

**Town of Grantham  
Planning Board Meeting Minutes  
November 1, 2018**

**APPROVED**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Carl Hanson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room of the Grantham Town Hall located at 300 Route 10 South in Grantham, NH.

**Present:** Chairman Hanson, Vice Chair Peter Guillette, C. Peter James, Mary Hutchins, Selectmen's Representative Warren Kimball and Clerk Stuart Kaufman

**Applicants and Members of the Public:** Jonathan Gilday, Rae Tober, Renee Gustafson, Richard Hocker, Sheridan Brown, Mark Lewis, Marilyn Lewis, Max Bryant, Nancy King, Karen Blum, Sandy Kerekes, Jane Deane Clark, Cindy Towle, Roy Miner, Paul Dorr, Terry Dorr, Chip Pattin, Joey Holman

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Hanson proposed to the Board, putting off the approval of the October 4, 2018 minutes because the copy was missing sentences from the bottom of page two.

**III. NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Proposed Zoning Board Amendments #11-2018-01; Conrad Frey, Chair of the Zoning Board.** Mr. Frey, who was going to present to the Board, was unable to attend. The presentation has been postponed until the December meeting.

**IV. OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **Site Plan Review #11-2018-02; GrAy Ledges Condo Association – Proposed Old Brick Building Demo M/L 232/001.**

Chairman Hanson said he had received a report from the Bedard Preservation and Restoration LLC – A narrative and photographs with observations and conclusions from a July 7, 2018 inspection funded by a Preservation Services Grant from the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance. Chair Hanson also received a correspondence from the Gray Ledges Board of Directors, dated October 9, 2018.

Chairman Hanson asked Max Bryant and Jonathan Gilday, residents presenting on behalf of the Gray Ledges Association, to summarize the current status of the proposal taking into account the additional information from Bedard Preservation and Restoration LLC.

Mr. Bryant stated that the Association tried to fulfill the request of the Board and get additional information from an outside source that had a preservation background. Mr. Bryant said the Association followed the Planning Board's guidance on a letter from the N.H. Preservation and Alliance which contacted the board within the last 12 months. Mr. Bryant said he personally contacted the N.H. Preservation and Alliance and Gray Ledges put in a mini-grant to fund the proposal. He said the N.H. Preservation and Alliance recommended Steve Bedard, whose proposal the Board received from the Association. Mr. Bryant said that Mr. Bedard came in the spring and assessed the condition of the building and submitted a report in September, which was presented to the Board. Mr. Bryant said the Association at this point is hoping that the Board make a decision on what the Gray Ledges Condo Association should do moving forward.

Chairman Hanson confirmed the Association's request remained the same - to demolish the brick building. He noted that a couple of hearings have taken place regarding the proposal. He then open up the meeting, allowing discussion and comments from the abutters and the public.

**Sheridan Brown – Resident**

- Asked the Board if they're at a point where it can make a decision on the proposal. He also asked if the Board was going to uphold the condition and get together in a fund-raising effort or, if the building is taken down, is there going to be a plan on how it will be replaced- maintaining the character, preserving the resources in a way to maintain the Building's historical and cultural value.
- Referred to the minutes of the April 5, 2018 Planning Board meeting and the list of specific items the board asked from the Association to move forward and consider the application for demolition.
- Asked about a compromise that maintains the history of the area and look of the community. In addition, Mr. Brown stated that he hoped the compromise doesn't impose an unreasonable burden now that the Association has an objective estimate.

**Rae Tober – Representative of the Grantham Historical Society**

- Noted the Society's role in preserving and keeping Grantham's history intact
- Made a proposal that people from the Society be allowed into the building to procure information regarding the building's historical value.

**Renee Gustafson – Resident**

- Asked about the availability of the report

Chair Hanson noted conclusions in Mr. Bedard's report regrading deferred maintenance, restoration and cost to properly save the structure.

**Jane Deane Clarke – Resident**

- Provided a scenario detailing the agreement and stipulations between the Town of Grantham, Mr. Earl Thompson and the Gray Ledgers Condo Association to maintain and restore the building.
- Voiced the opinion that the decision by the Gray Ledgers Condo Association to tear down the building due to the cost of restoration and not considering the historical significance and value of the building to the community isn't right.
- Said by putting aside money to buy a new building while not maintaining the old one, the Association wasn't taking care of something they promised to do.
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**Cindy Towle – Resident**

- Questioned how Gray Ledgers doesn't have enough money to rescue the building, but has the funds to tear down the original building and put up a new building.
- Said the statement that they have only owned the building since 2011 is misleading.
- Said being unaware of any agreements between the Town of Grantham and Mr. Thompson is a lack of due diligence.
- Stated that the assessment by Bedard clearly states the importance of the brick and timber frame and curved second floor ceiling of the building. Also see work that was never completed or finished to be an example of demolition by neglect. If the building is torn down. Grantham will lose forever and important part of its history.

**Terry Dorr – Resident**

- As a member of the planning board at the time, recalled the difficulty putting together the agreement.
- The challenge for the Planning Board and the decision -what does it mean what you require from any group for any building in the future. How does it affect the enforcement component and responsibility to check and set standards. The decision however way it's decided has a serious long term precedent setting possibility for the governing bodies.

**Max Bryant – Condo Association**

- Looking at previous minutes – restoration wasn't the word I saw, but it was refurbishment.
- November 7, 1996 Bob Weiss said "eventually it was restored."
- Gray Ledgers has fulfilled its obligation to refurbish the building, but hasn't been maintained well.

### **Tyler Gilday – Condo Association**

- What are we saving; what is the architectural fabric of the building? There is no answer to the word 'restore'. There are elements of the building that are historic.
- The Association made an offer to commission an architectural survey of the Red Brick building, contributing it to the Greater Grantham community.

### **Board Member Mary Hutchins**

- Provided historic reference to the Brick house (Edwin Damage Eastman- 1st NH AG)
- Referenced the Beddard report stating that the building was originally very well built and significant example of a Northern NH brick and timber frame cape style house
- When Earl Thompson came to the board, the building was sound at that point
- Asked about the fireplace bricks
- Asked if the building was still in use (pool house) and reference Mr. Thompson's request to turn the building into a pool house
- Asked about the foundation and water damage
- Spoke about the Condo Association responsibility

### **Gilday Response**

- Not arguing that at one point the building had historic significance, but its changed since Mr. Eastman created that building
- Some of the bricks were used in the Silver Hill Rd. and some were put on pallets to be used in some fashion
- Made note of the access to the pool area when you enter the building
- Spoke about the water and brick damage (concrete pad)

### **Bryant Response**

- Bob Weiss comments indicate that Gray Ledges has met the obligation to restore the building
- Noted the minutes reference to Mr. Thompson

### **Chair Hanson Response**

- Spoke about the Association agreement with Mr. Thompson and obligations

### **P. James Response**

- Referenced the Planning Board minutes: restoration done in 1996 and obligations;
- Commented on the maintenance of the building
- Referenced the meeting in April and Association's desire to tear down and replace the building and usage of materials

- Referenced Mr. Dorr's comment about setting a precedent; spoke about the appeal process and the letter to the planning board

#### **Bryant Response**

- Maintenance was the responsibility of the owner, but no outline directed by the Association

#### **Karen Blum – Condo Association**

- Question about the agreement and Mr. Thompson- Does the town have any responsibility to follow through on the agreement
- Oversight of Mr. Thompson's renovations

#### **Chair Hanson Response**

- The agreement was between the town and Mr. Thompson (developer) and the Condo Association (restoration)
- Mr. Thompson agreed to restore that building in 1989; No duty by the town to monitor Mr. Thompson's carrying out the agreement

#### **P. James Response**

- Referenced Mr. Thompson in the Planning Board Minutes from Jan. 2004
- Minutes don't indicate a permit or site plan (pool building) review being issued to Mr. Thompson to refurbish the brick building

#### **?? Response**

- Mr. Thompson indicated on a couple occasions the building has been restored; Not until 2005 that anyone from the Association wrote to the town and informed them otherwise

#### **Sandy Kerekes – Condo Association**

- Asked if the Board issued a permit to Mr. Thompson to put in the pool
- When was the Board aware that a pool had been put in

#### **Chair Hanson Response**

- The Planning Board never issued a site plan permit – Mr. Thompson had a consultation review with the Board
- The Planning and Zoning Board doesn't have the enforcement capability

#### **Mark Lewis - Condo Association**

- Question about the sensitivity related to preservation (burn down the motel building)

**P. James Response**

- The building was part of the original site plan – the other building wasn't mentioned
- Numerous site planning meetings (pool); What is historic

**Chair Hanson Response**

- Mr. Thompson's agreement to restore the brick cape, included permission to take away other existing buildings

**Karen Blum Response**

- Comment about finding a compromise – replication of the building

**Nancy King - Condo Association**

- The word "prefab" caused some problems
- We were never asked if we would be willing to build a new building in the same shape as the old one – that's what we want to do
- Build a Yankee Barn Building - would that be acceptable

**Chair Hanson Response**

- It's up to the Condo Association to make a proposal
- The proposal right now is to demolish the brick house- I haven't seen a proposal to replace it
- It would be nice to know what the plan is for us to consider
- You don't need a building permit for plans

**King Response**

- All along we felt we could fix up the brick house
- Three contractors said it was going to cost \$500,000
- We planned to keep it – we didn't have the \$500,000; The decision of the Association was – to demolish it and replace it with something the same size and a color to blend in with the community – It's been our plan for well over a year
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**P. James Response**

- There might be room for compromise, but we need to know what is being offered in its place

**Chair Hanson Response**

- You're the owners of the land and you get to decide what you're doing with your land
- If part of your plan is replace it with something else – we should be considering that at the same time

**King Response**

- We're not trying to get around obligations- we have spent millions of dollars to get it fixed – we always wanted to fix up the brick house – it's the entrance to our community

**P. James Response**

- What are they going to do for \$500,000

**King Response**

- You have two written proposals: 1) engineering report 2) N.H. Preservation Committee report – that was preceded by estimates we got from construction companies

**P. James Response**

- Problems with bricks and painting

**King Response**

- We would rather fill in the pool and have the brick house look the way it does – if we had the money

**P. James Response**

- April meeting - We only got only one half of the picture

**Brown Response**

- I was hoping there would be some effort to reach a middle ground; \$500,00 – a valid conditions to maintain the building – what is the equitable solution that fulfills the intent of that condition without putting a unreasonable burden on people
- Reference the April 5, 2018 meeting – Gray Ledgers attorney and Earl Thompson – no plan in place

**P. James Response**

- Bargaining chip come back and say - can't afford \$500,00 – but here's what we can do

**??? Response**

- I don't believe in destruction by neglect

**Gilday Response**

- We are asking you to rule on a site plan change

### **Chair Hanson Response**

- Changing the condition of the subdivision that was drawn in 1989 – We need to know what's going to follow it

### **Gilday Response**

- Restoration of the brick house – a requirement; bylaws of the Condo Association; reference minutes – the restoration has been done

### **Bryant Response**

- Refurbishment vs. Restoration; the requirement for maintenance by the Association; interpreting the minutes; aspirations for the project

### **Chair Hanson Response**

- The need for specifications and plans

### **P. James Response**

- Compromise is still on the table; no mention in the proposal to replace the brick building

### **??? Response**

- Clear – You want the B-part of the equation; Desire by the Association to have the issue tabled

Chairman Hanson requested a motion to continue the discussion at the February 7, 2019 Planning Board meeting. Motion made by Mary Hutchins. Seconded by C. Peter James.

Chairman Hanson requested a motion to continue the discussion at the January meeting. Motion made by Mary Hutchins. Seconded by C. Peter James. **Motion Unanimously Approved and Accepted. Vote (4-0)**

Chairman Hanson requested a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 pm. Motion made by Mary Hutchins. Seconded by C. Peter James. **Motion Unanimously Approved and Accepted. Vote (4-0)**

The next Planning Board meeting will take place at 7:00pm on Thursday, December 6, 2018 in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room at the Grantham Town Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stuart Kaufman  
Planning Board Clerk