

**Merrimack 275<sup>th</sup> Planning Meeting - Virtual**  
**Monday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021**  
**7:00 pm**

**Members Present:** Matt Casparius, Bob L'Heureux, Paul Micali, Anita Creager, Laurie Rothhaus, Chuck Mower, John Lastowka, Yvette Couser, Carl Ellis, Rosemary Rung, Barbara Healy, Chip Pollard, Maureen Mooney

**Call Meeting to Order:** Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm

**Update on Commemorative License plates:**

Matt updated the group on the status of the license plates. The printing shop making the plates had staff in quarantine due to COVID-19 and so we are essentially on hold until they can make our order. He reported that he is hoping to get an update from the sign shop later this week.

Matt talked briefly about sale of plates when the order does come in. The plan is to sell them at Town Hall, at the Parks & Recreation Office and Matt also spoke to Public Works Director Kyle Fox about selling them at the Transfer Station. He reported that there are a few logistical details that have to be worked out but that he is working on a flyer and press release so that it will be ready to go once the plates are in.

**New Business:**

**Discussion on April Events:**

Matt started the conversation saying that it was his opinion that we should focus our attention on smaller scale events or self guided activities for April, May and possibly June instead of trying to offer any sort of large scale event. Based upon the Governors report, it looks like it will be June before a vaccine is widely available to anyone that wants it.

Matt went on to say that we had initially talked about a kick off event on the weekend of April 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> with the idea of inviting dignitaries and trying to ceremony out if it, but based on where things are with the virus, he now thinks that we should still get the proclamations but then maybe have it read at a Town Council Meeting or invite a small group of invited guests (Town Council, the Committee, etc.) to an outdoor event that we video tape at one of Merrimack's historical sites. Matt suggested Merrimack's Geographic Center as a possibility. Anita suggested holding it at Abbie Griffin Park or Watson as they are more photogenic locations. Matt will work on getting the proclamations and then we can decide next meeting on the location and other details.

John talked about several new ideas that he had. John and Chip talked about the importance of the Historical Society being a resource for information. Chip talked about trying to make photo display of the Town's history and invited residents to share any old photos that they might have. Chip talked about a display he saw from the Milford Historical Society made by a company called Retro Planet. They make prints up to 48" tall in a sticker form that is designed for indoors or outdoors. We talked about making a display that could rotate around Town every couple of weeks. One suggestion was at the grocery stores in Town. Chip said he will check on pricing and report back at the next meeting. Yvette reported that she had all the historical photos from the Chamber of Commerce when they celebrated their anniversary a few years ago that she could share.

One of the other ideas suggested by John was to create a 275<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Cookbook and invite residents to submit their favorite recipes. This cookbook could then be sold as a fundraiser. The Committee thought this was a great idea and Barbara volunteered to coordinate this task with assistance from Matt.

Anita said that she would be ready with historic scavenger hunts in April and it would be available through the Fall. She is currently working to decide what to give for prizes for

completion. There are also some logistics about how people will submit their results and/or collect any prizes.

### **Discussion on May Events:**

Since no one else volunteered, Matt offered to take on the planning for events in May. One of the events that he is working on is a 2.75 road race. He is currently working on finalize the race route map. He reported that he is currently working on a couple of other events with more details next month.

### **Future Events:**

Yvette reported that the Library is working on the following events. (Dates to be announced)

- A Trivia Night
- A NH Humanities program on covered bridges
- The Summer Reading Program theme will be "Tales & Tails".
- Digital Book Mobile
- Bringing in an Author to do a Workshop on "Writing Your Family History."
- Student Art Show on Facebook

Laurie said that she would add the 275<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to the School Committee's Agenda for a future meeting and also reach out to School Principals to see how the Schools might participate in the celebration.

Anita and John will provide good photo of original Meetinghouse to display at Town Hall. Anita will also try to itemize locations of various photos around town: Library, Town Hall, Friendly's, others that she hopes to have available by end of January.

Bob talked about a Liquor bottle collection that we could display. He said it has to go in a secure display case near. There is one in Town Hall upstairs on the way to the Matthew Thornton Meeting Room. We will need to figure out when to do this?

Chuck is designing at 275th chair. There are questions about where and when will it be presented? The chair could be raffled off. Chuck also mentioned the idea of having local artists conduct demonstrations of their craft.

### **Discussion about Creating Anniversary Banners:**

Matt brought up the idea of creating anniversary banners to display. The purpose would be to showcase that is our anniversary by placing them on the telephone poles. This would be similar to what they do in downtown Nashua as well as at Bishop Guertin and Rivier College do. We talked about Daniel Webster Highway and Baboosic Lake Road. Other suggestions included the highway exists and graveyards. We also discussed selling them to local business at or just above cost and people could display them at their business or at their homes.

The Committee liked this idea and so Matt will begin working on a design, but we have to obtain permission from Eversource once we have a design in place but the hope would be to obtain them by April and keep up until October.

### **Fundraising Update:**

Laurie started by saying that they would like to follow the model used for the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with request for donations letters, a clothing line including things like hats, scarfs, shirts, etc. that would have the 275<sup>th</sup> Logo or the Merrimack logo on it.

In the summer or Fall, they wanted to do a "Merrimack & Cheese" bake off and invite the local restaurants to come up with their creations. Laurie said they were thinking about approaching

Budweiser to host the event there and so you would have an event with music, food sales, etc. People would pay an admissions fee to get into the event.

Chuck then talked about the Fundraising project itself. They would still like to recommend the covered bridge project idea for Twin Bridge Park that we initially talked about last month. The Concept is a bridge similar to the "Flume Bridge" design up in Franconia. The bridge follows the original North / South Road in Merrimack. Chuck talked about the idea of it being a destination that could potentially house an event or gather. There are challenges with parking, visibility and the overall cost to build the project. Paul suggested that the group make a presentation of their idea to the Town Center Committee to get them on board since it would fall within the Town's center and also show the Town Council they have support. Paul said he would find out when the Town Center Committee is meeting next and get them on to their next agenda.

**Next Meeting:** Matt said he wanted to hold off scheduling the next meeting until we find out when the fundraising committee can make their presentation to the Town Center Committee.

**Motion to Adjourn:** Chuck made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 pm. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rosemary and approved by all.