

Hollis Heritage Commission

Town of Hollis, Hollis, NH 03049

Date: 27 April, 2021

Members Present: Honi Glover, Wendy Trimble, Karla Vogel, Doug Nye, Sharon McCaffrey, Michael Bates, David Sullivan, Susan Benz, Aurelia Perry

Members Absent: Jan Larmouth

Meeting: Called to order: 7:03pm. Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes: March 2021

Approved with amendments – motion by Honi; 2nd by Sharon.

**** Please see addendum attachments to these minutes: research regarding Cooper Shop origins ****

Business: Welcoming Sharon, now officially a member, and Cassandra, to her first meeting! We are delighted to have them.

Calendar: Letters have gone out to all of our sponsors, and checks are starting to come in. Months are filling up! Wendy has put out more reminders on Hollis Facebook pages for photographs. We are still considering whether to up our regular print run of 400 calendars to 450 or 500. We are also discussing whether the price will remain \$10.

Drive-It Day: We are considering starting at the Lawrence Barn, having a nice drive, and ending at the Gambrel Barn for social-distancing picnicking. Karla suggested possibly touring the Farley Building as a middle destination. We are looking at June 5th, starting at the Lawrence Barn at 9:30am, having a mini car show for half an hour next to the Heritage Commission Cooper Shop foundation. Following that, we'll have about an hour drive, stopping at either the Farley Building and/or the Gambrel Barn. We will ask for a donation to sign up to join the event; as usual, there will be waiver forms to be signed.

Old Home Days: September 11. We don't yet know how extensive the celebration will be able to be, this year, with the pandemic, but we want to at least join the parade.

Cooper Shop: Dave and Doug have been up to the White Barn to look at the available materials. They will continue to review the original timbers, as well as the replacements donated by Honi, and begin laying out the plan. Karla has the contact information of a few people who were interested in assisting, and will reach out to them.

History of the Cooper Shop: With difficult and painstaking logistics, the Noah Dow Cooper Shop was dismantled and put into storage 14 years ago. Wendy reports that within the past couple of weeks it has been brought to our attention via a 3rd-party e-mail that the landowners/residents of the lot on which the Cooper Shop was originally located, who were going to demolish the Cooper Shop, are now disappointed in and hurt by the lack of recognition for their 'donation' to the Town. The residents have also approached some of the Selectmen regarding their grievance. Wendy went through the HHC meeting minutes from that time, newspaper notices, and records, to understand how the Cooper Shop came to the attention and ultimately the conservatorship of the HHC. In 2006, the residents applied for a demolition permit for the Cooper Shop, original to their property. The HHC heard about the

demolition, asked if they may preserve the building, and were declined by the residents – who wanted the structure gone without interference and had already arranged a deadline for the demolition. Further exploration with the Selectmen determined that the building was unsafe where it was; it was not feasible to preserve it in its original location. Nevertheless, word of an original cooper shop, hardly changed or touched by time, spread throughout the state; preservationists wanted to photograph the structure, and raised awareness of the possibility of moving it and saving it. Various acrobatics ensued, including Release of Liability documents; purchase of the building from the residents for \$1 by David Sullivan; newspaper involvement; a notarized, 3-page insurance waiver to cover the residents for any responsibility; a blog about trying to save the historic building; a rush to take the Cooper Shop down in late November before the residents' hard-and-fast December 1st demolition; continual refusals by the residents to delay demolition. Newspapers documented the tremendous volunteer effort, spearheaded by Honi Glover and David Sullivan, put forth to save the historic structure in the face of the unrelenting residents, and imminent destruction. Once the Noah Dow Cooper Shop was finally, successfully and heroically documented, dismantled, and safe in storage, David Sullivan donated the historic building to the Town for the purpose of its ultimate re-erection and restoration. The large volunteer effort did not include the residents, who additionally did not allow driveway access or volunteer parking at the time of the dismantling and were adamant that their property be left in an untouched condition following what they insisted was a great inconvenience to them – despite the fact that the Cooper Shop was taken down prior to what would have been their demolition date, and despite the fact that the volunteers saved the residents the demolition fee. (The residents' neighbors did allow volunteer parking, and supported the effort.)

Dave pointed out that many of the hard-working volunteers, particularly Honi Glover, should be the ones receiving any public recognition for saving the Cooper Shop, rather than those who wanted nothing to do with it but destroy it. Dave further pointed out that the work to restore and raise the building has been going on for nearly 14 years, and is not over; this is an odd time for a demand for recognition – let alone thanks for something clearly being misremembered.

Doug suggested that when the building is completed, there be a small plaque installed inside to list all the volunteers who helped save and resurrect it. The original road location of the building is well-known, and will always be part of its history. The landowners/residents provided no donation and no cooperation – but in the face of outside historical outcry reluctantly allowed what they wanted destroyed to be taken away for preservation, as long as it in no way affected them, delayed the demolition, or touched their property otherwise for any length of time.

Susan will speak with Mark LeDoux regarding the “recognition” and gratitude issue, which Mark has recently broached to Susan. Wendy has offered to illustrate her findings on the situation for Mark and the Selectmen, with her substantial research and documentation.

Woodmont Properties: Huge thank-you to Doug, who got the rutted parking area at Woodmont graded! It is now in much better condition. Additionally, since Doug fixed the storyboard signs with washer buffers, the humidity has not been an issue, and the informative boards look great.

Doug brought up the question of installing a couple of picnic tables for the Woodmont area; we will look into whether that would be within the purview of the usage of the place. Susan pointed out that any resulting garbage might be the only concern.

Hollis Historic District Commission: Michael reports that there haven't been any new applications; rebuilding on the Main St. property that was recently demolished is the only big thing that is being looked at.

Farley Building: Karla reports that the committee hasn't had official meetings lately, in favor of meeting with consultants regarding restoration. They are continuing to look at cost and procedure for renovation for offices and ongoing function.

Meeting adjourned at 8:16pm. Motion by Doug, 2nd by Aurelia.

Next Meeting to be held at 7pm in the Community Room, Tuesday, May 25.

Respectfully submitted by Aurelia Perry.