

**Rye Heritage Commission
Meeting
February 3, 2022, 5:30 PM
Rye Town Hall**

Present: *Chair Phil Walsh, Vice-Chair Gail Hughes, Peter White, David Choate, Elizabeth Sanborn, Mae Bradshaw and Alex Herlihy (via Zoom)*

Others Present: *David Caswell*

I. Welcome/Call to Order:

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

Chair Walsh seated Alternate Choate for Member Lagana and Alternate Sanborn for Member Giblin.

II. Review and Approval of January 13, 2022 Minutes

- It should be noted that David Choate was in attendance at the January 13th meeting.

Motion by Phil Walsh to approve the minutes as amended. Seconded by Gail Hughes. All in Favor.

III. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer White reported that the Commission has a total of \$19,276.88 as of January 31st. It is allocated as follows:

- a. \$7,814.95 is restricted for Town Hall use.
 - i. The windows have been paid for.
- b. \$6,160 is appropriated for the Gazebo.
- c. \$5,271.93 is unrestricted.

The 2022 budget has been approved by the Budget Committee and Select Board in the amount of \$9,500. It is as follow:

- d. \$4,700 is the operating budget
- e. \$4,800 is matching funds for a LCHIP grant to restore the town hall stairs.

Motion by Peter White to reimburse Mae Bradshaw in the amount of \$413.25 for the expense of the event held in October. Seconded by Elizabeth Sanborn. All in Favor.

Motion by Gail Hughes to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. Seconded by David Choate. All in Favor.

It was noted that the meeting minutes that were earlier voted on had the date of November 9, 2021 and the meeting was for January 13, 2022.

Motion by Peter White to amend the meeting minutes to reflect the date of January 13, 2022. Seconded by Elizabeth Sanborn. All in Favor.

IV. Demolition Review Committee Update and Rye Advocates Update

Member Choate reported that the Demolition Review Committee had one application from Mr. Caswell for 280 Wallis Road. The building is more than 50 years old and the roof replacement is more than 500 square feet. The shed roof that is being added to the back of the building will provide more living space but will not be visible from the road. The Demolition Review Committee recommended that the permit be issued.

Member Choate expressed his concern regarding the ZBA issuing variances on historical properties. He had attended the ZBA meeting where they were reviewing a teardown on 1595 Ocean Blvd. He was told he could not speak about the issue because he was not an abutter; however, the ZBA voted to allow him to speak. He tried to give the historic preservation perspective about how the goal is to raise awareness of historic houses. He commented that if the ZBA keeps granting variances, there is no point in having any historic groups in town. He asked Selectman King if he would look into whether there is a state statute that allows only the applicant and the abutters to speak at these hearings.

Member Choate continued that the ZBA also reviewed a teardown application for the property at 60 Wentworth Road, which will be coming before the Demolition Review Committee soon.

Member Bradshaw spoke about the rights of a quasi-judicial board such as the ZBA. She noted that if the Heritage or any other board has strong interest in a property, they could send a letter of opinion to the board or commission that is hearing the issue. It should be mutual respect between the boards to consider all opinions. She also talked about the appeal process. When an appeal goes before the ZBA anyone may speak to the issue. It doesn't have to be an abutter. An appeal would go to superior court.

Chair Walsh pointed out that the Heritage Commission and the Demolition Review Committee don't have the power to delay or stop anything, as they are just an advisory board. It had been mentioned previously that boards and commissions in other towns have written warrant articles to increase their authorities. He noted that they have missed this election cycle, but if this was something that they wanted to pursue, they should put together a subcommittee for a brief period to develop some ideas and thoughts of what would be adequate for this commission to have in terms of authority. A warrant article could be drafted to put before the voters next year.

Member Bradshaw stated that this really starts with the Heritage's chapter in the Master Plan. She recommended that it would be helpful if the Commission studied the current civic section of the Master Plan and come back with ideas of how that could be strengthened. She pointed out that they have a large chapter. Since the Master Plan is being revised, this is the right time to at a look at it.

Chair Walsh agreed and stated that the homework for the Commission would be to review the heritage chapter and civic section of the Master Plan. At next month's meeting they will have an in-depth discussion as to the direction of the Commission and start to develop a plan.

Member Bradshaw explained that the Heritage Commission will not have to write a warrant article. They will make recommended changes on their section of the Master Plan. It will then go through "Rules and Regs". "Rules and Regs" will then write the changes that go before the voters.

Member Choate reported that Rye Advocates have not met in the last couple of months, but plan to resume soon.

V. Fundraising Subcommittee Update
Tabled

Old Business:

VI. Pay Invoice: House Plaque (Timberline Signs Co)

Chair Walsh presented the Commission with two invoices from Timberline Sign for the house plaque project. The signs were for the William Mays House and the John R Holbrook Sailmaker House.

Motion by Elizabeth Sanborn to pay the invoices in the total amount of \$130.00 to Timberline Sign. Seconded by Peter White. All in Favor.

There was discussion regarding the progress of getting the list of plaques that have been issued so far. Chair Walsh explained that he has not heard back from Timberline yet.

VII. Gazebo

Member Sanborn reported that she contacted the School Superintendent Sal Petralia. He contacted Portsmouth High School. Ms. Richen from Portsmouth High asked for all the details and seemed delighted with the project; however, the head of Tech Ed said they would not be able to do it. They referred the Commission to Port City Makerspace. Member Sanborn said that she would go to Port City Makerspace to see what it is about.

Member Herlihy stated that Bud Jordan said he could do the restoration for \$3,000. Member Herlihy will reach out to Bud.

Treasurer White stated that the Commission has \$6,100 earmarked for the Gazebo project and \$5,300 in unrestricted. He suggested that they could use some of their unrestricted funds if the job exceeded the \$6,100. He recommended that the Commission does not let money be a barrier for getting the job done. He liked Member Herlihy's idea of having Bud Jordan do the work.

VIII. Fundraising/Outreach 2022

There was discussion about doing an annual fundraiser. Member Sanborn recommended listing some of the past projects the funds have been used for. Treasurer White talked about the cost of the mailer and recommended that they use their funds to proceed. Last year's fund raiser cost \$800 for printing and \$600 for postage. They received 45 to 50 responses. He pointed out that this is the 10-year anniversary as a Commission. There was discussion on focusing the fundraiser on the front circular staircases. Treasurer White will do a draft of the mailer and send it out to the other Commission members, so they can have it ready to go out by mid-March or early April. Member Sanborn suggested having the mailer coincide with an article in Rye Magazine. That way people will be anticipating the arrival of the flyer. For the April Rye Magazine addition, the deadline for an article is February 28th. Chair Walsh will get an article submitted by the deadline.

After further discussion, it was decided to do a letter targeting the people that have responded in the last few years.

IX. Town Hall Monumental Windows Update

Member Bradshaw read the terms of the contract as follows:

- a. Work shall be done as per the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the treatment of historic properties.
- b. Restoration of nine windows at \$1,466 each for a total of \$13,194.
- c. Restoration of one window at \$1,320 each for a total of \$1,320.
- d. Restoration of one arched window in the steeple for \$400.
- e. Total man hours 50 at \$40.00 – total of \$2,000.
- f. Staging \$2,000
- g. Total \$18,914**

Sum of the window sills need to be replaced, restored or refinished:

- h. Total man hours 20 at \$40.00 – total of \$800.
- i. Total project 19,714**

Member Bradshaw recommended putting language in the contract that the total project will not exceed \$20,000. The project will be paid for from a 50/50 split between The Friends of Town Hall and the Heritage Commission.

Member Bradshaw also recommended that the work should begin on or before March 1st and be completed on or before June 1, 2022.

**Motion by Elizabeth Sanborn that the contract be written with language as reviewed.
Seconded by Gail Hughes. All in Favor.**

X. Pulpit Rock Tower Discussion (as a Board)

Meeting to be scheduled with Patty Weathersby in March or April

New Business:

XI. Rye Signage 2023 (Forming a Subcommittee)

Chair Walsh explained that Alex Herlihy would like to develop a signage subcommittee for the 400th Anniversary Celebration. He is looking for two people from each of the Heritage Commission, Historic District Commission and Historic Society to join the 2023 Historic Signage Subcommittee. They will be doing research for historic signage for around town.

The subcommittee will:

- Research historical signs from other towns.
 - Size, fonts, subject matter, etc.
- Research sites in town that would be appropriate for a Historical sign placement.
- Research grant and fund-raising opportunities for the project.
 - Partnerships with business owners, etc.

Final Approval would go to the HDC for the district and to the Select Board.

Member Herlihy asked Chair Walsh to send out an e-mail to all members of the Heritage Commission asking for anyone who is interested in joining the subcommittee to contact Alex Herlihy.

XII. Recommendations: Two Alternate for RHC - Tim Durkin and Karen Nelson

Motion by Phil Walsh to make a recommendation to the Select Board to appoint Tim Durkin and Karen Nelson as alternates for the Heritage Commission. Seconded by Peter White. All in Favor.

- **Next Meeting: March 3rd at 5:30 PM Town Hall**

ADJOURNMENT

Motion By Peter Walsh to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 PM. Seconded by Elizabeth Sanborn. All in Favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dyana F. Ledger