Reminder: 2 Night Workshop October 18th/25th 5-7 p.m. @RPL/Zoom**

The Heritage Commission is hosting a two-night workshop at the Rye Public Library and via Zoom on October 18th and October 25th from 5 to 7pm. The event will cover the topic of advocacy efforts and best practice skills for educating citizens on preservation efforts for historic buildings and preserving the community character.

- **A Master Plan Workshop is being held by the Long Range Planning Committee on Wednesday, November 10th at the Rye Junior High from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**
- **Heritage Commission's next monthly meeting will be held on Thursday, November 4th, Rye Town Hall at 5:30 p.m.**

Adjournment

Motion by Gail Hughes to adjourn at 4:40 p.m. Seconded by Alex Herlihy. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted, Dyana F. Ledger