

## Wakefield Heritage Commission

2 High Street Sanbornville, NH 03872 USA

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### **FINAL**

## **Cobbler Shop Public Hearing**

8/29/2023

Members		Alternates		Others	
Pam Wiggin	x	Nancy Britton			
Rick Poore	x	Nancy Bancroft	x		
Phil Twombly	x	Geof Denley			
Connie Twombly	x	Jeanne Loughan	x		
Carroll (Snooky) Shea	x	Craig Farley			
Nancy Hall	x	Paul Zayac			
Mark Duffy					

Meeting Called to order at: 7 pm By: Pam Wiggin

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

In attendance Wakefield/Brookfield Historical Society Board Members; Nancy Spencer Smith, Bruce Rich, Jennifer Rich, Kate Niewenhous, Susan Raban, and Amber Marcoux

Abutters; Dave Takis and Jennifer Cullen

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

### **Opening:**

Pam W. read the request from Wakefield/Brookfield Historical Society (W.B.H.S.) to relocate the Cobbler Shop (C.S.) forward from behind the Historic Little Red Schoolhouse (L.R.S) to the front of the lot to promote water drainage.

“By moving this building forward from its current location in the SW area of the lot to the SE area, it is relevant to note that the distance of the SE corner of the schoolhouse current distance from the backend of the Schoolhouse, the SW corner, is only 16’. Accordingly the unobstructed drainage area and ground slope



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will be greatly increase remediation of water in the Schoolhouse crawlspace. And too, this movement should also result in greatly improved moisture, water and deterioration prevention for the Schoolhouse. I will add a rough sketch to the bottom of the email..."

### **Request:**

Nancy S. acted as spokesperson for the WBHS. She stated that they have embarked on a large-scale restoration project for the Schoolhouse and the Cobbler Shop (C.S.) with the help of L Chip. The two motivating factors for this move were the water mediation, there is a water drainage issue around the L.R.S. and gaining a track record of using grant record funds with L Chip.

Nancy S. gave a presentation with pictures and drawings of what the plans were. The Wakefield Brookfield Historical board received a matching funds grant from NH Preservation Alliance (NHPA) after a comprehensive analysis. The long-term plan will involve all 3 buildings. The Cobbler Shop equipment was purchased by Louisa Paul in 1966 and donated to the Historical Society. The Woodshed behind the school was converted into the Cobbler shop in the late 60's and early 70's. The Historical Board would like to move the Cobbler shop to the front of the lot to help remediate the issues with water. Nancy Spencer Smith pointed out they believe this would also allow them to establish a track record for requesting an L Chip grant for the next 2 phases of the work. Their proposed plan is to move the shop and regrade the land for 20 feet out from the schoolhouse. They feel this would provide better drainage and would put the cobbler shop in a better location.

### **Heritage Committee Response:**

Nancy H. asked if there were any alternatives such as raising the building.

Nancy S. replied that they would also be raising the building and putting down a vapor barrier.

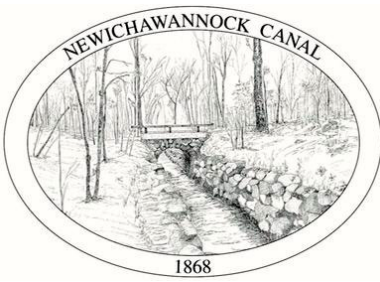
Nancy B. asked how parking would be affected.

Nancy S. stated that the lots would need to be graded as well as the areas around the buildings.

Nancy B. asked if planting trees in the drainage areas would help.

Nancy S. said this had not been discussed.

Nancy B. asked if it would affect the uniqueness of the L.R.S.



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Nancy S. no, it's small.

Nancy B. asked about the water affecting the abutters.

Nancy S. said there would be culverts to divert it.

Phil T asked about the plan for the foundation under the L.R.S. as it's in poor shape.

Nancy S. said it's approximately \$100,000 to fix: wood, dry rot, series of piers. Huge gap between entry and door. There is no drainage around the L.R.S. with the apron and asphalt.

Phil T suggested that they are better served fixing the foundation and drainage than moving buildings.

Nancy S. that would leave no track record of using grant money. She has a strong belief that L Chip with help with funding the foundation. This is step 1. Step 2 is the roof. Step 3 is dehumidifying inside.

Rick P. stated that he did not understand the need to change the architectural location of a building for no real drainage gain.

Nancy S. agreed a woodshed never would have been in front of a schoolhouse.

Rick P. presented a photo from 1907 showing the location of the then woodshed/now C.S. where it is now.

Rick P. stated that it makes no sense to block the L.R.S with a woodshed.

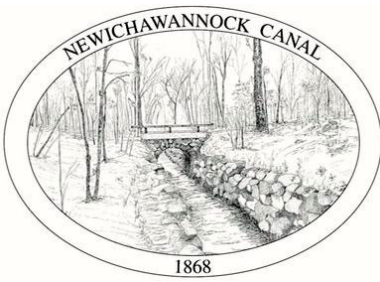
Nancy S. argued that a C.S. would be closer to the road. The cottage industry placed shops closer to the road.

Connie T. stated that if it were close to the road as a Cobbler Shop attraction it would add to the draw of the L.R.S.

Nancy B. asked if this request was for water drainage or aesthetics.

Nancy S. said the primary reason water, aesthetics and making it more accessible was secondary.

Rick P. said the remediation of water involved only 4 piers and asked if the report they had done said the building needed to be moved.



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Nancy S. attributed it to the concrete and asphalt and said the survey said the land had to be sloped for 20 feet. The C.S is within 20 feet.

Pam W. read a portion of the report saying that the aprons, tar, and asphalt should be removed. Branches should be removed first before this drastic move. Pointed out the 1907 picture.

Nancy S. said the picture was unconvincing.

Pam W. read the Heritage Commission purpose from our regulations and guidelines:

1. Preserve for generations to come the picturesque and unique settings and collections of historically, architecturally and culturally significant buildings and structures, which are found within the Town of Wakefield;
2. Encourage the maintenance and restoration of such buildings and structures and their settings, and ensure that new buildings and structures and alterations to those existing within the District, are in visual harmony with their neighbors in order to preserve that which reflects the cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history of the Town of Wakefield; and
3. Foster civic pride and beauty, strengthen the local economy, conserve and maintain property values in the District and provide an opportunity to enhance the education, pleasure and welfare of the citizens of the visitors to the Town of Wakefield.
4. Avoid radical changes that obscure or destroy character defining spaces, materials, features, or finishes.

### **Pam asked for comments from the Abutters:**

Dave T. stated that it looked good where it is. People stop to take pictures and go to look at the C.S. He hasn't heard a good reason to relocate it.

Nancy S. stated that the W.B.H.S. voted that it would benefit the society to move it closer to the road. Working around the shop would be harder.

Dave T. argued that his 40 years of construction showed you can easily work around a building of that size.

Jennifer C., who lives on the north side of the lot also said she saw no reason to relocate the building.



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### **Pam asked for comments from the WBHS members in the audience.**

Kate N. spoke of the long range plan of the WBHS. Bruce Rich commented that the WHC are not qualified to determine remediation of the water on the lot.

Jennifer R. commented that they had Steve Bedard, a historic property specialist, agree the building should be moved.

Pam asked if Bedard had done any engineering or was familiar with the soils in our village that do not drain well due to clay and hard pan. Jennifer assumed he'd know.

The abutters made extensive comments against moving the building.

### **Connie T. called for a vote.**

Pam explained that the WHC must have an answer within 5 days unless the WBHS requested in writing an extension. Bruce said the WBHS has a quorum present so they could vote to extend to give them enough time to get engineering done regarding the water. Nancy S. did not want to do that and wanted the WHC vote. Pam said they could come back at another time when they had a report regarding water. Nancy S. said she did not want to get the engineer now as he was so busy.

Pam W. clarified that a "yes" vote was to move the Cobbler Shop; a "no" vote was not to move the Cobbler shop from the current location.

Here is the vote:

Phil T.            No

Snooky           No

Nancy H           No

Jeanne L.        No

Pam W.           No

Connie T        Yes

Rick P.           No



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The request was denied due to lack of documentation that moving the Cobbler Shop would help to remediate the water issue on the lot.

Pam Wiggin adjourned the meeting 8:45pm.