

Kensington Heritage Commission Meeting

December 18, 2019

Minutes – **DRAFT**

In Attendance:

Present: Regular Members: Lynne Monroe, chair, Bob Solomon, treasurer, Meghan Gross, secretary, Steven Mallory

Alternate Members: Elaine Kaczmarek, Lorraine O’Keefe

Ex-officio: Mike Schwotzer, Planning Board Representative, Joe Pace, Selectmen Representative

Absent: Regular Members: Bob Gustafson,

Alternates: Alan Tuthill, Ben Cole, Frank Whittemore

Call to order at 7:11 PM

As there was a quorum, no alternates were needed.

Minutes:

Meghan Gross moved and Steve Mallory seconded to approve the minutes from the November 21 meeting as amended. Approved unanimously. Joe Pace Abstained as he was not present at that meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Change in Meeting Day and Time:

Because some members cannot attend the meetings on Thursday or on the third Wednesday of the month, Lynne Monroe proposed changing to the 4th Wednesday night. Meghan requested an earlier time and the **fourth Thursday at 6:15pm** was agreeable to all present. Mike S. made a motion that the meeting night and time be changed effective January 1st. Lynne Monroe seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

Action: Lynne will send out email to Kathleen Felch with the revised Policies and Procedures to post on the Town website and also inform other Commission Members of the change.

Facebook Page

Lynne posted on the Facebook page about the NHPA signing ceremony for the preservation easement to Elaine Kaczmarek is giving to protect Prescott Corners. After thanking Elaine there was discussion of how to get more out of the Facebook Page. Joe Pace recommended that we keep the page open so everyone on the Commission can post on it and set up it up so that anyone who is a member on the page can also post and comment. Members must be approved before being allowed to post, like the Kensington Connects page.

Action: Lynne will work on setting up page and inviting members to join.

Universalist Church:

As Ben Cole was absent, there was no new discussion.

Action: Ben will copy and distribute existing rehab plans to Commission members. *This has not happened yet.*

Rec Committee:

The Rec and Social Committee meeting scheduled for January 8 to discuss Old Home Days will be rescheduled. There was active discussion about the desirability of the Heritage Commission being involved to bring more history to Old Home Days! Tours of old homes and the Town Center were the clear possibility. Steven suggested including historic recipes and food as a part of the celebration. The NH Preservation Alliance has written guidelines and suggestions on how to run a successful Old Home Day. There is a Donald Hall book on it also.

Action: Meghan will interact with the Rec Committee and inform the members when the new date and time for the Old Home Days meeting is decided. Lynne will provide the NHPA guidelines for the committee.

Cemeteries:

The stones in the cemetery have become black and are being harmed by the dirt and material. They need to be cleaned and protected. Lynne reported that a commission in Maryland had used a method that was approved by Technical Preservation Services. They cleaned over 200 stones in an afternoon using about 20 volunteers. She has a video of the instructions that were given by the expert for that event and will distribute it to the commission. Some talk about a good event for nice weather.

Action: Lynne will send a video to the Commission members. Lorraine will call her cousin to find out more about monies available for care of cemeteries.

Library Addition:

Elaine reported that there was no news regarding the addition this month.

Library National Register Nomination:

The nomination is set to go to the January meeting of the NH Division of Historical Resources review board, then it will be passed on to the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Contra Dances:

Elaine Kaczmarek and Frank Whittemore went with Glen Coppleman from Kingston and Claire Mattin from Kensington went to the Selectmen's meeting on December 2 to discuss holding monthly contra dances in Town Hall. (These dances were held in Kensington for many years before the moved to Kingston fifteen years ago. Kingston will be carpeting their Town Hall which will eliminate dancing, making a move necessary.) The Selectmen asked the fire chief to check the structure of the floor. Glen assured the Selectmen that dancers always wear clean dance shoes to dances. Steven Mallory reported that his investigation of the floor shows that there is no need for concern about the floor structure/support, but there is concern regarding the future wear on floor surface as it has been sanded a great deal already. He stressed the danger from salt and sand and water coming in on shoes of all visitors to the building. He suggested that we purchase walk-off mats at the entrance to the building and strongly encourage people to wipe their feet when they enter. Future maintenance of floor should include deep cleaning and build-up of floor surface with layers of finish rather than sanding down the floor further. Steven asked about police detail during dances and there is none required under 100 people. Musicians will bring mats for their instruments to prevent damage to floor surface. Steven also suggested that the chairs in the hall are creating more stress on the floor than dancers will and that consideration be given to covering the metal sliders on the ends of the chair legs to protect the floor.

Action: Steven will reach out to the fire chief, John True, to talk about the floor issue. We will also invite him to attend a meeting to have a discussion about fire protection and historic buildings in Kensington in general.

NEW BUSINESS

Preservation Easements

Elaine Kaczmarek signed a second preservation easement with the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance on 12/17/19! Now all of Prescott Corner, land and buildings, is protected by easements and will be preserved! The Preservation Alliance will help with a party in the spring or summer to celebrate the easements and to show others in the town what easements can do.

News and Discussion

Members are concerned about the condition of a vacant Federal House on 150 across from the American Legion. Elaine suggested that Steven should talk to Harold Bragg about the property because he is likely the one plowing the driveway.

Joe Pace reported that the Selectmen are going to put submit a warrant article to do a Build-Out Analysis this year to identify the properties/land in town available for development.

Mike Schwotzer reported that the Dingman Property (known as Hog's Hill) is up for development, possibly for up to 400 home lots. The planning board has not been approached and there is no report of a sale yet, but plans are in discussion. Lynne suggested considering a Transfer of Development rights. This is discussed in "Preserving Community Character: Ways to Manage Change."

Lynne suggested having that the Commission have a working session to drive around town and identify properties that may be at risk and other issues. General consensus that this is a good idea.

Joe asks if the Commission is interested in having the Selectmen propose the warrant article creating a Heritage Fund. The commission unanimously and enthusiastically agreed that we are interested in creating the fund. It will allow the Heritage Commission to accept donations of money or property or apply for grants.

Action: Lynne will send the appropriate materials to Joe.

Joe introduced discussion of a future working relationship with the Select Board with the Heritage Commission consulting on architectural design projects in town. Understanding that the Heritage Commission functions strictly in an advisory capacity and will not be able to tell people what they can or cannot do.

Christmas decorations in the Town Center. Carl Rezendes was responsible for decorating the Universalist Church, the Grange and the Brick School with wreaths and candles in the windows. The Historical Society managed to decorate the Brick School and the Grange Trustees decorated the Grange, but the Church was dark. The Heritage Commission might offer to help with this another year.

OTHER BUSINESS

At 8:23 Mike S. called for a motion to adjourn; Joe Pace seconded. Approved unanimously.

Next meeting will be January 22, 2019 at 6:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Meghan Gross, secretary
Lynne Monroe, chair