

# **TOWN OF RYE – HERITAGE COMMISSION MEETING**

**Thursday, May 3, 2018  
6:30 p.m. – Rye Town Hall**

***Members Present:* Acting Chair Rich Davis, Peter White, Mae Bradshaw, James Tegeder, Selectmen's Rep Keriann Roman, Alternates Gail Hughes, Elizabeth Sanborn and Anne Richter-Arnold**

## **I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

Acting Chair Davis called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **II. Seating of Alternates**

Anne Richter-Arnold was seated for Alex Herlihy. Gail Hughes was seated for Bev Giblin.

## **III. Approval of Minutes – April 5, 2018**

- **Tabled**

## **IV. Reports:**

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

Member White reported that the Heritage Commission, as of April 30<sup>th</sup>, has \$13,182 in its checking account with \$9,992 of that being restricted to Town Hall related expenses. The Commission has 94% of the budget available for the remainder of 2018.

**Motion by Mae Bradshaw to accept the Treasurer's Report for April. Seconded by James Tegeder. All in favor.**

- **Fundraisers – Update Spring Cruise**

Member Bradshaw noted that an email was received from Chair Giblin confirming that the date for the cruise will be Monday, June 18<sup>th</sup>. The cruise is being held on the Thomas Loughton from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. The goal of the Commission is to sell 250 tickets for the cruise.

### **Discussion on Promotional Ideas:**

- Cruise to be posted on the Seacoast Community Online Calendar with link for online ticket purchase through town's website.
- Sell tickets and merchandise at the Historical Museum on Memorial Day, as it will be holding an open house and trolley tour.
- Flyers/Poster of cruise to be posted at Town Hall
- Flyer for cruise to be posted in the next Rye Magazine issue.
- Link on Facebook page for online ticket purchases for cruise.
- Post on the town's website that merchandise is available to purchase at the Town Hall.

### **● Window Workshop**

Member Bradshaw noted that the window workshop required that participants bring their own window so they did not attend the workshop. The Heritage Commission is now on the NH Preservation Alliance's mailing list to receive information on future events they may be offering.

### **● Town Hall Painting Status**

Selectman Roman noted that bids are due May 10<sup>th</sup>. As of this date, the Town has received one bid. There have been several calls with one additional person visiting Town Hall to take a look at the building. It is anticipated that there will be more bids received over the next week. At the May 14th Select Board meeting the bids will be opened and a decision will be made based on costs and recommendations.

Member Bradshaw noted that there were three detailed applications received for the Town Hall study. She asked for a copy of the applications as the Historic District Commission Chair. She reviewed the applications and researched the firms. All three firms are excellent.

Member White asked if there is any idea how much money will be above the grant funds allowed for the study.

Member Bradshaw commented that she is not sure.

Member White noted that the Heritage Commission has \$10,000 available in its fund to apply judiciously.

Member Bradshaw stated that one thing that struck her about the applications was that two of the firms were going to take three months to complete and one was going to take six months to complete. It seemed to her that the one that was going to take six months was going to do a lot more of the project kind of analysis. That is probably why it was going to take the extra three months. She would be very pleased to see one of the ones that can do it in three months do it. If a different kind of report is needed in the future, funds may be available from the Certified Local Government Program.

### **● Other Projects Update**

**Denis Lipman, 484 Brackett Road**, spoke to the Commission about the idea of putting out a brochure about the Town Hall, which was discussed at the previous Heritage Commission meeting. He noted that since that meeting he has spoken with Alex Herlihy from the Historical Society regarding information and facts about the Town Hall. They have also been working on

trying to get some pictures of the building for the outside cover of the brochure. He reviewed concepts for the brochure.

There was discussion on the cost of the printing for 1000 brochures.

Mr. Lipman explained that he is doing this because it is good PR for the Town Hall and will help to build support for keeping the building. He would like the residents to feel a connection to the building and to understand that it has a function and purpose in the Town.

Member Bradshaw asked if the brochures would be ready by July 4<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Lipman replied that they could be ready.

**Another note on painting:**

Member Bradshaw commented that the shutters on the building will probably be a separate piece from the painting. A grant proposal may actually be needed to do that shutters. She continued that there was some feeling that the shutters didn't have to go back on. She spoke with Peter Michaud, NH Preservation Alliance, and he confirmed that the shutters are authentic. Everything in 1830 was with shutters. A grant for the shutters may be something that the commission takes on.

**V. Phil Walsh – Request to be an alternate**

**Phil Walsh, 13 Whitehorse Drive**, spoke to the commission in regards to his interest in becoming an alternate member on the Heritage Commission.

**Motion by Mae Bradshaw to approve Phil Walsh as an alternate member. Seconded by Peter White. All in favor.**

**VI. Public Comments**

**Peter Crawford, 171 Brackett Road**, stated that it is good news on the painting. It sounds like it is not a matter of "if" it happens, it is now a matter of who will be doing it. He commented that apparently the bids for the Historical Structures report have been opened. He asked about the status.

Selectman Roman commented that she assumes it is going on the Select Board's next meeting agenda for May 14<sup>th</sup>.

Alternate Hughes asked what money has been set aside and approved for the Historic Structures report.

Member Bradshaw explained that they have a grant for \$11,000. The budget that came forward for 2018 included up to the \$31,000 in total.

Alternate Hughes asked what would happen if the proposals came in higher than the \$31,000. Member Bradshaw replied that the Heritage Commission has restricted funds in the amount of \$9,000 that could be used for the report.

Mr. Crawford noted that the Town could also decide to take money from a different account. Once there is some money allocated for a particular purpose that can be increased. The Town just cannot make up a new purpose that doesn't have any money in it now. He further explained the Town cannot exceed the total budget; however, money from a different line item that is not going to be spent could be used.

## **VII. Other Business**

### **• Graveyard Projects**

Member Tegeder noted that he will be contacting the NH Old Graveyard Association to see if they would be available to hold a graveyard event in October. The Association teaches how to clean and maintain the tombstones. In the past, the cub scouts and boy scouts have attended the event and enjoyed learning about graveyard preservation.

There was some discussion on how to build community involvement for the events held by the Heritage Commission.

### **• Parsonage Apartments**

Member Bradshaw stated that the Heritage Commission should get on board with the Parsonage Apartments. Marty Chapman from The Housing Partnership has informed the Selectmen that it is not worth it to him, with only a five year lease, to improve or do anything with the building. The Housing Partnership will not be renewing their lease when it expires in 2019. The question is what is going to happen to this historic property. She continued that she thinks there is a greater sense now that there is going to be a charrette for the town buildings in the center of town. The charrette was voted down at the town vote in March; however, other groups can pay for it.

Selectman Roman explained that the Town has to be involved in order for Plan NH to come out to do the charrette. The support of the Select Board and the Town is needed; however, the Town cannot give resources. There was a discussion at the last Select Board meeting regarding how the Town can be in support of it but have the charrette done privately. They are looking at ways to do the charrette and have the Selectmen support it but not give any resources. At the moment, there is a sense of not wanting to give up the Parsonage property. The problem is that it is in really bad shape.

Member Bradshaw stated that part of the Heritage Commission's function is to save buildings that are owned by the Town that are historic and the Parsonage is a historic property. Part of the issue that this Heritage Commission has had, and others in the State, is that it turns into a little bit of a battle between the Selectmen and the Heritage Commission, which it should not be. There should be a partnership between the Heritage Commission, Selectmen and the public because private donations are needed, as well as public funds to preserve these properties. She reiterated that the Heritage Commission's job is to maintain properties and bring them to their best use.

Member White noted that the Commission has raised well over \$25,000 since they have been doing their fundraising. The Commission has disbursed at least \$15,000 in the proper context over the last four or five years.

Selectman Roman commented that the charrette will help the Town figure out what the Parsonage could be used for. She continued that Mr. Chapman from The Housing Partnership had contractors review the property and in order to make the building useable it would be \$550,000. That was for The Housing Partnership's purposes. Having the charrette and finding out what the property could be used for might affect that cost. There was also discussion on keeping affordable housing in the center of town. There might be a way to use part of the building for something else and use part of it for affordable housing in order to get the benefit of The Housing Partnership's money into the building, which Mr. Chapman was open to.

Member Bradshaw pointed out it is Town property. The Town needs space and this is the center of town. It is a space that might be needed by the Library for expansion someday. It is a space that could easily accommodate the needs of a number of departments that are operating in the existing Town Hall. There are a lot of possibilities for the property. The costs that were given to renovate it are only for it being used as a residence. She pointed out that centers of towns have stores and places people can walk to. Rye does not have any of that in the center of town. She is not sure what the big deal is about leaving Workforce Housing in the center of Rye.

Selectman Roman noted that it is going to be a lot of money just to bring the building up to some sort of standard in order to use it for anything. That money has to come from somewhere. There is a big concern about the cost, how to keep that town property and make use of it.

Member Bradshaw stated that the Parsonage could qualify for the National Registry of Historic Places. The exterior of the building still has enough intact that an application to put it on the national register would open the door to funding and tax credits. She noted that the Certified Local Government Program is an avenue to getting a steady, repeatable source of funds on an annual basis for projects. No one expects that the town citizens are going to be able to restore and maintain historic buildings. The State and the federal programs are there to help. That is what the Heritage Commission should be doing.

Selectman Roman stated that the Select Board and the Heritage Commission have an underlying common goal, which is to keep that property and make use of it. That should be done and pursued together. If the Select Board is open to what the Heritage Commission is saying, and the Heritage Commission is open to what the Select Board is saying, a compromise will be found somewhere in the middle. The charrette will help that along.

Member Bradshaw stated that the Heritage Commission should look at what it would take to get the Parsonage on the Federal Registry.

#### **Next Meeting**

- **June 7<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m., Rye Town Hall**

#### **Adjournment**

**Motion by Rich Davis to adjourn at 7:58 p.m. Seconded by James Tegeder. All in favor.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dyana F. Ledger