

**PLANNING BOARD MASTER PLAN REVISION
COMMUNITY FACILITIES SUB-COMMITTEE**

SITE VISIT MINUTES MAY 18, 2018

Meeting called to order at the Libby Museum at 8:49 AM; adjourned at 10:07 AM.

Members present: Mike Hodder, Julie Jacobs, Linda Murray, Dave Senecal, John Thurston, Paul Whalen.

The Libby Museum of Natural History is located on the corner of Lang Pond Road and North Main Street (NH Rte. 109N) at the Wolfeboro-Tuftsboro town line. The museum is open to the public Memorial Day to Columbus Day (weekends only after Labor Day). Neighboring Libby Woods and Libby Park are public lands presently owned separately by Wolfeboro and Tuftsboro.

The natural history exhibits are displayed in a century old timber framed building. Designed by the original benefactor, the building is a free air venting system with natural circulation achieved by foundation vents for initial air intake, hollow spaces in the walls for air flow up and into the building, and ceiling and wall vents to carry circulated air back out of the structure. High summer humidity levels and stagnant air flows have allowed interior moisture build-up despite the design, which was innovative for its time. High moisture levels in the building have, over decades, accelerated the deterioration of the structure and the exhibits it houses. There is a noticeable musty odor on first opening the building; peeling interior paint and flaking exterior stucco are further evidence of the seriousness of the moisture problem in the Libby.

Building issues are not confined only to those caused by poor air circulation. Some floor joists are noticeably weak and exterior walls are not true in places. A feasibility study currently underway by Chris Williams Architects will address structural issues. An expansion plan under consideration would increase exhibit space by 1,500 sq. ft. by constructing a mezzanine balcony. The museum's septic system is a recent improvement.

A new heating/cooling system and new structural insulation are needed for a climate controlled environment if the building and its exhibits are to be preserved for the future. Such improvements might allow for three season use. Century old wood and glass exhibit cases require conservation.

Three part-time staff and docents provide an educational experience centered upon the natural history of the woodland species as the museum's founder intended. On the grounds outside a signed nature trail continues the museum experience in its natural setting through the contiguous Libby Arboretum. External to the museum grounds is a short trail. Further along Rte. 109N in Tuftsboro the Libby Park has views along the shoreline of Mirror Lake towards the Ossipee and Belknap mountains.

A gazebo on the east side of the building needs cosmetic care and minor repair. The grounds around it and the nearby parking area are washed out due to an ineffective drainage grate. Storm water is not collected but flows towards the museum building; a soil berm would mitigate this problem. Expansion of the parking area (preserving native trees) is needed along with reconsideration of locating visitor parking lakeside across busy Rte. 109N.

John Thurston, Mike Hodder