

Randolph Historical Commission

Final version

Minutes of Meeting September 1, 2010

Present:

Meeting was reconvened at 7:00pm at Stetson Hall

Present: Chairman Henry Cooke, Susan Ryan, Alan Banks, Joe Griffin and Mary West. Also in attendance:

Kevin Allen from Massachusetts Dept of Conservation & Recreation (DCR)

Ron Lum from the Community Preservation Commission (CPC).

Absent: none

Excused: Lallie Falls and Lesly Freed

Minutes of August 17th, 2010 meeting: accepted

Correspondence:

- No correspondence

Reports:

- Design review board – no report
- Community Preservation Commission –
 - Town Planner Richard McCarthy gave notice that he is leaving Randolph to accept a similar position in Dedham
 - There will be a CPC meeting on Wed Sept 8th at 5:30pm at Town Hall to discuss our request to reallocate \$10,000 from its original purpose of roof replacement on the Royal Stetson House (660 North Street) to hire a structural engineer to evaluate the north wall.
- Arts in the Park – Susan reported that 2 books (“Beneath the Elms”) were sold; the weather made it difficult (heavy rain) on August 22nd. Thank you very much Susan for volunteering your time.

Old Business:

- Royal/Stetson House at 660 North Street –
 - Update on Repair plans – need to determine if north wall is structurally sound so we can proceed with the new roof and other next steps; CPC will meet next week; Ron Lum attended the meeting and he agreed to go to the property at 660 North Street to evaluate its condition. He felt strongly that the \$10K should be for the roof and not for more studies. The Commission was very appreciative of Ron’s offer to volunteer his professional services in this regard.
 - Update on Reuse plans:
 - Chairman reported Randolph School Committee and Chairman Santos are excited about discussing a partnership with the Historical Commission on local history.
 - Susan reported that her contact Charlie at Massasoit Community College provided leads for possible internship or other collaborative opportunities
 - Historic Curatorship Program – discuss with Kevin Allen from DCR
 - Overview of the state’s Historic Curatorship Program: Within the Commonwealth’s 450,000 acres of State and Urban Parks are a number of unused, historically significant buildings. Over time, these properties have

fallen prey to the elements and vandalism. The Historic Curatorship Program was established in to preserve these properties through a unique public-private partnership. Through the program, DCR partners with a Curator who agrees to rehabilitate, manage and maintain a historic property in return for a long-term lease. As a result, DCR secures the long-term preservation of threatened historic sites and Curators exchange their hard work and unique skills for the opportunity to live or work in a one-of-a-kind location. Curators are selected through an open and competitive process and proposed reuses must be compatible with the historic and natural character of the park or forest. Proposals are evaluated according to the experience of the applicant, the quality of the reuse plan, proof of sufficient resources to undertake the project, and level of public benefit beyond providing biannual public access. Average lease terms range from 20 to 30 years. The program was created in 1994 and allows outside parties to rehabilitate, manage and maintain these invaluable historical resources in return for a long term lease. Curators contribute their investment, skills and hard work in order to live or work in a historical property. Properties which were previously eyesores and liabilities have been transformed into valuable assets that compliment or enhance the local area at little cost to the citizens.

Gatekeeper's House, Lowell Heritage State Park, Lowell



Before



After

- The program requirements include:
 - Cost assessment and/or Current condition report, including testing for hazardous materials and abatement
 - Lease must be a minimum of 5 years, and generally ends after 25 years (but can be negotiated for longer such as 35 years if property needs extensive work)
 - DCR property projects must always be used for conversation; we may have more flexibility at the municipal level
 - Process must be open, transparent and competitive
 - Minimum requirements for public access and public benefit need to be clearly outlined and understood, such as open to the public 2 times annually; list the number of programs and the dates for educational functions, etc
- The Request for Proposal (RFP) needs to be very extensive and detailed:

- Work must be done in accordance with Secretary of the Interior standards and it must pass all inspections for occupancy
 - Preservation restriction is needed
 - Recommend having an Open House for potential curators to see property first and ask questions
 - Key requirements include applicant's experience, finances and work plan/schedule
 - Kevin has developed a mailing list that includes historical, governmental, non-profits and local contractors
 - A property in Plymouth has started a non-profit organization to raise money; they also have a blog for communication
 - Progress updates – recommend checking in every other week with the curator; obtain copies of all permits to keep on file
 - If a fair market value (FMV) is needed to be calculated for the “monthly lease”, then take the cost of the repairs divided by the term of the lease.
 - Subleasing is legal with this program
 - If we are not ready to proceed with RFP, we could start with an Expression of Interest to gauge interest
 - Focus on the exterior and be very specific in naming any interior features that need restoration in the RFP
- Historical Commission website – no update.
 - Office at Stetson Hall – offer of excess shelving (donation) of excess furniture from National Park Service (Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site) in Brookline on Saturday; need to borrow a pick up truck

New Business:

- Facebook: Susan proposed that we look into using social media such as Facebook to let the public know about the Royal Stetson house, including ways they could help with its restoration

Next Meeting: Sept 22, 2010 at 7:00pm
 Meeting Adjourned: 9:00pm