

Calais Historical Preservation Commission

April 10th, 2024 - Zoom Only

Zoom only meeting – Attendees: David Schutz; Larry Bush; Susannah Blachly; Tobin Anderson; Jarrod Weiss

The meeting was called to order by Tobin Anderson at 8:07pm

1) Approval of minutes of February and March 2024 meetings. No changes to February minutes, Motion by Larry Bush, seconded by Susannah Blachly. Passed unanimously. No changes to March minutes. Motion by Larry Bush, seconded by Susannah Blachly. Passed Unanimously.

2) Thanks to David Schutz for his long-standing, successful years as chair of the Historic Preservation Commission. Tobin praised the work over the decades by David Schutz and his cranky perseverance. David spoke highly of the work over the years, the people who have been part of this commission, and the camaraderie of this current commission. We are considering having a summer event to celebrate David's tenure - including dancing, children, and music.

Discussion about growing the Commission to seven (7) members as suggested by the CLG guidelines. The Commission may be asked to present to the Selectboard as to meeting the suggested number of commissioners. Tobin is going to contact the Selectboard (Barbara) about how we are moving forward and David has already contacted Anne Winchester.

3) Curtis Pond Update: Still planning for construction this year, but they are still working on funding through different avenues. Jamie Moorby is confident that it is going to happen this summer and engineering work is on-going. Sen. Sanders was able to secure federal funds, but it is for the next fiscal year, so the group is still working with what they have at this time with the idea of bridging to the future. Tobin mentioned how the HPC does have some possible work with ornamental rock work and historic signage, both of which the HPC could facilitate a process for funding and creative assistance. David suggested signage at Camp Comfort and behind the Maple Corner Store, in addition to other possible projects on the accessory needs for the greater dam project. Most likely a post-construction project.

4) Adamant Community initiative: Larry Bush updated the group, including the land that the Adamant School of Music owns, the land to the east, the board is likely to sell that land in the next year and a half. That land is mostly forest and some small facilities, but that is a major item of discussion at the next meeting on May 4th. Larry wants to better understand how the HPC can continue to help and what the focal point for the future of the project should be. Tobin asked Larry if Ben Doyle (Preservation Trust of Vermont) would be at the May 4th meeting, but Larry did not believe that he would be in attendance. The group in Adamant continues to discuss the issue within the hamlet. Tobin mentioned the idea that those in Adamant have talked about with

the community owning the land that is being sold, so it could possibly be rented back to the school. David will be in communication with someone from Adamant who may be leading this effort, including Andy Christenson and others, about who is attending the meeting on May 4th, trying to ensure that Ben Doyle will be at that meeting. Larry suggested that it might be good for HPC members to want to go to the next meeting and the possibility of having members from the East Calais Community Trust in attendance as well so they could help with future building of a trust for Adamant.

5) 2022 CLG grant—Calais Town History Tour Project: Tobin started the discussion, and he and Susannah talked about needing people to fact check and look over the narratives to ensure accuracy. Susannah discussed how to approach individuals for their assistance and how to ensure feedback is structured and helpful. She and Tobin are going to discuss how to engage these individuals for their feedback. Tobin wants to ensure they have each section of the tour project rounded and complete so that people can focus their feedback. Susannah and Tobin are going to be another read through to ensure it is ready to be read by reviewers. Larry asked if Erica Heilman was the reader, but Tobin said it would be he and Susannah would be reading with Erica doing the production.

Susannah will be working to possibly contact these individuals:

Karen Lane - East Calais
Scott Bassage - East Calais
Linda Grey - Maple Corner
Steve Gallagher - Maple Corner
Donna Fitch - Kent's Corner
Curtis Johnson - North Calais

David discussed some of the various aspects of the grant and mentioned that we should be documenting those who are providing “in-kind” contributions. Also, creating that list and who has

Tobin discussed this next bullet point, who can we employ to create the website and online aspects of the project. Jarrod is going to connect the Town of Calais webmaster, Sarah, and Tobin to talk about the possibility of work on this project.

Tobin started a discussion about the Abenaki to ensure we have a proper and accurate portrayal for the tour. David asked if Jess Robinson has contacted Tobin, and he has not. Fred Wiseman is also someone that David is going to get into contact with. The hope is that in the next few weeks David will some text about the Abenaki history of Calais to include.

Susannah asked Tobin what we should be doing to scheduling Erica Heilman about her work on this project. Tobin agrees that we should be cognizant of Erica's time and start a conversation about her time commitment and her work on this project.

Susannah suggested to Tobin that she can take on the role of contacting the people need to help finish this project. She is also working with Ryan Edwards on the architectural parts of this project.

7) Ideas for a 2025 CLG grant?

Larry suggested there could be something to do with the Curtis Pond Dam. David suggested more conversation with the Adamant community and what grants could be available to them in the future. David mentioned the Maple Corner Historic Registry

Larry mentioned two “off the wall” ideas including the possibility of the future of the Old West Church. Susannah is going to take that idea to the Old West Church board. David wants to talk to Susannah and Donna Fitch about the Old West Church, the Robinson Sawmill, and the Kent. Susannah would like to bring the board together and have that conversation, including bringing these groups together. David mentioned including the Friends of the Calais Town Hall, creating an umbrella group for all of these various historic resources. Tobin talked about how the HPC started as a group of the someone from each of those boards and how they are now struggling to maintain a themselves. Maybe an umbrella group will help save the groups in the future.

The real “off the wall” thought from Larry - Wawaseekee Ashram in Worchester Road, in Calais. The Terra Nova Retreat Charitable Trust. The trust has purchased all the land, including Hawkins Pond. The HPC wants to take a field trip in May to meditate, find our inner self, find our center, while learning more about this interesting site in Calais.

8) Public Comment for non-agenda items

May 10th at the Old Meeting House in East Montpelier to discuss the bicentennial of both Town Meeting Houses in East Montpelier and Calais. The presentation will be conducted by Jan Lewendosky, Nancy Boone, David Schutz, Liz Pritchett. “Tale of Two Meeting Houses” talk. 7pm.

Adjourned by unanimous acclamation at 9:03 pm.