

Historic District Commission/ Heritage Commission

Minutes of May 8, 2003

Present: T. Furlong, C. Pynn, G. Stearns, M. Stoltz, and P. Schena

1. Review and approval of April minutes

C. Pynn made a motion to accept the April minutes. M. Stoltz seconded the motion. The April minutes were accepted by unanimous vote.

2. Senior Center – Barbara Coish

Ron Coish, representing Barbara Coish and the Senior Center, attended the meeting to discuss the proposed addition to the Center. He described the proposed addition as a single story structure appropriately 28'x20' in size to be located on the west side of the existing building. He displayed preliminary plans, which were consistent with his presentation. He noted that the current design included a deck or farmer's porch to be located on the Rt. 111 side of the structure. He explained that the foundation of the addition would be freestanding poured concrete, positioned immediately adjacent to the existing stone foundation. Regarding other structural matters, Mr. Coish pointed out that the existing fireplace/chimney (currently not in use and in disrepair) would likely be removed and that the east side of the roof of the existing building will require repair. Finally, Mr. Coish explained that the existing building is vinyl-sided and requested that the Commission consider synthetic siding for the proposed addition. The Commission agreed review siding alternatives.

Based on Mr. Coish's presentation, the Commission expressed no reservations with the scale or scope of the project as currently planned.

3. Bartley House entry stairs – D. Sullivan

D. Sullivan attended the meeting to discuss the progress of the Bartley House project and to seek the Commission's input on replacing the entry stairs of the building. Mr. Sullivan explained that the original stairs were too small to be reused for that purpose and proposed two alternatives: 1) a 2-step, concrete platform to be completely covered in granite veneer with no rails or 2) 3 granite steps, rails, and platforms for the existing post supports. Mr. Sullivan further noted that the first alternative was the less expensive option and would include the construction of a walkway to the stairs.

After various questions and member discussion, T. Furlong made a motion that the Commission accept the proposal to install a concrete base with granite veneer covering the entire platform, including the sides of the platform, no rails, and a walkway leading to the stairs. C. Pynn amended the motion, adding that the original granite steps be retained for reuse in landscaping on the property. M. Stoltz seconded the amended motion. The motion was accepted by unanimous vote.

4. Windham Depot fence – M. Samsel

J. Mangan attended the meeting, representing himself and M. Samsel, to request they be allowed to extend a post and rail fence between the Windham Depot parking lot and Mr. Samsel's property and continue the fence perpendicular to the existing fence to prevent vehicle traffic from exiting the lot through a makeshift driveway. Mr. Mangan noted that he and M. Samsel would install the proposed fence at their expense.

Mr. Mangan addressed several questions posed. After member discussion, C. Pynn made a motion that Messer's Mangan and Samsel be permitted to install a post and rail fence between the Windham Depot parking lot and Mr. Samsel's property and to continue that fence perpendicular to the existing fence across the makeshift driveway. M. Stoltz seconded the motion. The motion was accepted by unanimous vote.

In the context of the fence discussion, Mr. Mangan further noted that the current light in the Depot parking lot is used largely in winter and only when turned on by town employees working in the area. Mr. Mangan proposed that the Commission consider the installation of a permanent, automatically activated light in the Depot parking lot for security and safety reasons. The Commission was receptive to this proposal. P. Schena agreed to refer the matter to D. Sullivan and the Board of Selectmen with the recommendation of the Commission.

5. Historic markers program

P. Schena proposed putting the historic marker program on the Commission's June agenda for finalization. Commission members agreed to finalize the program at that meeting.

In this context C. Pynn suggested that the Heritage Commission consider an initiative to document Windham barns. This idea was well received by Commission members. P. Schena further suggested that this project be included among those suitable as possible community service projects under the Commission's supervision.

6. Presentation and discussion of correspondences and/or other new issues

P. Schena discussed a meeting he attended with Wayne Morris of the Planning Board, sponsored by the Rockingham Planning Commission and the NH DOT and held to explain the use of ISTEA and CMAQ funding for local transportation-related projects. He noted considerable discussion at this meeting on the proposed "rails to trails" initiative and the possible role of the Windham Depot Historic District in the project. He suggested pursuing possible ISTEA/CMAQ funding for a possible preservation study of the Depot area as a first step. Finally he noted the July application deadline of the program, emphasizing that any action by the Commission toward this end be undertaken quickly. G. Stearns noted that ownership of the buildings in the Depot district was still in question. He suggested that as a priority, and in parallel, the Commission draft a letter to the Board of Selectmen requesting that the BOS seek ownership of the property from the state. P. Schena agreed to draft such a letter. P. Schena also agreed to research the details of commissioning an engineering study for the Depot that would be funded by the ISTEA and/or CMAQ programs.

P. Schena reported to the Commission that the Boy Scout who had contacted the Commission in search of an Eagle Scout project is instead pursuing a project with the Cemetery Commission.

7. Review of plan/project submissions

There were no project submissions to the Commission for consideration at the meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick J. Schena
Chairman, Windham Historic District Commission