

**TOWN OF RYE – Historic District Commission
MEETING
Wednesday, March 09, 2021
5:30 PM
Rye Town Hall**

Present: Chair Kaitlyn Coffey, James Tegeder, David Choate, Alternate Lydia Tilsley, Selectman's Rep Tom King

I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Coffey called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m. and led the pledge of allegiance.

II. Seating of Alternates

Chair Coffey Seated Alternate Tilsley for Member Smith.

III. Approval of Minutes – 2/09/22

The following was noted: Page 2 The two members of the public were Mary & John Mitchell.

Motion by David Choate to approve the minutes of February 9, 2022 as amended. Seconded by Lydia Tilsley. All in Favor.

IV. 562 Washington Road Application – Public Hearing

John and Mary Mitchell presented the project, which consisted of stairs and a fence.

Note: Member Karen Stewart Arrived at 5:53

Mr. Mitchell reported that he will be using all wood for the project and that he will be replacing the stairs and the railings, but will be keeping the landing.

Motion by David Choate to approve the front porch and stairs as presented. Seconded by James Tegeder. All in Favor.

Mr. Mitchell showed the commission members where he would like to put the fence. He explained that it is all about privacy. He talked about being able to see the dispatcher's computer screen in the Safety Building from his back porch. He showed a picture of the fence behind the Safety Building. It is a white vinyl fence with a lattice top. He stated that is what he would like to do at 562 Washington. There would be a gate with an arbor. The height of the fence would be 5'7".

There was heavy discussion regarding the use of vinyl within the Historic District. It was pointed out that the fence behind the Safety Building is on town owned property and was not approved by the Historic District Commission.

Motion by David Choate to approve the fence as proposed in the drawing with the stipulation that it must be made of wood. Seconded by Karen Stewart. All in Favor.

V. Vice Chair Appointment

After a short discussion regarding the responsibilities of the Vice-Chair, there was a motion to appoint James Tegeder to the position.

Member Tegeder was not sure that he would be able to handle the position, due to his children's schedules for the summer. It was decided that he would try it until May and the position could be revisited at that time.

Motion by David Choate to appoint James Tegeder to the position of vice-chair. Seconded by Karen Stewart. All in Favor.

Motion by David Choate to approve Karen Stewart's reappointment for another term. Seconded by Tom King. All in favor.

VI. CLG 2022 Grant Intent Updates

Note: the audio in this section was intermittent.

Chair Coffey did a quick update on the two CLG Grant intents.

Motion by Kaitlyn Coffey that Alternate Bradshaw is able to seek reimbursement of \$100 for the NAPC Grant. Seconded by James Tegeder. All in favor.

The second grant was for the assistance on the planning of the use for the Town Hall building. It is the \$20,000 grant that was approved by the Budget Committee this year. It is still in the first stages; Alternate Bradshaw has just filed the intent and she will have some more updates by the next meeting.

VII. Temporary Sign Update

Chair Coffey read a description from Ms. Hawkins regarding the difference between temporary and movable signs. Temporary signs include real estate signs and banners for advertising, which are usually installed for a limited amount of time. A movable sign, like an A-frame sign, is often used for advertising by businesses. These can be regulated by zoning. Some municipalities choose to regulate them and others treat them like furniture and they are not regulated. If the commission does not wish to allow a movable or plastic sign in Rye, it is best to modify the sign ordinance to indicate that. If they do not wish to have movable signs in the designated Historic District, it can be handled with an amendment to the zoning ordinance. If they want to allow moveable signs, Ms. Hawkins recommends discouraging the use of plastic and to encourage the use of framed, wooden chalkboard signs.

Member Choate suggested that the first step would be to circulate the sign section of the Zoning Ordinance. If there are any restrictions, that is probably where they should go. After that it would have to go to the Rules and Regulations Committee for next year's town meeting.

Selectman King pointed out that the library does not have to follow the zoning ordinances because it is a town facility.

Chair Coffey wondered if it would be worth talking to them to see if they would look into something more historically appropriate. She pointed out that they have a lot in the works with their planning for the new common. She acknowledged that they clearly have a need to advertise to the public.

Selectman King suggested that the Historic Commission should come up with a design that looks better than what is being used. The signs would not be so offensive and they would have consistency. He suggested something made of wood that is heavy enough so it won't blow away.

The members will start looking at sign designs and will bring ideas back to the next meeting.

VIII. Guidelines Updates - Mailing to District

Note: the audio in this section was intermittent.

Chair Coffey reported that she has a draft of a mailing to go out to the District. She noted that they have budgeted for it. She recommends that a postcard be sent out. This mailing is to ask the residents to review the guidelines and give feedback, prior to having the guidelines printed. She suggested that the Commission should host a small reception when the guidelines are completed.

IX. Application Updates

Note: the audio in this section was intermittent.

Chair Coffey stated that she, Member Choate, and Alternate Tilsley have formed a subcommittee to work on developing the PDF for the application.

She talked about having a Technical Review Committee to review the application, in order to determine if there is a need for the Commission to hold a public hearing on the project. They will not be able to change their process until the zoning ordinance is changed.

If a large project comes before the Commission, they can hold a work session and talk about it. They just can't talk about it in emails. The Technical Review Committee can not talk about what they think of the application. They can only state if they think it is complete or not.

The guidelines will have to go through the Rules and Regulations Committee. They start meeting in the fall. There was talk about updating the Historic District handbook and having the guidelines being an appendix.

X. Master Plan Updates - Mission & Values

Note: the audio in this section was intermittent.

Chair Coffey suggested that next year the Commission could go after a grant to hire help in rewriting their portion of the Master Plan.

Member Choate stated that the Heritage Commission is reviewing the Civic Life Section of the Master Plan and is meeting on the 24th at 5:30. (Master Plan; Chapter 9.)

Selectman King reported that the \$20,000 for the work on the Master Plan was taken out of the budget for this year, so he doesn't really know how much work will be done. They were trying to finish the Visioning Chapter and get set up for next year's work.

XI. Candlelight Stroll Updates

Note: the audio in this section was intermittent.

Chair Coffey reported that the historic candlelight stroll is still in the preliminary stages. However, now that the Town got the approval for the 400th Anniversary Celebration, they can move forward with the plans.

Member Choate recommended having a committee to take on this project.

During the discussion Selectman King noted that they would have to get Select Board approval if the candlelight stroll would include the road being closed. However, if there was enough interest it could happen. Other ideas of how it could work on a smaller scale were discussed. There was a suggestion to start the first year small. There could possibly be a Christmas tree lighting in Parsons Field.

Member Tegeder reported that the Historical Society has a committee that is also working on preparations for the 400th anniversary.

There was also a suggestion to have the Candlelight Stroll in conjunction with the Christmas Parade, in order to have more attendance.

XII. Other Business

Note: the audio in this section was intermittent.

Member Stewart expressed concern regarding the earlier application for the privacy fence within the District. She pointed out that when she first moved to Rye with young children and a dog, she had a very hard time getting permission for a low picket fence. She pointed out the earlier application was for the property owner looking out, not the public looking in.

Member Tilsley stated that she looked in the guidelines before the meeting this evening. The guidelines are pretty clear that a fence that sets back in the side yard (even if it is visible to the street) is more tolerable than a fence in the front yard.

Selectman King stated that he would personally like to discourage privacy fences in the Historic District all together.

- **Next Meeting April 13, 2022 at 5:30**

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by David Choate adjourn at 7:12 p.m. Seconded by Karen Stewart. All in Favor.

Respectfully Submitted
Dyana F. Ledger