



Thursday, September 1, 2022

Community Development Department Conference Room, 7:00PM

Present: Frank Farmer (Alternate), Peter Griffin (Regular), Renee Mallett (Regular), Carol Pynn (Regular), Derek Saffie (Regular)

The meeting opened at 7:00PM with the pledge of allegiance and introduction of members.

Mr. Farmer was seated for Wendy Williams.

Dennis Senibaldi opened the discussion of the Town Hall project with an ask to the Commission that they make a decision on the direction of the project.

Mr. Griffin asked Mr. Senibaldi what a realistic figure would be to replace the clapboards and remediate moisture issues. Mr. Senibaldi replied that the cost should be approximately \$300,000.

Ms. Mallett stated that the total cost estimate provided by Mr. Senibaldi for replacing the clapboards is similar to Steve Bedard's inflation-adjusted estimate to restore the existing clapboards.

Ms. Mallett provided a brief summary of the Town Hall project for the public in attendance, including an overview of both of the options being considered. She also explained the LCHIP grant eligibility.

Heath Partington invited the Commission to attend the next Board of Selectmen meeting to give their recommendation for either restoring or replacing the Town Hall clapboards.

Mr. Farmer expressed that he did not see the benefit of any solutions that may only provide short-term alleviations of the paint and humidity issues.

Ms. Mallett asked Mr. Senibaldi if the \$300,000 estimate he quoted was the total estimate or in addition to the funds already allocated by CIP. Mr. Senibaldi responded that only \$25,000 has been allocated by CIP, which is negligible compared with the total cost of the project.

Mr. Senibaldi stated that his biggest issue with the LCHIP grant is that if it is applied for and not received then the project timeline will be pushed back even further, and the more time that passes the more costs will likely increase.

Mr. Griffin made a motion to recommend the appropriation of \$300,000 to re-clad the Town Hall and perform remediation recommendations outlined in Steve Bedard's report.

Ms. Pynn asked Mr. Griffin to amend his motion to include the building being re-cladded with in-kind materials. Mr. Griffin agreed to the amendment, and Mr. Farmer seconded.

Mr. Partington asked if the Town Hall could be resided with vinyl or any other material. In response to his question, Ms. Pynn asked Mr. Griffin to amend his motion to include the use of cedar for replacement trim and siding. Mr. Griffin agreed to the amendment, and Mr. Farmer seconded; the motion passed 5 - 0.

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Ms. Mallett opened discussion on the Master Plan. She expressed her opinion that the Master Plan should come from the residents rather than from the Commission itself. Additionally, she reiterated the Steering Committee's goal that the chapters be kept casual.

There was discussion of a draft Master Plan chapter from 2018. The discussion included which material, if any, should be moved to an appendix. The existing draft contains some detailed history and facts which may not be in line with the goal of concise and casual.

Ms. Pynn suggested there be more emphasis on preservation, and that the wording should be more forceful to protect and preserve historic assets. Ms. Mallett responded that there is little protection at state level for historic properties, and the Commission itself does not have the authority to prevent destruction or neglect of historic assets. Mr. Farmer related his experience of protecting the stone walls surrounding the Gage Lands by sending letters to abutters of the property to raise awareness. To that point, Ms. Mallett suggested the Master Plan focus on collaboration with property owners to raise awareness and protect historic assets. Mr. Griffin noted the goals in the draft chapter already include encouraging preservation and reuse of historic assets.

Mr. Griffin asked that Leonard Morrison's *Supplement to the History of Windham in New Hampshire* be added to the list of resources in the draft chapter. He also suggested noting that many of the resources can be found at the Nesmith Library.

Ms. Pynn asked if it would be too much to include the Historic / Cultural Resource List in the Master Plan. Ms. Mallett thought that the Commission could offer to include the list in an appendix.

Mr. Griffin asked Cynthia Finn if she had any insight as to how the Steering Committee will receive and evaluate draft chapters, to which Ms. Finn replied she did not know.

Ms. Finn asked that the NHDES statistics for Cobbetts Pond be updated from those given in the 2018 draft chapter.

Ms. Mallett thought the Conservation Commission may include some of the same information about lakes and ponds, but did not want to risk excluding the information from the HD/HC's chapter and have it left out of the Master Plan entirely.

Bob Coole suggested the town should inventory all existing historic assets. He expressed his opinion that the town administration has not been proactive enough with protecting and maintaining historic assets when they have been in a position to do so. As an example, he related the story of a damaged granite sign post which has not been repaired or replaced after being broken months ago. He asked if the Commission could consider an ordinance to force action by the town on damaged historic assets.

Mr. Griffin asked how Mr. Coole's comments could be included in the Master Plan. He suggested that town departments should consult with the Commission on the disposal and reuse of historic resources. Ms. Mallett suggested including Mr. Coole's comments as a goal for the town to pursue reusing damaged historic resources.

Ms. Mallett stated that the Commission should do more to promote and educate residents on historic resources.

Ms. Mallett informed the Commission that a draft of the HD/HC chapter is due by September 30th.

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After discussion, Mr. Griffin made a motion to develop a draft of the HD/HC Master Plan chapter to be posted on the town website by September 5th to solicit feedback from the public, and that draft be revised per feedback and presented at a public hearing on September 19th; seconded by Mr. Farmer, passed 5 - 0.

Ms. Mallett opened discussion on the 2023 budget.

Mr. Griffin will obtain an estimate for the cost of surveying the Governor Dinsmore wall site. He also reminded the Commission of previous votes to share the cost of a bronze plaque at Garaphelia Sylva and cover the cost of a bronze plaque commemorating Edward Searles' contributions on the Governor Dinsmore wall; these projects were only to be funded in 2022 if there were residual funds.

Ms. Mallett will increase the budget requests for signs and historic contractors if there are not sufficient funds from 2022 available to roll-over.

Mr. Saffie asked that funds to cover photography expenses be added to the 2023 budget.

Ms. Pynn made a motion to accept the minutes of the August 4th meeting; seconded by Mr. Farmer, passed 4 - 0, Mr. Griffin abstained.

Mr. Partington asked the Commission to locate historic photos to hang in the CDD meeting room.

Ms. Pynn gave a TRC update. The only matter of historic concern was the "Bowery Brae" cabin. In the latest plan for the property in the Village Center District on which the cabin sits, the cabin is not present. Karl Dubay had told Ms. Pynn that the cabin's condition was too deteriorated to relocate it. Ms. Pynn did inform Mr. Dubay that a demolition permit would need to be filed to tear down the cabin. Ms. Mallett will try to arrange a site walk to the cabin. Ms. Mallett will invite Mr. Dubay to a Commission meeting.

Mr. Farmer informed the Commission that both of the new Historic District signs have been delivered and he will ask Mr. Senibaldi to have them installed.

Mr. Farmer opened a discussion of the condition of the Armstrong house which, although under covenant by the DOT, has been neglected to the point that it is not likely to be saved. Ms. Mallett suggested that there may be historic pieces from the home which could be saved with permission of the property owner.

Mr. Farmer and Mr. Griffin attended a school board meeting to request permission to place a historic site marker at the London Bridge Causeway. With their support, a decision now needs to be made on the style of the sign. Mr. Griffin will follow-up with a site walk for the school maintenance department and athletic director to ensure the sign doesn't interfere with the athletic program.

Mr. Griffin made a motion to adjourn at 8:52PM; seconded by Mr. Saffie, 5 - 0.

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