

WOLFEBORO HERITAGE COMMISSION

Town Hall Annex Meeting Room
Wednesday, November 16, 2016, 5 p.m.
Minutes – Draft

Members and guests present: Chair Maggie Stier, Anne Blodget, Vaune Dugan, Wendy McHugh, Gene Denu, Sheryll Ross, BOS Liaison Dave Bowers; guests John Simms of Depot Square condominiums, and James Collins, Adjutant/Finance Officer, American Legion Harriman-Hale Post 18.

Members/staff absent: Harold Parker, Cynthia Melanson

Staff Present: Town Manager Dave Owen, Director of Planning & Development Matt Sullivan, Recording Secretary Larissa Mulkern

Introductions: Mr. Owen introduced newly hired Director of Planning & Development Matt Sullivan, who will assist the Heritage Commission. Mr. Sullivan's experience includes work at Strafford Regional Planning Commission where he assisted with the update of the Town of Durham Master Plan; he was involved with economic development projects through the Business Retention and Expansion survey where he worked with the Wentworth Economic Development Corp., In addition, he worked with WEDCO Director Denise Roy-Palmer and the Moose Mountains Region Alliance to promote and attract tourism to the towns off Route 16 north of the Seacoast and east of the greater Lake Winnepesaukee region.

Members introduced themselves to Mr. Sullivan and provided some background information.

1. **Call to order:** Chair Stier called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.
2. **Minutes:** Action on the October 19 meeting minutes was postponed to the next meeting.
3. **Old Business**
 - a. **Freight House/Museum Project** – Mr. Simms reported that the oil tanks have been removed from the property. Mr. Owen will ask the Board of Selectmen to authorize him to move forward with the purchase and sale agreement for the property. Mr. Bowers, who has experience running museums in the past, suggested that an endowment be created to fund annual operating costs; the previous rough estimate for renovating the Freight House for \$150,000 was mentioned. Relocating the Klickety Klack Railroad model would be easy but the venture requires staff, insurance and funds to run it. Mr. Simms said he was focused on the next steps; a rough draft of an annual budget of \$60,000 to \$70,000 has been submitted to a benefactor; a board is being formed and currently includes Joe Santoro and Brad Lipe. He added the Board of Selectmen

would review two related warrant articles, the first to enter into a lease with the nonprofit and a second to enter into a public/private partnership. If the warrant articles are passed at Town Meeting, the next four months will be planning time while the town rehabilitates the building. Under consideration will be whether to charge admission. Mr. Simms said the key reason for the project is its location. He sees lots of tourists wandering around looking for things to do and if the railroad museum is located at the Freight House it would attract more tourism than it does at its current location. Mr. Owen pointed out that this point in time the organizing group (advocating for the Freight House/Klickety Klack Railroad) does not legally exist. Mr. Simms indicated the group is a few days away from registering with the State of New Hampshire, possibly under a different name such as the Wolfeboro Model Railroad Museum. Mr. Parshley owns the registration for Klickety Klack Railroad name. Ms. Ross suggested the group meet with a consortium of heritage museum managers. Mr. Simms added that an architect, Norman Larson, is preparing a formal estimate for rehabilitation costs of the Freight House and requires an entity to list on his invoice. He asked if the Town of Wolfeboro would pay the bill for this estimate. Mr. Owen said the Town is interested in not the fee, but the resulting estimate since the Town will be asked to split the cost.

- b. Comments on design for new library:** Ms. Stier had previously asked members to review the drawings for the Wolfeboro Public Library renovation and expansion. Mr. Owen said the Town purchased the lot between the police station and the library, and removed the house on the property so the library and police station would not be hidden behind the structure. The proposed building will move closer to Main Street with a much higher profile. The Town purchased the lot on the other side as well, to allow for a wider driveway and more space. Ms. Stier said she attended the library open house and the architect's presentation. She was impressed with the thoughtfulness and the process of addressing the needs of the community. Discussion ensued regarding the exterior design. Areas of concern include: use of glass, materials, the rooflines, things that might be tweaked in some way without substantially affecting the usefulness and design of the interior spaces. Existing brick buildings on Main Street include the police/fire station and Huggins Hospital. The context and look of South Main Street largely developed in the late 19th century with homes with porches, clapboard siding, pitched roofs, columns with round or square posts for porches. The setbacks are fairly uniform and the proposed setback for the renovated library would allow setback to match what is along the street. Ms. Stier said the proposed design uses what exists with a more contemporary look but that some adjustments could be made so that it fits in a little better. Suggestions and comments from the board included: suggestion for outside seating; softening the 'institutionalized' appearance of the building; softening the lines of the eaves or roofline; using a more typical, historic window design with more panes; using real wood siding somewhere; installing window treatments; and downward lighting under the eaves. Ms.

Stier and others commented the building should harmonize with the neighborhood.

- c. **Information booth status:** DeVylder's withdrew its proposal to purchase the old information booth out of concern for its condition. Peter Cooke will move forward with the other proposals. The Town does not want the booth back.

4. New Business

- a. **Work plan for 2017 and budget requests:** Funds to cover the cost for the recording secretary are included in the Selectmen's budget.

5. Public comment:

- a. Mr. James Collins, Adjutant/Finance Officer with the American Legion Harriman-Hale Post 18 in Wolfeboro, joined the board to discuss structural repairs to the building located at 142 Center Street; the building needs a new foundation. Mr. Collins is seeking guidance from the Heritage Commission regarding how to apply for any available funding for the building, which is 150 years old. Legion members want to save the building, but since the building is in disrepair they have had to turn groups away who have wanted to use the space for events such as weddings and blood drives. The American Legion is a federally recognized 501-c-19 organization that received its charter in 1919, added Mr. Collins. Members discussed the ins and outs of acquiring a listing/status on the state's historic building register. Ms. Stier said the Heritage Commission could add this project to its 2017 work list and suggested a site visit in the future. Mr. Bowers and other members suggested the Legion obtain a partner for this project. Mr. Collins noted the Legion membership has dipped to about 78 with only four active members.

- 6. **Adjournment:** Being no other business, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded, voted on and passed at 6:15 p.m.

**Next Meeting:
[No December meeting]**

January 4, 2017, Town Hall Annex Meeting Room