

**RYE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**Thursday, May 28, 2020**

**2:00 p.m. – via ZOOM**

***Present: Chair Mae Bradshaw, Karen Stewart, Tom King, Kaitlyn Coffey, David Choate, and Phil Winslow***

***Others Present: Kate Drago, Town of Rye Administrative Assistant; Jack Farrell, Star Island Facilities Director via Telephone.***

**I. Attestation**

**Statement by Kate Drago:**

As Administrative Assistant of Rye, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of 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:

- a) *Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or 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 the access to contemporaneously listen and if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone # 646-558-8656 Meeting ID: 839-6950-1755 Password: 368576 or by clicking on the following website address: [www.zoom.com](http://www.zoom.com) Meeting ID: 839-6950-1755 Password: RyeNH03870

- b) *Providing public noted of the necessary information of accessing the meeting:*

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. Instructions have also been provided on the Town of Rye Website at [www.town.rye.nh.us](http://www.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 anybody has a problem, please call 603-964-5523 or e-mail at [kdrago@town.rye.nh.us](mailto:kdrago@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 are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

**Attendance by Roll Call:**

- Mae Bradshaw, Chair
- Karen Stewart
- Kaitlyn Coffey
- Tom King
- David Choate
- Phil Winslow

**II. Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance**

In lieu of the Pledge of Allegiance, Chair Bradshaw asked the members take a moment of silence in memory of the people who have been lost in the past four months due to the pandemic.

Chair Bradshaw seated Kaitlyn Coffey for James Tegeder and Tom King for Charles Hoyt.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

**1. Meeting Minutes, April 16, 2020, via Zoom**

**Motion by David Choate to approve the Meeting Minutes of April 16, 2020 as written.**

**Seconded by Karen Stewart.**

**Roll Call Vote: Mae Bradshaw – Aye; Karen Stewart – Aye; David Choate – Aye;**

**Kaitlyn Coffey – Aye; Tom King – Aye; Phil Winslow; Aye**

**Motion Passed.**

**2. Meeting Minutes, February 3, 2020, via Zoom**

**Motion by David Choate to approve the Meeting Minutes of February 3, 2020 as written.**

**Seconded by Tom King.**

**Roll Call Vote: Mae Bradshaw – Aye; Karen Stewart – Aye; David Choate – Aye;**

**Kaitlyn Coffey – Aye; Tom King – Aye; Phil Winslow; Aye**

**Motion Passed.**

**IV. Star Island Public Hearing**

**The purpose of the Hearing is to receive public input on Star Island construction on the waste treatment plant and the Brookfield building on Star Island, Isles of Shoals, located in the Historic District.**

**Jack Farrell, Star Island Facilities Director**, addressed the Commission regarding the Brookfield Marine Lab. A lot of the proposed work is in response to Building Inspector Rowell's review last year. Mr. Rowell had an issue with the bleachers that face the harbor and the lack of a stairway, instead of just seats. The proposal includes three sets of narrow stairways; one in the middle and one on either side of the bleachers, similar to what is seen in a high school gymnasium. There is a two-step height (58 inches) on the bleachers and there will be a one-step height on the stairways.

There is also a ramp on the east side of the building that is too steep to be functional, the proposal is to move it to the west side of the building. They have identified a place on the west side, for a ramp or a walkway, leaving the Brookfield porch at the rear corner (where the closets and the bathrooms are located), parallel to the tennis courts until it reaches the existing grade going up to the hotel. This will make it flatter, so that it is wheelchair accessible. Also, it will have an end area that is more easily joined to the existing wheelchair ramp system that is around the hotel and cottages. It is a five-foot wide, thirty-eight-foot ramp. It will be screened underneath and the rail system will be pressure-treated posts and cable railings like what is on the hotel. This will be a major improvement, as it will be more functional and will connect with a good system that they have underway to have improved access all around the complex.

These are the major proposals, in addition to completing what was discussed with the Historic District Commission last year; being the railings and replacing pilings underneath the deck, in order to cover up the framing, steelwork and the concrete. This is a system of two-inch boards placed vertically with a half inch space in between. It allows airflow under the buildings, but it is also almost impossible to see through it. The proposal is to leave it just pressure treated and not to paint it. This will reduce the need for repainting every year or so. It will just weather and turn a gray tone.

Chair Bradshaw asked if there were any further questions from the Commissioners.  
There were none.

Chair Bradshaw asked if there were any comments from the public.  
There were none.

Chair Bradshaw asked for a motion to approve the changes.

**Motion by Phil Winslow to approve the changes as outlined by Jack Farrell. Seconded by Karen Stewart.**

**Roll Call Vote: Phil Winslow; Aye; Karen Stewart – Aye; Kaitlyn Coffey – Aye; Tom King – Aye; David Choate – Aye; Mae Bradshaw – Aye;**

**Motion Passed.**

Chair Bradshaw told Mr. Farrell that the certificate of approval will be sent within the next few days.

Mr. Farrell addressed the Commission in regards to the waste treatment plant. He explained the treatment plant underwent a major improvement project last year. The changes that are being proposed now are the results of the experience they had with the system during the year. They took the things that they learned and used the engineer's suggestions to make the system improvements; primarily to the process efficiency, which will help along the road to the ultimate goal of creating effluences that can be reused on the island, instead of being deposited back into the ocean. The requirements to do this has a very high level of scrutiny of the finished effluence product. The results last year didn't get them to that level. So, they will be working a lot of small changes. The goal will not happen this year because they will not be running the system this year; however, they are getting ready to do it next year. All of the proposed improvements are in conjunction with their DES permit, to build the facility and to continue to manage its operation.

One other item that they are proposing is targeted to reducing the smell of the process. They are proposing to add carbon filters on top of the main processing chambers. There are presently stacks there. The carbon filters will be placed on the stacks. Presently, they just vent into the air. The replaceable carbon filters are designed to scrub out some of the sulfuric nitrogen smells.

Some of the other proposed changes are to improve operators' safety, such as enhanced railings and stairs, by replacing the deteriorating pressured treated material with aluminum.

***Note: Member Charles Hoyt joined the meeting by telephone.***

Mr. Farrell when on to explain that the system has more sludge than the designer anticipated. So, they need to have a better way of removing the sludge from the waste stream, in order to make the system work efficiently. They are proposing to install two sludge waste tanks, which are eight-feet high. These are polyethylene tanks that stand vertically and will be placed on the ground beside the processing chamber. This will allow the backwash from the reactors to settle out, so that the sludge can be removed instead of returning backwash water back to the system laden with sledge.

There are some other incidental items, such as the bases to lift the pumps and equipment out of the tanks, and new pumps and controls. These are all mostly invisible; they are either under the water or in the control room.

Another major improvement has to do with the sledge that comes out of the reactor. They are proposing to replace five of the existing sledge holding tanks with three new tanks. Three of the five tanks are fiberglass and are cracked. These haven't been used in quite some time. The

other two are polyethylene tanks that are located up by the barn (uphill from the treatment plant). The three new holding tanks are similar to the sledge backwash holding tanks. They are eight feet high and six feet in diameter and stand vertically. The waste goes into the tank and the water is separated from the solids. The water goes back into the system to be retrieved again and the sledge gets deposited into the drying beds.

The final part of the proposal is that they presently have a series of drying beds that are pressure treated open boxes. They are lined with rubber and sand filtration material. The beds look like raised flower beds and are about four feet off the ground. The slurry that comes out as sledge sits in there and the water filters out through the sand and finds its way back into the treatment process. The sledge dries out and then it can be composted. These drying beds are part of the original treatment plant and are in bad shape. So as a part of this initiative, they are planning to rebuild all of the drying bed and to relocate them to an area along the stone wall. To relocate them to that area will make the process a lot easier because that is where the sledge settling tanks are located. There will be less pumping because most of it can happen by gravity. In the process of moving the drying beds, it will open up the area near the composting bay, which will give more room to deal with the growing composting project. Over the past five years, they have gone from transporting their sledge and food waste to the landfill to compost it, to using it as a soil enhancement on the island. This is also a part of the DES permit that is annually monitored by DES.

The tanks are fully enclosed, sealed units; unlike the old system that had open vats. There were also improvements to the fencing and railings around the area last year that makes it extremely hard to get into the area.

Chair Bradshaw asked if there were any further questions from the Commissioners. There were none.

Chair Bradshaw asked if there were any comments from the public. There were none.

Chair Bradshaw asked for a motion to approve the changes.

**Motion by Karen Stewart to approve the changed as outlined by Jack Farrell. Seconded by Charles Hoyt.**

**Roll Call Vote: Phil Winslow; Aye; Karen Stewart – Aye; Kaitlyn Coffey – Aye; Charles Hoyt – Aye; David Choate – Aye; Mae Bradshaw – Aye;**

**Motion Passed.**

Chair Bradshaw told Mr. Farrell that the certificate of approval will be sent out as well.

**V. Renovations – Karen Stewart**

Member Choate stated that the application was too light to read. He also asked if there was a time period that the application needed to be filed with the Commission prior to being on the agenda.

Chair Bradshaw explained that because this was just for a modification, they didn't know if they had to file anything and also the office was closed which made it hard to access the application. This is a small modification on a larger project that was already approved.

There was further discussion regarding the process and procedures and putting the application on the website.

**Karen Stewart, speaking as a resident of 546 Washington Road**, explained that they were planning to restore their barn. After having builders look at the barn, it has been determined that there are issues with the structural integrity and the barn cannot be saved. So, they are going to have to rebuild the barn. They plan to rebuild it in-kind to the exact specifications that were approved a couple of years ago by the HDC. One exception is the barn door on the second floor. They would like to replace the door panel with a window, but it would be the same shape and size as the door. The other exception is that they are planning to add a mud room so the window and the door on the north wall of the barn will need to be moved 6 – 7 inches to the right to accommodate that.

There was discussion regarding the grading and the height of the structure. It was agreed the new plans have no substantive changes to what was approved a couple of years ago. There have been some optical changes to the front with moving the windows and door.

Chair Bradshaw asked if there were any further questions from the Commissioners. There were none.

Chair Bradshaw asked if there were any comments from the public. There were none.

Chair Bradshaw asked for a motion to approve the changes.

**Motion by Kaitlyn Coffey to approve the changed as outlined. Seconded by Charles Hoyt.**

**Roll Call Vote: Phil Winslow; Aye; Kaitlyn Coffey – Aye; Charles Hoyt – Aye; David Choate – Aye;**

**Mae Bradshaw – Aye;**

**Motion Passed.**

**VI. Vote on By-laws**

Chair Bradshaw asked if there were any suggestions, corrections or questions from the Commission.

There were none.

**Motion by Charles Hoyt to approve the by-laws as presented. Seconded by Karen Stewart.**

**Roll Call Vote: Phil Winslow; Aye; Karen Stewart – Aye; Kaitlyn Coffey – Aye; Charles Hoyt – Aye; David Choate – Aye; Mae Bradshaw – Aye;**

**Motion passed.**

Chair Bradshaw asked Kate Drago if she would post the new by-laws on the website and send the members of the Commission the final copy.

**VII. Old Business – None**

**VIII. New Business**

Member Choate noted an item on the Planning Board's June 9<sup>th</sup> agenda. It is in regards to Eversource trimming trees near the power lines on Washington Road. He expressed concern because in other towns this has been a disaster.

Selectman Winslow stated that there were problems in the past; however, Eversource is now required to notify the property owners prior to cutting.

Chair Bradshaw noted that Eversource has to come before the HDC for approval prior to cutting in the District.

Member Choate offered to send Eversource a notice stating that they need to get approval from the HDC.

Chair Bradshaw suggested that the HDC should send the letter. It was agreed.

**Next Meeting: TBA**

**Adjournment**

**Motion by Phil Winslow to adjourn the meeting at 3:18 p.m. Seconded by Karen Stewart.**

**Roll Call Vote: Phil Winslow; Aye; Karen Stewart – Aye; Kaitlyn Coffey – Aye; Charles Hoyt – Aye; David Choate – Aye; Mae Bradshaw – Aye;**

**Motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted, Dyana F. Ledger