

Heritage Commission

October 16, 2018

Draft Minutes

Members Present: John Merkle, Chairman, Julie Gilman, Pam Gjettum, Jay Myers, Maura Fay

Call Meeting to Order: John Merkle, Chairman, called meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the Wheelwright Room of the Exeter Town Office Building.

A resident who lives by the Rose Farm, came to the meeting, William Murphy. The board introduced themselves to him.

Business: John stated that the first discussion is about the consultant recommendations for Park/Cass Streets surveys. Julie told the commission that they got one response and it was from Lynn Monroe. The commission has a budget of \$20,000 for this project. Lynn does not know this and Julie stated this is something they can surprise her with. She gave a quote of \$20,000 to do it, with a note stating that this would really be a stretch. Julie said they have to meet with DHR to go over the extent of the project. Julie stated that the meeting has not yet been set up and she would be happy if someone other than herself would like to go or with her. Maura and John stated they would be available to go. Julie stated they would have to respond to Lynn Monroe. John asked if the commission would be waiting to hear back from DHR. Pam stated they would have to tell Lynn. Julie stated they would have to award her the grant and send her a letter and tell DHR who they have. Dave Sharpal will then set up the meeting with DHR. Maura then asked if the commission needed to vote on this since they only had one applicant. Julie stated that they probably should. Pam then made a motion to accept Lynn Monroe's application. Julie seconded. John asked if there was any further discussion. Julie stated that she will add that they only had one applicant response and she is a historical planner and they have worked with her before. John stated that she is on their list. He then stated with no further discussion, all were in favor and the motion accepted.

Julie suggested that the next agenda be the discussion of the Rose Farm demolition recommendations. John stated that they met out there approximately two weeks ago and the structures that are out there now, they looked at pretty much all of them. Some of them will be reused, but he is not sure as to what extent. The mobile homes, the commission has no jurisdiction over and they are going anyway. Some of the buildings were in such a state of disrepair, they were not worth trying to rehabilitate. Julie stated that they also did not find a cemetery. Pam also stated that there is no cemetery there. She stated that the piece of stone that was found is a hunk of concrete. Julie stated that Keith Patterson showed the commission the piece of stone that was shown to him and it was just broken concrete. There was no sign of anything. Pam also stated that there was never any family there either. Pam showed the commission pictures of the buildings that were going to be torn down. She liked the little house. John stated they talked about sitting down with them to see if they would consider saving the garage. He stated that because of the brick work, it is unique to the town. Julie stated that she has been going back and forth with Keith Patterson to find a date where they can have that conversation. She said that he told her they had thought about it and much like the garage on Franklin Street, using some piece of it for something. John stated that they will have equipment out there for maintain

properties. Julie stated she asked him about this and it is not a condo association. Maura stated that it is a homeowners association. She stated that they may or may not have their own maintenance equipment. They may hire someone to do it. John stated that the condition of the two buildings are good. Julie stated she was looking at their site plan and understands it is all engineered out, but she thinks a little bit more curve around the garage would be good.

Maura asked out of curiosity what would happen on a big project like this if human remains are found of some kind. There is no documented cemetery, but it has been used for so long. Julie stated the work would stop for a little while and she is not sure if the State would then get involved. John stated that the State would get involved if it was a real cemetery. Pam stated that there are lots and lots of family graves in the back. Maura again stated that she was just wondering what the process was if something was found. Julie stated that the Selectmen are the Cemetery Trustees and they would be involved in some fashion. If a cemetery or grave site is found, it is up to the Trustees or the property owner to reach out to any remaining family members if they can find them. If no one is found or if found they are not interested, then it becomes the property of the town. Julie stated they will be doing an archaeologist survey. Maura then asked what this involves. Julie stated it involves test pits. They pick different areas and dig down around six inches. Pam then stated that this is not where the local tribes hung out. They were down by Kimball Road. John stated that the commission will wait to hear from Julie.

Next is the discussion considering HDC's concerns about the former Ioka Theatre and sending out a letter. Julie stated there was a conversation per e-mail regarding what could be done about the Ioka. It had to be made an agenda item. Discussion was there was concern about the tree growing out of the roof and broken window. The HDC thought it would be better coming from the Heritage Commission whose mission is to preserve and protect the heritage of the town. Just a simple letter to Allen Lewis, the owner, telling him about the concerns. Julie has not written up a letter about this. She stated that the Fire Department is concerned about one corner of the building separating. The tree has been removed or at least cut. John then asked if the letter should come from the town. Julie stated that this commission is the town. She also stated that they have been unsuccessful trying to reach Mr. Lewis. Recently, there have been some parties interested in purchasing the Ioka, but they have not been able to get inside to even look at it. There is also some concern that the mold in there has gotten so bad that no one will want to go in. There have been two offers made and no response. Mr. Lewis will not let his people have the authority to do any discussion at all. He has been waiting for the town to come up with some idea of what can be a public/private partnership. John stated that it is too late for that. Julie stated that one of the offers was going to be mostly private, but have a public advantage and be open to public use occasionally. This letter is aimed at telling him we are still looking at it and want something done there. We are concerned as time goes by, we will lose the opportunity. Pam asked if this letter should be from the town attorney. Julie stated that it is not a health threat yet. Julie stated that she asked Doug about it and he thinks it is fine for now. Pam asked who should write this letter. Julie stated that someone can start it because they are talking about it here at the meeting and it is a mission to write this letter, it can be passed around electronically, as long as they vote on it to send together. Pam will start this letter and what are the points they want covered. Julie stated they are concerned about the state of the structure and damage that has occurred over time. The HDC thought this would be good coming from the Heritage Commission because they are not regulatory. John stated that it is in a Registered National Historic District and the Heritage Commission considers it contributing to the district and are concerned about its condition. Julie suggested putting in the commission's mission which is to preserve and promote. Julie stated that this letter should ask him to get in touch to see how they can help.

Other Business: John asked about Fall clean-up at the cemetery. Julie stated that she never organized anything. Pam will be having some volunteers clean-up the Gas House Cemetery instead. It is in terrible shape and Winter Street Cemetery looks very good. Pam stated that Saturday morning, she will have the Key Club and a group from the academy both working there. Pam then stated that when she went to get permission from Parks and Recreations, they did not know anything about a cemetery up there. Julie stated that if the commission wanted to do more work at the Winter Street Cemetery, they could put in for another grant.

Julie mentioned that the etching of the dam has been in place now for a couple of months. She found this out at a Selectmen's Meeting. Julie was wondering if the commission would be interested in doing a ribbon cutting. The members thought this would be a good idea. Julie will throw out some dates for this.

John told the commission that he has not called PEA yet about 15 Grove Street. They are planning on meeting there 10:30 am on Thursday morning. Pam stated that it is not particularly historic. John stated that he looked at it on line and architecturally, there is nothing historic about it.

John asked if there was any other business and there was not and he asked for a motion to adjourn. Pam made the motion and Julie seconded. All were in favor and meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick  
Recording Secretary