

MINUTES
LYME HERITAGE COMMISSION

October 28, 2014 7:00 p.m.
LCA Meeting Room

PRESENT: Ray Clark, chair; Adair Mulligan, vice chair; Jane Fant, Rick Pond ; Tim Cook, alternate; Laurie Wadsworth, alternate; Patty Jenks, selectperson

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 by Chair Ray Clark.

1. Approval of Minutes Minutes from the August 26, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved. Note: the Commission did not meet in Sept.

2. Updates:

- Tim reported that the c. 1900 barn at Loch Lyme Lodge will soon be moved back, out of the wetland where it sits.
- Adair shared the story, soon to appear in the Lyme Historians Fall Newsletter, about how her new neighbor consulted with Heritage Commissioner Tim Cook before she decided to try to replicate the trim along the porch of her historic home in Lyme Center. Patty suggested that a photograph of this success story replace the old one on the Heritage Commission's page of the Town website. All agreed that this is an excellent idea - "Heritage Help in Action"! Adair will check with that homeowner, and send the photo, along with a date, to Dave Robbins so he can make the switch.

3. Proposed letter for files: Laurie passed around the first draft of a letter (copy follows these Minutes) to be placed in the front of the file for each property on the Inventory. As Patty reported at the last meeting, property owners often come to the Town Office first to see the files on their house before they start to make any "home improvement" plans and apply for permits. This letter would alert them that their property is considered historic, and offer help from the Heritage Commission. The question arose as to whether or not it's true that the whole inventory will eventually be available on the web (privacy issues?) Patty and Ray will check into this. All Commissioners will reread and edit the rest of the letter before the next meeting.

4. Summary Report: Ray reported on the slow but steady progress toward getting this document ready for publishing. Jeff Valence, volunteering his (extremely in demand) time and expertise, had re-formatted about half of it before school began in September, but normal school business and the added requirements of completing school and playground renovations, Open Houses, etc. had prevented him from getting back to it. Ray met with him about a week ago, and Jeff had completed the work by the next day! Commissioners spent some time looking over and admiring the color copy of it that Ray passed around.

Next step: editing this draft. Jane, Laurie and Tim volunteered to do this, hopefully within the next two weeks. Ray encouraged us to consider the time it will take to make corrections with the old adage, "Best is the enemy of the good." We discussed the

benefits of aiming to get the publication ready in time for Christmas vs. hurrying and doing a sloppy/incomplete job. We decided to move down the sequence that we had outlined on July 29 (We are now only at step 3*) and see where/how long it takes us to do a *good* job:

From July 29, 2014 approved Minutes:

Revised schedule:

1. *Jeff continues to work reformatting the copy he has*
2. *Ray will bring revisions to Jeff in mid-August (especially Appendix)*
3. **Copies of Jeff's final work distributed to all Commissioners for additions and edits*
4. *Jeff adjusts with these final edits*
5. *Patty will proofread, checking that page numbers all match, etc.*
6. *to Jan Williams for indexing*
7. *To publisher*
8. *Distribute copies/ letter to all property owners*

5. How to thank Jeff? Ray suggested, and all agreed, that a gift certificate for dinner out would be an appropriate and appreciated way to thank Jeff for his time spent on our Summary Report. Ray, as chair, will choose a place from suggestions offered, withdraw \$100 from our account, purchase and deliver the gift certificate for Jeff and Cindy Valence.

6. Historic Assets Fund – proposal Ray passed around his draft of a proposal to create a fund, under the supervision of the Heritage Commission, from which Lyme citizens could apply for money to pay for work on their historic building. (Possible uses are enumerated in the proposal.) Commissioners were enthusiastic about the idea, but wonder if we have the authority to do this under the warrant that created the Heritage Commission at Town Meeting in 2010. Patty will present the draft proposal to the Selectboard, and if they approve, to Town Counsel to confirm our authority to hold and disperse assets/monies.

7. Tax Relief for Historic Rehabilitation –proposal Jane proposed another pro-active way for the Heritage Commission to encourage citizens to save old properties, based on a successful program in Richmond, VA. Usually, once a property is “improved,” the taxes automatically, immediately, and possibly steeply, increase. The present tax structure therefore encourages owners to tear down old buildings instead of renovating them. This program, however we might choose to write it, would implement this tax increase, but stepped up over a period of time, say 5 or 10 years. We could also write it in such a way that it only applies to some significant properties (example: Lyme Inn). Jane agreed to write up a proposal for our next meeting.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, December 16. Laurie will notify the Town about the date changes (NOT Nov. 25 nor Dec. 23)

Meeting adjourned at 8:32.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Wadsworth, secretary