

## LYME HERITAGE COMMISSION

October 27, 2015                      7:00 p.m.  
LCA Meeting Room

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

Guest: Mark Tecca, representing the Lyme Congregational Church

Meeting was called to order at 7:06 by Chair Ray Clark.

1. **Approval of Minutes:** With the spelling of “LCHIP” corrected, the Draft Minutes from the September 22 meeting were then approved as amended.

2. **Inventory Summary Report** Commissioners report that we have had several “rave reviews” of the book. Patty reported that the Church & Community Newsletter brought in more buyers. There are only about fifteen copies left.

3. **Lyme Congregational Church parsonage** Mark came to our meeting to ask for help as the church makes plans to add on to the parsonage at 21 Union Street. They have several objectives: make the house more family friendly (the current pastor Amy & husband Matt have 3 kids) and make the house more visitor-friendly by enlarging the kitchen and adding a mud room/ell off the back of the house, while also updating the electrical wiring and correcting the water in the basement. They hope to start in the spring.

The Colonial Revival style house was built in 1935 on the stone foundation of the 1823 parsonage, which had burned in 1933. Amy’s father is a contractor who has done some historic restoration, so she is familiar with the need to keep the historic look of the house.

Commissioners had several suggestions: check the Historic District Report online (1985); locate the well and septic; try to keep the same roofline pitch and fenestration; attend to details such as overhangs, moldings and soffits. The idea is to start planning with the outside in mind; then make the interior fit the design, instead of the other way around. Adding gutters and grading around the foundation should help with water problems. Consulting the “White Pines series” would provide scale drawings and photos as guidelines.

As is usually the case, the church will have to strike a balance between following historically correct guidelines and their means. Commissioners also recommended looking into the NH Preservation Alliance’s planning grants.

We are most grateful to Mark and the church for seeking our advice before starting the project. We urge them to keep us informed as their plans proceed so we can all work together to find good solutions.

[The Heritage Commission went into an executive session to discuss various historic properties in town and to consider ways that the Heritage Commission can help to preserve them.]

4. **Possible incentives for owners of historic properties** Certainly the most important issue for property owners considering renovation is the cost. For instance, vinyl siding is cheaper than clapboards; new windows may seem to be cheaper than reusing old ones, though there is evidence that reusing old windows can be cost-efficient. Although education about the importance of our history, etc. is important, Commissioners agree that clearly more economic incentives are needed in Lyme. Patty will check with Dina about the timing for warrant articles for Town Meeting.

Jane Fant reminded us about the “Richmond (Va.) Plan” which has worked well to conserve historic properties in that city. There, when a historic property owner makes the improvements that are necessary for modern life, instead of being immediately socked with a huge tax bill, the tax is incrementally increased over several years, and is even transferable to new owners.

Commissioners are urged to think about other ways that we could propose to the town that would provide incentives, probably mostly economic, for owners of historic properties to follow the example of the Congregational Church in attempting to preserve the historic integrity of our town.

5. **East Thetford Bridge** Tim attended the latest presentation in Thetford, given by the State of NH about their plans to renovate, not replace, this historic bridge between our towns. Lightweight concrete would be used for the roadbed so that the weight limit could be raised from the present 15 tons, and there will be new railings on each side of the road.

They will not change the overhead structure at all, but at issue is the supporting pier in the center of the river, which has been shown to be seriously deteriorating. The State plans, scheduled for 2022, propose 3 options. The most expensive, which also would entail closing the bridge for two full seasons (April- Oct.), would be to replace the pier with the same kind of foundation that presently exists. A more likely plan entails a concrete brace that covers the present pier and therefore extends for about 23 feet on each side. (This plan would close the bridge for “only” 1-1/2 construction seasons.)

The Lyme Heritage Commission is recognized as a “consulting party.” After reviewing the plans and their drawings, we decided to at the least, continue to advocate for a pedestrian/bicycle “path” alongside the bridge. For safety’s sake, if there are to be two 13-foot extensions on either side of the pier anyway, could not one of these be used as a base for another “lane” across the River, even if it is below the level of the bridge?

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:52.

**Next meeting:** Because of the holidays, we plan to combine the Nov. and Dec. meetings into one, on

**Dec. 15, 2015.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Laurie Wadsworth, secretary