

LYME HERITAGE COMMISSION

July 27, 2016 7:00 p.m.
LCA Meeting Room

PRESENT: Ray Clark, chair; Adair Mulligan, vice chair; Tim Cook, Jane Eakin, Laurie Wadsworth; Patty Jenks, select person; Pat Erwin-Ploog, alternate

GUESTS: Lyme residents Steve Rich, Michael Whitman

Meeting was called to order at 7:08 by Chair Clark.

1. **Approval of Minutes:** With a few minor corrections, the Draft Minutes from the April 26 meeting were approved as amended. [Note, the Commission did not meet in May or June.]

2. **Interior photo documentation of Endangered or Critical Properties - our "Top Ten" Nominations**

Patty read aloud an email from former Commissioner Jane Fant which listed 7 properties that were on our mutual lists, along with 4 others that she suggests, for our second interior documentation. Patty will scan the document and send it to **Ray**, who will forward it to all Commissioners. **[done, July 28]** Adair asked if these are listed because they are threatened, or exemplary. The answer seems to depend on the property, and in some sense any could be threatened because of fire (ex: the Tecca's former old Cape on Pinnacle Road). Jane Eakin again presented a form for permission to photograph, which **Patty** will bring before the Selectboard tomorrow morning. If the Selectboard approves it, the Commission gave **Laurie** the go-ahead to contact the Greenleafs so we can make a record of the interior of the Hamilton House, which Steve Rich kindly offered to photograph. **Patty** will notify Laurie. Laurie urged that someone familiar with interior historic details, such as Ray, Tim or Adair, accompany Steve, and **Laurie** offered to be the recorder (room by room).

It was noted that the photographic records, starting with the over 300 digital photos of the former "Poor Farm" at 100 River Road (now dismantled) that are currently still on Steve's camera, should be stored in three places, on either a CD or a thumb drive. **Pat Erwin-Ploog** will determine the current best practice, and Patty approved some storage in the Town's vault.

Steve was urged to complete the proper paperwork so he can be reimbursed for a card reader, as well as for other expenses he has and will incur on this project.

3. **Demolition Ordinance** Ray asked if we should propose an ordinance for Town Meeting. Other towns have one, but Lyme has none. Since the creation of the Heritage Commission five years ago, about a dozen antique properties have been destroyed, three in this year alone. Its intention is not to stop property owners, but to give them information, introduce an opportunity for documentation, or even for the Town to purchase the property before it is torn down. Patty informed that, by law, it would have to go through all the proper channels (including a public hearing) by February, so we should get right on it. **Tim** agreed to contact the NH Preservation Alliance for information and a possible template.

4. Monthly report to Listserv? Ray noted that it would serve the Heritage Commission well to communicate more regularly to the town. Commissioners reviewed the different venues available and the audiences they serve: the Listserv, the Town's website, the monthly *Church & Community News* and the Lyme Historians' quarterly newsletter. Laurie and Adair discouraged doubling up with the Historians because of the already existing confusion about the 2 organizations, as well as space issues in their newsletter (which does occasionally acknowledge Heritage Commission news). One possibility is working toward featuring a "House of the Month," at least on the website; we would try to balance news of successful restorations with that of "houses lost" so no one feels targeted. **Adair**, our resident writer, agreed to consider whether or not she "can and will" fill this role for us.

5. Chesley School Ray reported that the survey is done, and that the Planning Board has granted the subdivision of lot , subject to the Department of Environmental Services approval to create a lot without septic. He is hopeful that the plat will be approved by this fall, so that the transfer of the property to the Lyme Historians can be properly and legally completed.

6. Fencing – Little Common We have permission from the Selectmen to construct a fence for the 95 feet from Route 10 to the old tree, delineating a line between the school and the Little Common. Jane Fant and Tim got an estimate for 13 granite posts and plastic rails in between, totaling \$3500. The posts, total \$2015, will be four feet out of the ground, with three white rails between each, and an opening in the middle to walk through, quoted at \$786.31 including shipping. Tim and Jane had determined that wooden posts would be not only too expensive, but also would require more maintenance (painting). After a funding appeal, there has been \$2270 raised toward this project so far, which has been deposited in the Historic Assets Fund managed by the Town. With a unanimous vote, the Heritage Commission voted to authorize a grant of \$3,000 for the Little Common Fence Project. As a side issue, Ray requested that the documentation of the Historic Assets Fund be under one account, not two as it is currently recorded. **Patty** will ask Dina to correct this accounting.

7. Four old cemeteries – Laurie reported that although the Cemetery Trustees are aware of issues with the stone wall and gate at the Beal Cemetery, their attention this year is on the removal of three large dead trees in the Old Cemetery, whose fall could damage or even destroy the gravestones surrounding them. A bright note is that a young native Lyme resident, Alaina Smith, has chosen the Beal Cemetery as the subject of a research project that she is completing this summer for a graduate-level course at Plymouth State University. Laurie has met with her, shared information, and directed her to former Cemetery Commissioner Jean Smith. Alaina has agreed to share her report when it is finalized.

Laurie also requested that Heritage Commissioners thoughtfully consider whether or not the signage at the Beal Cemetery, in a quiet, almost indiscernable lot above Dorchester Road, be improved so that the historic spot can be more easily found. The advantages would be for townspeople and genealogists; the disadvantages would be providing more information for vandals and thieves of old stones. **All Commissioners** are urged to drive up there before the next meeting and think about these issues.

8. East Thetford Bridge – Tim had sent out a copy of an e-mail from Jay Barrett that he is progressing in the pursuit of a National Historic Register designation from both states. Jay has requested photos of the bridge from the water, and Ray will try to take them.

9. Historic Marker for the Horse sheds - Michael Whitman has begun the research necessary to have the State of NH install a sign (those metal Historic Marker signs) recognizing our horse sheds as the longest standing line in New England, so probably in the country. He reported that the State is eager to get one in Grafton County, and that they would pay the necessary \$2500 to have it installed. Michael requested that the Heritage Commission be the sponsor, and come up with the wording. Laurie suggested that perhaps the church and the cemetery might be included in this recognition, but there is of course a limit on number of words, so that will require further research. Michael also is pursuing permission to somehow move the unsightly utility lines and poles which now obscure the historic view of the horse sheds, as they line the road directly in front of them. Another future consideration is some sort of guidelines as to how the horse sheds can be utilized by Lyme organizations, especially with an eye to maintaining their historic appearance. Commissioners recommended contacting our new Executive Councillor, Joe Kenney, for help with the power lines issue. Michael offered to continue the research with the State and the Town, and the Heritage Commission voted unanimously to authorize him to do so. We are most grateful for this contribution to our town's heritage. As a side issue, Laurie will ask our architectural historian, Liz Hengen, whether the term "horse sheds" should be one word or two! [Note: Liz uses two words, so we will also use "horse sheds" from now on.]

9. Photos of the "Poor Farm" at 100 River Road (aka the 1774 Fairfield Farm) As the clock was ticking after 8:40 p.m., we decided to postpone viewing Steve Rich's photos until the next meeting, when Adair will provide a slide projector so we can view them together. The Commission commended Steve for not only taking the photos, but also for waiting through our long meeting tonight, and the upshot is that he would be willing to fill the vacancy for one more alternate. Patty will facilitate the necessary paperwork so that Steve can formally join the Commission.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Wadsworth, secretary

**Next meeting: August 23, 2016
Lyme Center Academy School Room**