

Newington Historic District Commission – Minutes

Tuesday August 21, 2018

Meeting at 3:30 p.m. plus updates from resent email streams.

TOWN OFFICES

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| Members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ted Connors Member (2020) √ Christopher Cross Member (2020) Elaina D’Orto Member (2021) John Lamson Member (2021) √ Edna Mosher Member (2021) √ Lulu Pickering Member (2020) Maxine Mintz Pottier Member (2020) NellAnn Hiatt Alternate (2020) |
| Guest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> √ Martha Roy, Town Administrator at the end of the meeting |
| Minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes from the last meeting were approved by Chris, Edna, and Lulu. Will get any comments and approval from the other members by email. Unless otherwise indicated, the minutes will be considered approved. |
| 2019 Budget | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last year’s total budget was \$16,300, which included \$300 for operating expenses, \$3,000 for special projects; and \$13,000 for a grant that was not funded. • <i>Preliminary</i> discussions are for a total HDC budget of \$10,800, <i>not including grant income</i>, because we are not applying for any grants. This budget includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$5,000 maintenance in the Historic District for tree trimming and cutting. The Town Forest is entirely within the Historic District, which is overseen by the HDC. The budget line item for “Town Forest” should be in the HDC budget and the line item called “Town Forest” that is in the Conservation Commission should be renamed for maintenance of all the other conservation and open space properties in Town. The selectmen’s “Care of Trees” line item is generally used outside the Historic District. ○ \$3,000 for cannon painting project unless we can generate enough interest to do it ourselves (see further below in these minutes). ○ \$1,000 landscape plantings. ○ \$1,000 document archiving, copying, binding. ○ \$500 for transferring and hanging town artifacts from the Historical Society collection in other town buildings; the town crew could do this work but getting on their schedule in a timely fashion could be an issue. ○ \$300 operating expenses; coffee and snacks for events, memberships, etc. ○ \$0 for computer/printing/scanning equipment; Chris indicated the cost was about \$2,000 for purchasing equipment for a previous town planner; additional cost would be needed for Internet access and Wi-Fi; until we have a work place to set up the equipment, it is a moot point. Carting material to the Town Offices would be tedious and inefficient to say the least. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$0 Town Forester stipend; Lulu favored having a \$500 stipend in the budget for working with a forester on our “Forest Management Plan concepts” to provide “clerk of the works” type oversight, but Edna and Chris thought we did not need to spend money for this purpose and could do it ourselves. ○ \$0 for landscape design; Lulu favored having a sum for working with a landscape designer to incorporate specific features into the old town center viewscape; Chris and Edna said we could do it ourselves by working directly with contractors to implement our design ideas and not someone else’s. |
| Old Town Hall | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Historical Society reorganized in August with Laura Coleman as the elected president. The first priority will be the town-wide yard sale in September. A tour of the museum showed many artifacts and a chaotic jumble of “stuff”. Sorting, photographing, collecting known information, and an inventory are all needed. ● Edna identified a small shovel, washing board, and third artifact that could make a nice grouping; plus, the large Watson apple orchard sign and perhaps the large hay rake. She can artfully arrange the artifacts but the town needs someone to hang them correctly, so their weight does not destroy the sheetrock walls. Estimated a few hours of work to transport and hang; \$500 if hired out or perhaps done by the town crew. Photos and descriptions of the artifacts are needed by the Historic Society to create an inventory. ● Lulu – the tour of the museum showed that there is no current space to work on town documents; no existing computer, scanning, or printing equipment; no internet access or Wi-Fi. It is a catch-22. Past selectmen have not wanted to invest in the buildings because “no one uses them” but the catch is that they are not usable for many of today’s needs and become merely storage spaces. |
| Horsesheds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The ferns and small tree have all been cut from the back of the building to prevent moisture, mold, and deterioration of the siding. Yay! |
| Veteran Monument Area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lulu and Lenny Thomas discussed removing the sharp rusted areas on one of the cannons, perhaps with a blowtorch and grinder to remove the sharp edges. He will ask for permission from the Selectmen for the maintenance. ● The committee discussed pushing the cannon painting into 2019 and adding \$3,000 to a painting line item in the budget. The many layers of paint, some lead based, were already removed by Environmental Restorations a few years ago. So, all that is really needed, is to remove dirt, lichen, and rust; sand; and apply another layer of paint. Edna recommended we save money and do it ourselves, Chris suggested the HDC have a 9/11 cannon painting party. ● Maxine email with cannon painting info: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coverage: 270 square feet ○ Current paint: Benjamin Moore 163 Iron Clad Rust Inhibitor Paint ○ Recently suggested paint: Sherwin William Direct to Metal Marine grade paint ○ Color: John knows the correct military color IE Naval Grey or we can provide images (or a flake) of the current paint color. |
| Old Town Center plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Martha said the line item (\$1,000) in the selectmen budget for “care of trees” was already overspent by a lot due to the culvert washout on Little Bay Road by Captain’s Landing. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ted indicated by email that the town employees will address the trees as time permits – good news but somewhat open ended. • Martha indicated that a tree cutting service was going to be working in the cemetery in the next week or so, and we may be able to piggy back on having their equipment and men already in the old historic center. • Chris said he will discuss with the Conservation Commission their line item (01-4611-49-870) for \$1,500 for “Town Forest” for tree cutting in the historic district. Combining \$1,500 from the Conservation budget with \$1500 from the HDC budget, would give us \$3,000 to have the tree cutting service extend their stay in Newington by up to two days. • The priority would be to cut/trim by the Old Town Parsonage first and then the Old Stone School. The town employees could then work primarily on the area in front of the Town garage and elsewhere, depending on what the tree cutting service did not accomplish. • Martha will see what is possible by the tree cutting service; Chris, Edna, and Lulu will meet to mark trees to be cut. • Removing the fees for using buildings in the old historic center was not discussed. |
| Town Forest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town needs a forest management plan and use of a town forester, but this project is more than we can handle this year. |
| Rain Garden | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maxine and lulu email streams – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ So far, Maxine, Lillian Wilson, Jim Weiner, and Lulu are interested in helping with plants and planting. ○ Lulu has some lily (late summer blooms) and iris (spring) plants to donate; Maxine has some white daisies (July blooms); Jim has some lilies. ○ Montauk daisy perennials (fall blooms) or black-eyed Susan’s (summer) might add color at other times of the year and can be purchased. ○ None of those plants grow as high as the plants that are in the garden now, some of which could be saved, or not. ○ Sept 22 (Sat) at 9:30 a.m. with a backup of Sept 23 (Sun) in case of rain is planned for work on the rain garden. The HDC can provide coffee and donuts. ○ Maxine will start sign-up sheets (library and transfer station) ... and ask for other flower/bulb donations, as well. |
| Old Parsonage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This summer the parsonage has been open for visitors on nine Thursday afternoons from 2:00 till 4:30 pm for visits. Perhaps 20 people, including the tour guides, have toured the building. • Building maintenance needs (discussed at the meeting and in emails): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Water is still a big problem with wet areas along the cellar foundation walls and chimney base. Should leave the cellar and attic doors open to facilitate air circulation throughout. Paint is falling off several walls and ceilings, perhaps due to heat/cold and moisture issues. ○ The building badly needs rain gutters to get water away from the foundation, and to inspect whether the chimney cap is sufficient. ○ An existing wooden vent could be inserted in an attic window to improve air circulation, but the security system may have the window wired. A 4-inched chewed hole in the bottom of the attic window gives access to lots of wasps |

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| | <p>and maybe squirrels. Dead bugs and spider webs show no one has been cleaning the building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Suggest that a designated person (who, the building inspector?) work with the HDC and selectmen to oversee and schedule needed maintenance and cleaning. ● A better use of this beautiful historic resource is needed (<i>the info below was not discussed at the HDC meeting but is captured here for convenience in ongoing budget discussions</i>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is another catch-22 where the building is not well used because the building is not usable. ● A five-year plan could address the internal painting and air circulation issues at the same time it addressed making the building more readily usable. ○ Possible uses include reviving it as a “tavern” setting for social gatherings, an event venue for townspeople, and/or a document library. Other ideas and concepts are welcome. The corner pub, the breakfast spot before church, a monthly hangout to meet the neighbors in a very unique and memorable setting ○ Consider installing a heating/AC/air handling system so the building can be better used throughout the year. ○ Consider installing electrical outlets in at least some of the rooms for lighting and other purposes (i.e., coffee urn and TV/video). ○ Consider installing internet access and Wi-Fi so computers, televisions, or other equipment could be used. ○ Consider installing internal access to water, but not a bathroom, which could involve port-a-potties. |
| Document library | <p>Information below from email updates (<i>not discussed at the HDC meeting; inserted here for convenience</i>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lulu – Old Town records in the vault were bound and archived in 2003 by Brown’s River Records Preservation Services, One Allen Martin Drive, PO Box 8501, Essex VT 05451; Ph 800-639-3027. They did much more than what is needed for our recent town records and used a very ornate binding (beautiful) with mylar sheets for many old handwritten pages. There still appears to be many old records that need binding. As best I can tell, that project was not finalized. ● Gail Pare – The previous book restoration project was a 5-year undertaking by the HDC, from 2003 - 2008. All the books were scanned and saved on CDs to permit research without needing to use the actual paper volumes. ● Chris – For binding volumes, the town uses Bridgeport National, 662 Silver Street, PO Box 289, Agawam, MA 01001-0289, Phone: 413-789-1981. ● Lulu – spoke with Robin Silva at the Portsmouth Athenaeum about archiving and binding town records. Some info on our document project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Copying is likely up to us, she does not know of any outfits that do that except for places like Staples or Fedex Office ○ Print copies on acid free paper - most regular copy paper these days is already acid free, check it first, but should not have to buy special paper ○ Toner in the machine does not matter |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use white paper (not too bright white), do not use colored papers ○ Use medium or better weight paper because thin paper gives static which is a pain for binding and later browsing of the bound volumes ○ Don't use too heavy paper - I think she said because binding is harder ○ They are currently using Acme Book Binding in Massachusetts for binding the volumes; AcmeBinding.com ○ Use a library binding with a plain cloth covering - different colors are available ○ Includes the printing of a title and year on the volume in a contrasting color (white or black depending on the cloth color) ○ Per volume pricing is about \$15-20 per volume, she thinks ○ Sometimes the volumes have to be split into separate volumes if the size is too great ○ They do not pick up or deliver unless you have a very large order ○ Will have to mail the material to them or hand deliver it ○ Can get discounted pricing if have more than a certain number of volumes to be bound, maybe 25, she doesn't remember ○ Surcharges are applied if we are only binding a handful of volumes so plan ahead. ○ For each volume, a form is filled out on the website, printed, and included with the material to be bound ○ For processing recent Town documents into archives, it may be possible to get a Moose Plate grant (Thomas Hardiman, Athenaeum Keeper) |
| Members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussed changing the time and/or date of the meeting so it is easier for some members to attend. Chris will follow up. |
| Adjourned | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5:38 pm |

Lulu Pickering
HDC Member
August 23, 2018