

Peterborough Heritage Commission
Approved Minutes
March 9, 2017

Present: Bruce Batten; Richard Estes; Debbie Kaiser; Mose Olenik; Peggy Shaughnessy; Melissa Stephenson; Doug Ward; Tyler Ward, Select board liaison

Absent: Sheila Kirkpatrick, Alternate

Also Present: Tina Rapp, Vincent and Donna Fittante, Shaun Walsh, Greg **Maundascher**, Phil Suter, Reverend Jamie Hamilton

The chair opened the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

I. Shieling Forest House

Tina Rapp and Old Street Road neighbor to Shieling Forest and the adjoining Elizabeth Yates McGreal house, Sean Walsh, and concerned citizens Donna and Vincent Fittante, briefed the commissioners on the history of the gift of the house and adjoining property to The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, and their contact with DRED's Forestry V Susan Francher with regards to funding support for the upkeep of the house. No one currently resides in this building.

The house is failing; the chimneys are in need of repairs, the exterior paint is peeling, the interior paint has been determined to contain lead, and water damage is taking effect. The house holds some artistic provenance and a copy of the Literary Monadnock brochure, featuring the house, was passed around.

The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests is ultimately responsible for the upkeep of Shielding Forest which includes the house.

It is the opinion of Susan Francher that the McGreal Trust can be used for the house repair and upkeep but that the trustees have not been inclined to spend the funds accordingly. A figure of \$200K was mentioned as necessary to resurrect the building at this point.

Tina Rapp outlined building options in order of preference:

- Allocate funds for repair and upkeep
- Add private funds to the trust fund designated solely for the house
- Trustees choose to tear it down

The sale of building is problematic due to many infrastructure and upkeep issues including the septic system, moisture problems, tar underneath the property, interior lead paint, etc.

It was noted that the SPNHF can generate its own funds for designated purposes.

As neighbors with concerns about the disrepair of the building and after talking to the state about this issue for several years, they ask for the support of the Town in their efforts to seek improvements. The Heritage Commission is in agreement with these efforts.

Peggy Shaunessey informed everyone that town manager Rodney Bartlett has a scheduled meeting with DRED regarding this matter and that the PHC will draft a letter to the McGreal trustees (once their identities are known) requesting that they address this issue.

II. All Saints Church Request for Demolition Permit

The River Center property on Concord Street has been purchased by the Church to allow for additional parking. The Church petitioned the Planning Board to divide the lot into two parcels with intent to sell the house at #44 Concord and/or demolish additional structures on this property and to demolish the back additions and/or the entire structure at #46 Concord Street to allow room to build a church parking lot. A plan for the #46 property is being developed over the next several months with an eye to keeping the Episcopal “campus” beautiful. It was noted that the Planning Board has determined that the two projects/properties be dealt with separately. Safety issues are also being reviewed.

Commissioner Debby Kaiser reminded all present that the subdivision and permit requests applied for is under the Neighborhood Overlay Ordinance, which calls for use of downtown space for housing using existing structures. “...to allow for the infilling of lots and additional residential housing in close proximity to the Downtown Area in sections of town where there are established subdivided neighborhoods.”

“The guidelines focus on basic building and site relationships and are intended to foster pedestrian-oriented streetscapes and harmony between new and existing homes.”

The commission understands the church need for parking but is concerned that this is not an appropriate use for the streetscape under the current overlay plan and could set a precedent for any future invocation of that ordinance. Members also

voiced concerns regarding any precedent set by the use of the subdivision to tear down buildings along the streetscape.

Kaiser questioned considering the means of saving any house along Concord Street in order to avoid gaps in the line of houses.

Mose Olenik noted that #46 had only been on the market since September 2016. She also remarked that the Concord Street streetscape is an important entrance to the town as defined by the Master Plan.

Reverend Jamie Hamilton said the single family building idea had been considered and that the Episcopal task force is still open to options.

She outlined the recent history of the Church acquisition of the property and their planning process:

- Church bought the property in May 2016
- Commercially zoned
- New rector in place
- Due diligence by the property
- Parishoner Andy Peterson assisting in the researching the feasibility of buying, subdividing, and selling
- Churches make decisions via congregation
- Created task force to determine if the property was affordable and approached the standing committee of the diocese for approval.
- Church is confined by finances. Needed roofing and other maintenance issues put pressure on church and church resources.
- Andy Peterson represents the buyers of # 44. Hope Taylor is looking into affordable housing at #46

The Planning Board approved the subdivision of a 5000 square foot lot at #44 Concord Street. The Church has received one estimate for demolition of the remaining structures and is seeking two more estimates for this work.

There is a purchase and sale agreement in place for #44.

There has been discussion about moving the ice house to the Cornucopia Farm to Fork project across from the high school with Doug Ward noting that a storage building is needed at the Conval site.

Tyler Ward summarized that 70 parking spaces are included in the proposed Church permit request . During a recent count, there were 49 cars and nine piles of snow in the present lot. Saving front part of #46 along the street would not cause a substantial net loss in parking spaces. He suggested offering the front part of #46 at a low cost in order to preserve the streetscape. The Church has concerns about outside ownership within the confines of their currently owned property.

Debbie Kaiser and Peggy Shaunessy have received a copy of the Demolition Permit Request.

Dario will send the requested permit to the other members of the Demolition Committee; some members are still unaware that plans for this property's demolition are under consideration. It was asked that the minutes reflect that the Heritage Commission input was brought late into the planning and demolition permit request process.

The chairman thanked the group for their willingness to bring their plans before the Commission.

III. GAR Hall Update

The closing date is rescheduled for 21st of March.

IV. New Business/ Old Business

Mose Olenik requested that members help publicize the next photography show. There have been two submissions of three photos each to date.

It was generally agreed that members of the Heritage Commission may submit photos for consideration for inclusion in the show but will not be included in the judging.

The meeting adjourned 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Stephenson, Peterborough Heritage Commission

The next meeting of the PHC is Thursday, April 13, 2017, at 5:30 p.m.
Peterborough Town Hall