



TOWN OF WINDHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE
HISTORIC DISTRICT/HERITAGE COMMISSION
3 NORTH LOWELL ROAD, WINDHAM NH 03087

Meeting Minutes
Special Meeting
September 17, 2020

Present:

Regulars: Peter Griffin, Carol Pynn, Michael Speidel, Wendy Williams

Alternates: Frank Farmer

Absent/Excused: Derek Saffie, Heath Partington (BOS Liaison)

Meeting opened 1:00 pm.

Brief discussion about Stone Culvert letter

Peter Griffin motioned to approve the letter with amendments, Michael Speidel second, all in favor, motion passed 5-0

Letter will be emailed to appropriate parties once amended

Brief discussion about 88 Range Road letter

Carol Pynn motioned to approve the letter with amendments, Frank Farmer second, all in favor, motion passed 5-0

Letter will be mailed and emailed to appropriate parties once amended

Michael Speidel exited the meeting

Round Table:

Discussion regarding the Windham Depot electrification estimates

Further discussion regarding 88 Range Road

Discussed October meeting agenda items and task assignments:

- Depot estimates – Frank Farmer
- Dinsmore Plaque estimate and tree removal estimate – Peter Griffin
- Funds to earmark for 2021 if not used in 2020 – Wendy Williams
- Plaque and letter of appreciation to people who have preserved Windham's history – future

Motion to close meeting by Peter Griffin, Frank Farmer second, all in favor, motion passes 4-0

Meeting closed 2:15 pm

Minutes recorded by Wendy Williams

Chairman HDC/HC



TOWN OF WINDHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE
HISTORIC DISTRICT/HERITAGE COMMISSION
3 NORTH LOWELL ROAD, WINDHAM NH 03087

Mr. Alexander L. Ray
P.O. Box 581
Ashland, New Hampshire 03217
September 18, 2020

By Registered Mail

Dear Mr. Ray,

On behalf of the Town of Windham New Hampshire Historic District Commission/Heritage Commission, I am writing to request a report on the actions taken regarding the historic structure at 88 Range Road Windham, NH 03087. This historic home was owned by Robert Armstrong (often referred to as the West House) which lies west of the Common Man Restaurant establishment located on the same parcel 17-G-26. You are the current owner of both properties.

Ms. Carol Pynn and I met with you at the Windham Town Museum on February 27, 2020 to discuss the increasingly desperate deterioration of the historic Robert Armstrong house (West House). We presented the National Park Services (NPS) mothballing procedure to preserve the structure from further degradation. We also presented the idea of moving the Robert Armstrong house (West House) beside the George Armstrong house (East House) to create a larger parking lot for the Common Man Restaurant along the I-93 retaining wall.

As you are aware, there is a preservation easement for the property through the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NH DOT). To date the NH DOT and New Hampshire Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NH DNCR) have not been able to reach you to set up a site walk meeting at the property. Therefore, I am reaching out to you directly to encourage you to take action to preserve this property as agreed in the preservation easement signed December 5, 2007.

We ask your help to move this project forward. We would be glad to meet with you to further discuss opportunities to save this historic house for our community.

I look forward to your reply regarding this desperate matter within (4) weeks of receiving this letter.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Wendy Williams
Chairman,
Historic District Commission/Heritage Commission
Windham, New Hampshire
E-mail: hdc@windhamnh.gov
Tel. (860) 287-1750

Enclosure: Two (2) photos of Robert Armstrong house taken September 14, 2020

CC:
Windham NH Town Administrator – Dave Sullivan
NH DOT – Jillian Edelmann
NH DNCR – Benjamin Wilson

Photos taken September 14, 2020

I-93, Robert Armstrong House, Common Man Restaurant, George Armstrong House (left to right)



Current condition Robert Armstrong House (West House)





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An historic stone culvert exists in the vicinity of the recent dam breach at the wetlands located on North Lowell Road at parcel 11-C-3600. New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources has provisionally declared all surviving stone culverts to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (see attached document).

The culvert appears to be a “stone rectangular box culvert” consisting of split lintels with chiseled stones dating the structure to the 18th century.

11-C-3600 is included on the Historical Cultural Resource List as a site and will be updated to include the historic stone culvert. The Historic District Commission/Heritage Commission (HDC/HC) should be informed of work planned in this location to assure the historic resource is not disturbed.

Should the work to add a new modern culvert be pursued, it should be in a location that will not impact the existence of the historic stone culvert.

Respectfully and Most Sincerely,

Wendy Williams
HDC/HC Chair

Enclosure:

CC:

Community Development Department Director – Rex Norman
Conservation Commission Chair – Dave Curto
General Services Director – Dennis Senibaldi
Town Administrator – Dave Sullivan
Planning Board Chair – Derek Monson
Zoning Board Chair - Michael Scholz
NH DOT – Jill Edelmann
NH DNCR – Ben Wilson



NEW HAMPSHIRE DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

State of New Hampshire, Department of Cultural Resources
19 Pillsbury Street, 2nd floor, Concord NH 03301-3570
Voice/ TDD ACCESS: RELAY NH 1-800-735-2864
<http://www.nh.gov/doh/dhr>

603-271-3483
603-271-3558
FAX 603-271-3433
preservation@dohhr.state.nh.us

HISTORIC STONE CULVERTS

The floods of October 8th, 2005, which devastated buildings and farms along several streams in Walpole and Alstead, caused lesser damage throughout southwestern and central New Hampshire. A survey carried out by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) drew attention to an often-overlooked highway structure, the stone culvert.

A number of stone culverts were damaged by flooding, and planning for their restoration has recognized their vulnerability to casual replacement. Local authorities may regard these structures as having little historical value or as being too small to accommodate future floods. In fact, such culverts are among the most evocative of the cherished stone structures that give character to New Hampshire's cultural landscape. With proper maintenance, they are nearly imperishable.



Dry-laid stone box culvert on Gore Road, Warner, N. H., showing minor flood damage.
(Photograph by James L. Garvin)

Most stone culverts date from the nineteenth century, but some may have been built in the 1700s. They generally take two forms: the rectangular box culvert and the much rarer arched structure. Pending the development of a full survey of surviving structures and a procedure for evaluating their significance, the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources has provisionally declared all surviving stone culverts to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

FEMA is developing several innovative methods of retaining and repairing them, and has suggested armoring their earth fill against erosion and providing auxiliary bypass structures to handle floodwaters.



Dry-laid arched culvert, Memorial Highway over Temple Brook, Temple, N. H.
(Photograph by James L. Garvin)

DHR, FEMA, and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation are seeking resources to begin a survey of stone culverts in southwestern New Hampshire as a template for a future statewide inventory.

James L. Garvin
State Architectural Historian