

TOWN OF CALAIS
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES
October 12, 2022

Meeting called to order at 7:05pm.

Present: David Schütz (Chair), Larry Bush (Vice Chair), Susannah Blachly, Ryan Edwards, Linda Gray (Guest), Reed Cherington (Guest)

Members Absent: Tobin Anderson

1. AGENDA REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS

- The meeting Agenda was unanimously approved.
- It was discussed and decided that beginning with next month's (November) meeting that approximate times for line items on the agenda will be included such that meeting duration is kept to approximately one (1) hour.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

- The minutes of the last meeting were unanimously approved.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT (Sharing historic preservation concerns, information, or activities in the community)

- Larry noted that the community walk on the Ellis-Bruce Trail led by Toni Kaeding as part of the Calais Fall Foliage Fest (sponsored by the Calais Conservation Commission, Calais Historic Preservation Commission, and the Calais Trails Committee) was an enormous success with great turnout. He noted that Devin Colman (Vermont State Architectural Historian) and Jess Robinson (Vermont State Archaeologist) will be visiting the historic sites along the trail with Toni on Tuesday, October 18th at 2:00pm.
- Susannah noted that preparations, including music and local dancers, are underway for celebrating the 200th anniversary of Old West Church (c. 1823) next summer.
- Davis noted that the "Interplay" exhibit at Art of the Kent has come to a close and was an enormous success including record crowds, which at one point saw cars parked all the way to the wetlands on Kent Hill Rd. and up to Janet Ancel's house on Old West Church Rd.
- Linda Gray, Guest, shared that the contra dance held at Town Hall as part of the Calais Fall Foliage Fest was a huge success with approximately 50 people in attendance. She also shared that attendees at the event expressed interest in having future contra dance events at Town Hall.

- Ryan shared general updates on Memorial Hall and the East Calais General Store.
4. UPDATE REGARDING 2021 CLG GRANT (Maple Corner Historic District National Register Nomination)
- David shared that the current draft of the nomination has been submitted to Devin Colman for initial review at the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation (DHP; the “Division”), but that the Commission is welcome to continue their review and feedback at this time.
 - Upon initial review of the draft, Devin Colman informed David that the desire to include Camp Comfort and the swim area will not be approved by the Division as he feels it is a reach to expand the proposed district to that area. David noted to the Commission and attending guests that although the final draft will need to remove this component, we certainly will retain all of the narrative associated with Camp Comfort, and any other components of the narrative that may be removed during review by the Division, for general historic documentation of Maple Corner.
 - David provided a general overview of the next steps and noted that once review of the draft is completed by Devin Colman at the Division, and by members and guests of the Commission, that it would then be formally submitted to the Vermont Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (“Advisory Council”).
 - Both Linda Gray and Reed Cherington, Guests, have reviewed the document and have modifications/corrections that they would like made to the document for accuracy. Linda noted that it’s important for the narrative to be as accurate as possible given the significance of the document as a historical record.
 - Linda and Reed agreed to meet soon to review their respective modifications and will email said changes to David as soon as they are compiled. David will then share them with Brian McKnight.
 - Linda noted that Dirk Van Susteren is also intending to review the nomination narrative.
 - David noted that we should know by our next meeting (November) when the draft will be sent to the Advisory Council.
5. 2022 CLG GRANT (Calais Town History Tour Project)
- Susannah provided a general update on the project in addition to the notes the Commission received via email on October 10th from Member Tobin Anderson who is working with Susannah on the project:
 - Susannah and Tobin met to discuss the creation of a pilot script for the first few locations. They’ve decided to start the tour in Kents Corner, because that provides an opportunity to discuss the founding of the town. Each of them will write a few entries, which, when read, each should take only about 2-3 minutes max. Their current list of topics is:
 - Founding of the town
 - Abijah Wheelock cabin site – first white settlers
 - Robinson Mill
 - Kent house/first store/shoe factory

- Old West Church (SB) / Millerite ascension from Old West
 - Susannah and Tobin have set themselves a deadline of January 1st for this first batch of topics.
- Susannah noted that they will eventually require input from others outside of the Commission, but that they will need to find a balance of how much outside input to receive
- David noted that the budget for this project is a bit more complicated than one in which we simply hire a paid outside consultant, and so we should revisit the budget at a future meeting to ensure that Susannah and Tobin have access to the funding they require.
- David noted that additional grants will become available at the end of the year and that we should consider whether we should apply for additional funding given the breadth of the project.
- Linda Gray recommended to Susannah that they should reach out to Nel Emlen who used to give historic district tours to children a long time ago.
- Reed Cherington recommended reaching out to Donna Fitch to which David noted that he's been in close contact with her.
- Susannah noted that she's been talking with others in the community who may be interested in assisting with the project, but who might not be formally interested in joining the Commission.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

- General discussion was had about people in the community who might be a good fit to join the Commission as the Commission currently has four (4) vacancies. Further discussion of this topic will remain ongoing.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 9, 2022 @ 7:00pm (Calais Town Hall)