



TOWN OF LEDYARD

Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Chairman
Vincent Godino

Regular Meeting

Monday, January 22, 2024

7:00 PM

Town Hall Annex -Hybrid Format

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting was called to order by Chairman Godino at 7:02 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present Commissioner William Barnes
Commissioner Douglas Kelley
Chairman Vincent Godino
Alternate Member Kenneth Geer
Commissioner Earl Lamb
Non-voting Alternate Member Kelly Lamb

Also in attendance:
Karen and Keith Parkenson.

III. APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES

Ken Geer was appointed as a voting member.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Motion to APPROVE the Regular Meeting minutes from December 18, 2023, as written.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Earl Lamb

SECONDER: William Barnes

AYE 5 Barnes Kelley Godino Geer Lamb

V. FISCAL REPORTS

1. Financial Reports.

The fiscal year is half over. The Commission will be able to finish up the projects this fiscal year. The projects include maintenance, electrical, barn door squeeze in French drain (a priority). The barn door requires a significant change to the exterior.

Preservation of School house - \$1,500.00 is in the budget. The windows need to be re-glazed and

caulked. There are approximately ten windows.

The Preservation account hasn't been set up yet.

Siding of the Mill will cost approximately 20-30K.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Sawmill Committee - Mr. Barnes.

Damns are registered with the State. Damns cannot be worked on without the State being involved. Permits G5 and G16 are needed.

Beth Ackly will perform a structural assessment in the coming months. A Handicap access is included in the structural assessment.

The Boy Scouts reached out about assisting with a project, possibly with a pavilion, which will in turn help them earn their Eagle Scout badge. The pavilion is a large task, maybe landscaping or picnic tables would be a better project for them.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

2. Nathan Lester House - Mr. Kelley.

Chairman Godino reported that the RFP failed to post and will need to be resubmitted with new dates. Two contractors have approached Chairman Godino, he feels both candidates are good. The walk through is on Saturday January 27, 2024.

December

The year 2023 closed with the Yuletide event at the Lester House, hosted jointly by the Historic District Commission, the Ledyard Historic Society, and the Ledyard Garden Club. As the "Fog of War" movie exhibit remained in place, décor by the Garden Club was 1940s themed. Despite thorough drenching, carolers from Ledyard High School performed, singing sheltered in the front bay of the main barn to a group of hardy celebrants. Coordination with the Historic Society continued; plans for a fresh inventory of the contents of the house and barns. The Society is reviewing a proposed electronic inventory system. Activity - including participation of our tenant-caretaker - will commence in the new year.

While plans have been made to retain the 1941 staging of the Fog of War movie, the Committee was approached via the Mayor's office by Cinetica Filmes e Producoes LTDA in late December. They were interested in using the house and grounds for a film, beginning in early January. A representative of the Art Department, Amauri Vinci, met with us, accompanied by Kristen Chapman, Mayoral Assistant to view the house, on December 21, 2023. Upon subsequent approval by the art department, director and producers, an offer was made to the Town, and being out of the Commission's normal meeting cycle - that offer was accepted by the Commission via email polling.

\$4,000 total is to come to the Commission for any distribution, and \$200 to our tenant-caretaker family. A cleanup of the house, with removal of seasonal decorations, was conducted December 28, 2023, with participation from the Garden Club and tenant-caretakers. Some advance planning was handled between the Mayor's office and the film.

January

Working to support the new film began in earnest on January 3, 2024, with the arrival of the Art Department. As a result of that meeting, it was agreed to paint the dining room, as with the aggressive schedule and the holidays, a painting contractor could not be engaged. Filming began with the arrival of the full crew on Saturday, January 6, 2024. The film "The Fox Sisters," is set in 1848 in upstate New York. The Fox family figured prominently in the beginnings of the Spiritualist Movement in the United States. While the production company and much of the crew is out of Brazil, many of the actors are American and the movie will be in English. Our New England weather very graciously provided snow that same night, and many of our visitors were able to experience snow for the first time.

As most of the filming had already been done in Brazil and in upstate New York, the scenes inside and outside the Lester House were quickly accomplished by about 10:30 pm, January 8, 2024. The Art Department returned the next day to complete a clean-up and return as much of the collection to its pre-film state. Since there is maintenance planned for the off season and plans for the Fog of War exhibit are not definite, the normal exhibit has not yet been reinstated. Most of the paintings lent for Fog of War have been returned to the lenders, but they may be recalled if that exhibit is restaged.

Scheduled for this month is a "Lessons Learned" meeting to review what went well with both movies and what could be improved. The Commission would like to be as prepared as possible for any future movie productions should they come along. Although it is not anticipated that this will be a major use of time or as income to depend upon but would like to be prepared.

The major weather events in January have not been a problem, but the large amount of rain has helped move planning for drainage to priority planning.

On Saturday the 13th, potential restoration contractors met at the house to review the scope of work on the east side of the house, and to ask any questions. We expect proposals to be returned by early February. One interesting outcome of this meeting was the observation by these experienced contractors that the Lester House almost certainly predates the official 1793 construction date.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

3. Research/Preservation - Mr. Lamb.

Gained approval to begin work on the proposed historic park across from 85 Lambtown Road with GOSA. Prior work completed included the base historic sign, Land preparation plans and a draft 3D layout of the pollinator garden. The main sign is completed. Additionally, in the process of laying out plans for the pollinator garden, which the Garden Club prior stated they would partner with the Committee.

Spicer Place - Members of the LHDC attended the Land use committee and gain agreement on path

forward.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

4. Center School - Mr. Geer.

Mr. Geer received estimates from John Kelly for the school windows. The Committee agreed that the rates were reasonable and Mr. Kelly's work is exceptional.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

5. Social Media.

Possibility to start a new Instagram account. Mr. Kelley has experience with Instagram. Social media could be used to raise awareness and run ideas in between announcements. Also, could feature before and after renovations of historical houses in Town.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Any Other Old Business to come before the Commission.

New Volunteers:

Ammie M. Chittim, PH. D., R.P. A.

Karen Parkinson

Both volunteers have applied for Commission positions through Town Council.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

IX. NEW BUSINESS

1. Election of Officers -
Chairperson.
Vice-Chairperson.
Secretary.

Chairman:

Chairman Godino would like to step down from the Chairman position and remain on the Commission as an alternate. Nomination for Mr. Lamb.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Doug Kelley

SECONDER: Kenneth Geer

AYE: 4 Barnes Geer Godino Kelley

ABSTAIN 1 Lamb

Secretary: This vote was tabled until the new members are seated on the Commission.

Vice-Chairman: Nominations for Mr. Barnes and Mr. Kelly. Mr. Kelly said he would rather the position go to Mr. Barnes.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Vincent Godino

SECONDER: Kenneth Geer

AYE 5 Barnes Kelley Godino Geer Lamb

2. Any Other New Business to come before the Commission.

Decatur preservation:

Mr. Kelly sent the original letter about its preservation; a follow-up letter will be sent. The Commission needs to be more proactive in the future to be sure this doesn't happen again. Perhaps use social media to keep ahead and aware.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

X. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to ADJOURN the Regular Meeting at 8:10 p.m.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: William Barnes

SECONDER: Kenneth Geer

AYE 5 Barnes Kelley Godino Geer Lamb

DISCLAIMER: Although we try to be timely and accurate these are not official records of the Town.