

The Parsonage Apartments Long Range Planning Committee

The Parsonage Apartment house was originally constructed in 1810 and is located within the Rye Historic District. Additions have been added to the West and South sides and a separate masonry carriage house has been converted to an apartment. There are 8 apartments within the two buildings.

The building was converted into tiny apartments in the 1940's for housing workers at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. Prior to being acquired by the Town, there had not been any major improvements to the property in over 50 years.

The Parsonage property came into Town possession in 1995 when the larger tract of land was purchased for remodeling and expanding the adjacent library. The Town operated the apartments until 1999 before entering into a long term lease agreement with The Housing Partnership (THP) to rent the apartments as affordable housing. THP is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing affordable housing in the seacoast area.

At the time of the lease, the Town received a Community Development Block Grant from the State Office of Planning which was combined with a loan for \$300,000 that was used for a modest rehabilitation of the property. THP has managed the property since then under a lease agreement that requires them to provide for general maintenance. The Town is responsible for all other maintenance and capital improvements. In the last two fiscal years the Town has replaced the roof, repaved the parking lot and replaced the boiler at a cost of \$33,640. An inspection of the building was conducted by Lassel Architects PA in 2015 and the report was presented to the Board of Selectmen on September 28, 2015. The report identified a number of interior and exterior repairs that need to be made in the near future, including a structural review of framing timbers that have insect and rot damage and making reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities.

The current lease with THP is due to expire in 2019. THP has indicated to the Town that although they wish to continue to provide affordable housing in Rye at the Parsonage, and given the repairs the building needs, the current arrangement is not fiscally prudent. They would like to either own the buildings or have a long term ground lease that would allow them to access government and non-profit grant funds as well as affordable loans to rehabilitate the building.

Charge

- The Board of Selectman have decided to establish a Parsonage Apartments Long Range Planning Committee to study and make a recommendation to the Board as to how to continue to provide quality affordable housing at the Parsonage and to rehabilitate the buildings in the most economical manner. Such recommendations may include continuing the lease with THP or another entity, selling the property with a possible deed restriction that the property remains affordable senior or workforce housing, or other recommendations that meet the above criteria as the committee sees fit.

- The Committee will report back to the Board of Selectmen on the process and the committee's recommendation for appropriate next steps for the Town to take, no later than October 14, 2016.
- The committee shall consist of not more than six members. Members shall be appointed by the Board of Selectmen for an initial term ending on December 31, 2016. Staff members may be appointed as non-voting members of the committee. It is the Selectmen's intent to sunset this committee after completion of its charge, unless the Selectmen vote to continue the committee.

The Parsonage Apartments Long Range Planning Committee is established on this date of March 28, 2016 by vote of the Board of Selectmen.

Town of Rye Board of Selectmen

Joseph G. Mills Jr., Chairman

Craig N. Musselman, Vice-Chairman

Priscilla V. Jenness, Selectman