

DURHAM HISTORIC DISTRICT /HERITAGE COMMISSION
Thursday April 7, 2011
DURHAM TOWN HALL -COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MEMBERS PRESENT, Leslie Schwartz, chair; Henry Smith, vice chair; Andrea Bodo secretary ; Peter Stanhope ,Town Council rep; Peter Wolfe, Planning Board rep; Erich Ingelfinger, Crawford Mills

MEMBERS ABSENT: none

OTHERS PRESENT: 8 students from UNH Political Science class

I. CALL TO ORDER 7:07p

II. Approval of Agenda, Peter Stanhope made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Peter Wolfe

III. Approval of Minutes :

Dec minutes - Peter Stanhope made a motion to approve the Dec minutes, seconded by Crawford Mills
Feb minutes - Peter Stanhope made a motion to approve the Dec minutes, seconded by Crawford Mills
Henry Smith abstained

IV. New Business

A. Preparation for May mtg.

Peter Stanhope thanked Crawford Mills for his dedicated service to the Commission these past few years.
Chair Schwartz said she would like the committee to consider election of officers next month.

B. Chair Schwartz asked Andrea Bodo to be responsible for getting the KEY for future mtgs. Agreed.

C. Andrea Bodo asked if a request could be sent to the Town Council to install a push button system or electronic fob system. Chair Schwartz will send a letter to Todd Selig.

D. Chair Schwartz asked Peter Stanhope if there was any plan B if HDC is unable to make a quorum.
He will research an answer

V. Old Business

A. GRANGE

Peter Stanhope gave a report of the presentation before the Town Council by developer Peter Murphy, Nick Isaak and Mike Sievert

This was the first time that a developer had stepped forward with a proposal for work force housing and handicap access. In general, the Town Council was pleased with the Proposal. The building did not have any parking but it was the feeling of the Council that there would be other opportunities for parking spaces in nearby lots.

The only issue of concern that came up was RS 79-E. It was the feeling of the Council that it would be better to forgo the tax relief and lower the asking price.

Peter Stanhope raised the question of Signage and what would the HDC like to see if anything. It was agreed that it would be nice to have signage but it needs to be appropriate for this historical building

Peter Wolfe will bring the HDC concerns of signage to the PB. Peter Wolfe said there would be a Public Hearing and he recommended that the HDC send a letter that any Signage on the building is to be reviewed and approved by the HDC.

Eric Ingelfinger expressed concern about shed dormers and roof pitch. After discussion with the Commission, it was felt that it would be helpful to ask Nick Isaak, project architect, to present and discuss his design with the HDC.

Peter Stanhope suggested that we wait until the Town enters into a contract with Mr Murphy and then request the plans be brought back to the HDC.

End of discussion

B. Andrea passed out Position Statement:

Historic Preservation and Sustainability from the National Trust for Historic Preservation for members to be review and discuss as a possible addition to the Historic District section of the Master Plan.

B. HERITAGE COMMISSION DISCUSSION –

The Commission discussed the need for moving forward with defining THE COMMISSION'S ROLE AS HERITAGE COMMISSION.

Eric Ingelfinger volunteered to work on this project with Henry Smith and report back in June.

Andrea suggested they contact Maggie Stier NH Preservation Alliance as a resource.

D. Smith Chapel restoration process

Roofing on Smith Chapel to start April 11. Leslie showed one of the new slates that will be used.

Andrea discussed having a community fundraiser for the Chapel selling the slates. She will contact Sandy Devins new Director of Parks and Rec. Leslie suggested that a list be made of the uses of the slate to be posted at the table. Andrea will contact Mike Lynch to see where possible locations could be to sell slates. Leslie feels that it should be where there is high foot traffic.

E. Moose Plate grants

Andrea has written and submitted two grants - \$10k from Preservation / \$15k from Council on the Arts for restoration of stained glass windows.

The State will make the decisions in June whether or not Durham is awarded anything.

F. CLG grant

Andrea submitted the LETTER OF INTENT on March 31st. see attached. Awaiting outcome before the CLG grant is written and submitted.

G. MPAC Update

Chair Schwartz said this is ongoing....

H. Chair Schwartz is working with Dick Lord for a possible collaboration with the Historical Society

VI. Adjournment @ 8:30P

Peter Stanhope moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30p, seconded by Crawford Mills.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Bodo, Secretary HDC/Heritage Commission
4/7/2011

NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF HDC is Thursday May 5, 2011
These minutes approved 6/2/2011

March 29, 2011

Deborah J. Gagne
Grants Coordinator
NH Division of Historical Resources
19 Pillsbury Street
Concord, NH 03301
603-271-3559

Dear Ms Gagne,

On behalf of the Historic District/Heritage Commission in the Town of Durham, NH , I am hereby sending you this LETTER OF INTENT to start the process of applying for a CLG grant to fund the PRESERVATION COMPANY to prepare the application of the Smith Chapel in Durham New Hampshire, nominating it to the National Register . The Chapel is owned by the Town of Durham.

Attached is a RESOLUTION #2011-04 from the Durham Town Council endorsing the listing of Smith Chapel on the National Park's Service National Register of Historic Places List.

Per your instructions to obtain a "qualified architectural historian", Todd Selig placed a public notice in the paper and Town of Durham website. We ran an open process. The Preservation Company was the most qualified firm based upon information provided for our specific purposes, and that firm is also the only respondent which provided a price.

We have selected The Preservation Company 5 Hobbs Road □ Kensington, NH 03833 (which is on the NHDHR list of approved consultants).

History of the Smith Chapel

The Smith Family Chapel, built in the 1900's in memory of the late Hamilton Smith is a treasured landmark in the town of Durham. It was the family Chapel until the death of Mrs Onderdonk's daughter in 1983. The Town has rented it out for weddings and numerous parties until about 3 yrs ago. The structure has developed a leaking (slate) roof which contributes to moisture inside this Chapel and erosion around Redding Baird stained glass windows. The Chapel was modeled after St Margaret's Church in Somersby, England where the father of Alfred Lord Tennyson was rector. Many people go to visit Smith Chapel for it's beauty, it's history and it's tranquility . It is nestled in the woods off Mill Road in the Red Tower neighborhood. As stewards of this historically significant structure in Durham, the HDC/HC would like to move forward with nominating this Chapel to the National Register. The application process to the NHDHR received Determination Of Eligibility on 2.23.2011.

Hamilton Smith

Hamilton Smith (July 5, 1840 - July 4, 1900), was the grandson of Judge Valentine Smith of Durham was born in Louisville, Kentucky. When he was five years old he came to Durham to live with his grandfather and his Aunt, Miss Mary E. Smith. She was the town librarian for many years. Hamilton Smith attended the Durham Academy before returning to live with his father, also named Hamilton, who had acquired large coal mines in Indiana. Young Hamilton soon became familiar with many branches of mining and by 1870 was a leading American mining expert especially in hydraulic mining about which he wrote the standard nineteenth century work.

He became a consulting engineer for the Rothchild's of London and was a well known figure in South Africa, Alaska, South America and California. In 1886 he formed the Exploration Co. Limited, which did the blasting for the London Underground. He made his headquarters in London but moved his office to New York 10 years later following the purchase of land and buildings in Durham (his 77 acre Main Street Red Tower Estate which went down to the Mill Pond).

Hamilton Smith married Mrs. Charles Congreve (Congreve rockets) in 1886, in London, born Alice Jennings of New Orleans, Louisiana and it was she, his widow, Mrs. Alice (Congreve) Hamilton Smith (April 18, 1850 - March 15, 1906) who had the chapel erected in his memory. He gave \$10,000 for the Valentine Smith scholarships and another \$10,000 towards a town library in which his Aunt Mary was interested. This last sum helped to defray part of the cost of construction of the building now named Hamilton Smith Hall at the University of New Hampshire.

In her will, Mrs. Hamilton Smith provided that after the death of her daughter by her first marriage, Edith Angela Congreve (Mrs. Shirley Onderdonk), the residue of the Hamilton Smith estate, after all bequests had been made, was to be divided equally between Dartmouth College and the University of New Hampshire. The University's share with a book value of \$128,846.91, known as the Alice Hamilton Smith Fund, was borrowed from to pay for building the first wing of Congreve Hall. Mrs. Onderdonk gave \$10,000 towards the cost of Smith Hall named in memory of her mother. The gift to the town of Durham of the Hamilton Smith Memorial Chapel and of an endowment fund of \$5,000 for its upkeep, was made by Mrs. Onderdonk's daughter Alice Hamilton Onderdonk (Mrs. Lloyd van da Linda).

This fund has since been used and the Town struggles to maintain this Chapel. The Town has bonded \$71k to do the urgent repairs to save this historic treasure.

It is our hope that we might be able to obtain a CLG grant to undertake the process of listing the Chapel on the National Register and hopefully we would be in a better position to apply for grants to help restore the Chapel.

Sincerely,

Andrea Bodo

Contact person :

Todd I. Selig, Administrator
Town of Durham, New Hampshire
T. 603.868.5571 || F. 603.868.5572

tselig@ci.durham.nh.us || www.ci.durham.nh.us