

Kensington Heritage Commission Meeting

September 27, 2023

Minutes- **DRAFT**

The meeting was held in person at the Town Hall. The meeting was posted on the Town's website, so the public was able to attend.

In Attendance:

Present: Regular Members: Lynne Monroe, Chair; Meghan Gross, Secretary; Bob Gustafson, Treasurer and Selectmen's Representative

Alternates: Elaine Kaczmarek; Frank Whittemore; Joni Praded

Absent: Steven Mallory; Alan Tuthill; Planning Board Representative

Call to order at 7:02 PM

Minutes: The minutes from the August 1 meeting were reviewed. Elaine Kaczmarek made the motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Bob Gustafson. Approved unanimously.

BUSINESS

Old Home Day review: The Commission hosted a walking tour of the Town Center on Old Home Day in August and had about 12 people attend- it was really fun! It is an event that can be expanded upon in the future. The only problem was how dangerous it is to walk on the road! We used the Walking Tour brochures from the Library. Lynne Monroe spoke about each building and Joni Praded took photographs. A summary article was posted on Kensington Connects.

Grange: The Grange has had new insulation installed in the attic which was paid for by private donations made to the town. The upgraded insulation will allow the building to remain open through the winter and keep heating costs down so that events can be hosted year-round. This past month there was a successful and fun artists' fair that took place, complete with live music; and a bridal shower hosted by someone from out of town. There will be 3 events coming up in October and several more suggestions for events in the future. Grange Trustees will determine if they will winterize the building as usual based on interest/applications for winter months and performance of the new insulation.

Union Meetinghouse: Restoration has begun on the Meetinghouse! Exterior work on the sheathing and roof repair has started. A steeplejack from VT is dismantling the steeple and doing the repairs.

Library: A rough sketch plan of the proposed library addition was brought in by the architects last week which showed the addition at the back of the building and 6-8 feet of additional space on the sides of the stack room. An elevator is proposed in the area where the bathrooms are currently located. There are some issues with code on the current stairway in the addition that need to be addressed during renovations. The Library Trustees have decided to move ahead with a warrant article in 2024 for the approval of the addition.

Historical Society/ Brick School update: A new roof has been installed on the back ell of the North School. The Historical Society has also hired an intern from UNH to start digitizing and organizing its collections. Lynne suggested talking to Margaret Perry, former librarian who helped document the items in the 90s and to talk to her about the archival process since she is a trained archivist!

National Register Nomination: Commission members looked over the draft Town Center Historic District Nomination together and made a few comments for consideration. The Town Center District nomination will be great publicity and a jumpstart to other projects. Lynne would like to get the Commission's approval of the nomination draft so the members have agreed to look over the latest draft and respond to her by Sunday evening (10/1). After that the nomination will be submitted to the NH Preservation Office for review. When it is approved, it will be sent to Washington for consideration by the Keeper of the National Register. Home owners will be notified and the Heritage Commission will hold informational meetings.

PlanNH Charette/Town Center: Meghan went to the PlanNH conference on 9/26 and reported on the main themes of community/ placemaking. She talked to the Director of PlanNH and the Heritage Commission has been invited to speak with them at a planning conference in Newcastle in November. Their presentation is about their charette process, like Kensington's in 2017. Meghan will follow up. Since the Charette, things have happened, like the formation of a Heritage Commission, campaign for use of the Grange, and the Town Center District nomination, but there are many more recommendations that haven't been implemented and should be revisited. The first step is the Town Center Historic District nomination that will call attention to the historic Town Center creating interest in revisiting the Charrette recommendations.

NEW BUSINESS

Other Business: Lynne posted the Community News article on Kensington Connects and asked for other ideas for the Facebook page. Joni suggested asking people "What is iconic about Kensington," "What are the landscapes and the houses that make Kensington 'Kensington'," or other things that make Kensington special as a community.

The NH Preservation Alliance is hosting two zoom presentations related to Heritage Commissions. Lynne invited the Commission members to attend and watch together. The Commission will meet in the Sawyer Room for lunch and watch the presentation on the big screen.

Frank Whittemore made a motion to adjourn at 8:12pm; Elaine Kaczmarek seconded it. Approved unanimously.

Next meeting will be Wednesday, October 25, 2023, 7:00 at the Town Hall.