

**Town of Center Harbor  
Heritage Commission Meeting  
July 30, 2015  
Meeting Minutes**

- I. **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 4:33pm. Present: Chairperson Kim Baker, Richard Hanson, Karen Ponton, Dave Reilly, Roland Garland. Absent: David Hughes (Alternate)
- II. **Introduction of Guest(s):** Erin Plummer from *The Meredith News* was unable to attend today's meeting.
- III. **Approval of Minutes:** Motion by K. Ponton, seconded by D. Reilly that: The Minutes of June 25, 2015 be approved with the correction that the Winona Bridge be deleted from the Heritage and Cultural Resources Inventory Working Draft. Passed unanimously. (The Winona Bridge is located in New Hampton).
- IV. **Old Business**
  - A. **Community Involvement**
    1. ***The Meredith News, The Laconia Citizen, The Laconia Daily Sun:*** (See Item II above). K. Baker reported that she has not yet contacted *The Laconia Citizen* and *The Laconia Daily Sun*.
    2. **Historical Society Research on Old Town House:** R. Garland summarized the history of the Old Town House as written by Mae H. Williams for the *NH Register of Historic Places* application, with her permission. (See attached application). The Commission thanked R. Garland for his informative presentation.
    3. **Moultonborough Heritage Commission (MHC):** K. Ponton briefly reported that she attended the July 22, 2015 meeting of the Moultonborough Heritage Commission. Their current focus is the village area of Moultonborough on Route 109, especially the many privately-owned vacant, for sale/rent and underutilized historic buildings. The MHC extended an open invitation to the Center Harbor Heritage Commission, and is happy to serve as a resource.
  - B. **Building Maintenance: Old Town House**
    1. **Broken Windows Repair/Torn Shades:** K. Baker reported that she has spoken with Jeff Haines, Road Agent about repairing the (9) broken windows with temporary glass. All of the window shades have been removed. K. Ponton reported that J. Haines discussed these repairs with the Town Select Board at their July 15, 2015 meeting, which she attended.
    2. **Security Issues: Electrical Service:** K. Ponton reported that K. Ballance, Code Enforcement Officer, completed an inspection of the electrical service at the Old Town House earlier today. Electrical service is at minimum for "as is" usage, but will need to be rewired if the building's use changes. He also recommended that an external disconnect be installed. (See attached Inspection Report).

3. **Security Issues: Motion Detectors, Security Camera, Fire/Smoke Alarms:** K. Baker reported on her discussions with Police Chief Chase, who indicated that there are no grant monies remaining for use at the Old Town House in 2015. A Warrant Article for 2016 might be proposed to update security systems at all Town buildings. K. Ponton reported that the Select Board suggested using battery-powered fire/smoke detectors at the Old Town House. K. Baker responded that battery-powered detectors are not up to code for public buildings.

4. **Storage Use:** R. Hanson reported that addressing the storage situation at the Old Town House is a low priority for the Select Board at this time, and that further discussion is premature.

### **C. Old Town House Master Plan**

1. **Site Visits by Architects/Structural Engineers:** K. Baker reported that three (3) architects recommended by the NHPA have toured the Old Town House and two (2) have submitted bids; the third is expected next week; and that she would like to get one more bid. Some of the preliminary recommendations from the architects include: composting toilets, providing water to the building, changing the parking lot from the current Route 3 site to Waukegan Road (15-20 cars), fencing along Route 3, and handicap-accessibility. D. Reilly questioned whether a boundary survey should be done. "Red flag" issues include the "hanging chimney" and that the bank of windows on the south facade may be separating and moving away from the building structure. Incidentally, one architect speculated that the building's original paint colors may have been gray with blue window trim.

K. Baker also reported that she has been made aware of the Town's purchasing policies and bidding process. Purchases over \$10,000 require a formal, sealed bid.

2. **Master Plan Timeline (to Completion):** After discussion, it was the consensus of the Commission that the rehabilitation/reuse plan for the Old Town House be completed in 5-6 years (2020-2021). During the next 5 months the Commission plans on applying for an NHPA assessment grant, securing matching funds, hiring an architect/structural engineer PE to conduct a building assessment and prepare the rehabilitation/reuse plan by December 2015, and proposing a Warrant Article for the March 2016 Town Meeting. The first six months of 2016 will focus on developing town-wide support for the Warrant Article, proceeding with Phase 1 of the rehabilitation/reuse plan and securing additional monies through grant-writing and fundraising.

3. **NHPA Technical Assistance Grant Application (Research):** K. Ponton reported that NHPA staff Maggie Stier recommends that answers to application questions be short and to the point, and said the reviewers will request more information only if it is needed. Preferably, the application should be submitted electronically with 6-8 photographs. She gave K. Baker a rough draft of information gleaned from the *NH Register of Historic Places* application to address Question F.2 on the Old Town House's history, architecture and place in the community. A brief description of Commission members, including any preservation work they may have done, is needed for Question F.4; Commission members are asked to forward this to K. Baker at their earliest convenience. Item C.2 above will be helpful in addressing Question F.7.

4. **Financial Plan for Matching (1:1) NHPA Grant Funds & Timeline (for remaining FY 2015 & to Completion of Master Plan):** K. Baker reported briefly on the July 22 Select

Board meeting that she attended. She had asked if \$5,000 might be available through the Buildings Repair & Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund; no funds are available at this time for architect consulting fees. The Board suggested the monies be raised either through a Warrant Article or fundraising.

Due to time constraints, the Commission limited its discussion of this item to the August 6, 2015 LobsterFest, sponsored by the Center Harbor Community Development Association (CHCDA). K. Baker spoke with the CHCDA about having a small fundraiser for the Old Town House in conjunction with the LobsterFest. The CHCDA has graciously allowed the Commission to have a table display with information and to request donations at the event. K. Baker will create an informational brochure and photo display; K. Ponton will develop a donor record-keeping form; R. Garland and K. Ponton offered to help staff the table with K. Baker. R. Garland was asked to see if the Historical Society has any good early photos of the Old Town House. The LobsterFest runs from 6-10pm.

K. Ponton reported that donations to the Heritage Fund are tax deductible. (See attached from NHPA Maggie Stier). Checks should be made payable to : *The Center Harbor Heritage Fund* and may be mailed to the Town Hall, 36 Main Street, P.O. Box 140, Center Harbor, NH 03226. She has asked R. Woodaman by email whether the Commission can use Town stationery for thank-you letters to donors, whether the letters can be mailed through the Town Hall, and for a copy of the free government information letter provided by the IRS to include with the letters. R. Woodaman responded by email that she has forwarded the request to the Selectmen.

K. Baker added that she is exploring the crowd-sourcing website GoFundMe.com as a possible vehicle for raising additional donations.

**5. Conservation License Plate Grants/Mooseplate Grants:** Due to time constraints, this item was postponed to the Commission's next meeting. It is worth noting that these grants do *not* require matching funds.

#### **D. Heritage & Cultural Resources Inventory**

1. **Working Draft:** K. Ponton has placed the *Inventory* and the *Working Draft 2015* in a labeled binder, as requested. It was the consensus of the Commission that the binder remain in the custody of the Secretary for the time being.

2. **Volunteer(s):** D. Reilly volunteered to work on the *Inventory* as his schedule allows in the coming months.

**E. NH State Register of Historic Places Plaque for Old Town House:** Motion by K. Baker, seconded by K. Ponton, that: The Commission expend the amount of \$50.00 to purchase a NH State Register of Historic Places plaque. Passed unanimously. K. Baker reported that the Select Board would like the plaque affixed to the building, rather than placed on a signpost; she will attend to this.

#### **V. Other Business**

A. **Webpage Volunteer(s)** - Postponed

B. **The Meredith News:** Front Page Article, July 2: Copies of the article were distributed to Commission members. (See attached). The Commission expressed its appreciation to Erin

Plummer for the excellent coverage. K. Baker will contact her about coming to a subsequent meeting.

**VI. New Business**

A. **Heritage Fund:** K. Ponton reported that per email R. Woodaman spoke with Jeannie DeGrace, Town Treasurer about setting up the Heritage Fund, and that R. Woodaman is going to process the check this week.

B. **Next Meeting:** The Commission's next meeting will be Thursday, August 20, 2015 at 4:30pm instead of August 13.

VII. **Adjournment:** R. Hanson questioned whether the Commission wanted to change its meetings to accommodate a longer meeting time. K. Ponton suggested that a Commission member could make a motion at any meeting to extend that meeting when more time is needed, and the Commission concurred. Motion by R. Hanson, seconded by D. Reilly to adjourn at 6:05pm. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

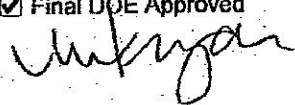
Karen S. Ponton  
Secretary  
att (4)



## Determination of Eligibility (DOE)

Inventory #: CEN0007

Review Date: 11/25/2014 DOE Date:

☒ Final DOE Approved

Property Name: Center Harbor Town House

Area:

Address: 175 DW Highway

Town: Center Harbor

County: Belknap

Reviewed For: SR

DOE Program(s):  
State Register

## DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY

State Register eligible, individually

Integrity: Yes

Level: Local

Criteria:	A: Yes	B: No	C: Yes
	D: Unknown	E: N	

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The Center Harbor Town House was constructed in the Greek Revival style in 1844 and was at the center of town administration and a center of community use from 1844 to 1964. It was converted into a one-room schoolhouse from 1933 to 1946 and is currently used for storage. The band of windows on the south façade represents its changing use as a school during the twentieth century. The Center Harbor Town House is eligible for individual listing in the New Hampshire State Register of Historic Places for its social history and architecture. The building represents an important municipal function in town. It is a well-preserved example of the Greek Revival style which was commonly used in public buildings during the nineteenth century. The period of significance under Criterion A is 1843-1964. The period of significance under Criterion C is 1844, 1907, 1933, and 1939, representing the building's construction and important changes over time.

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE(S)

Architecture  
Community Planning and DevelopmentPeriod of Significance: 1843  
to 1964☐ Period not applicable

Boundary: Tax parcel 220-036

## Follow Up:

Notify appropriate parties. Note that the DHR inventory number is CEN0007. Please revise the site plan on page 3 to provide a key that delineates the tax parcel boundary specifically.

Comments:

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

**NHDHR INVENTORY # CEN007**

**Name, Location, Ownership**

1. Historic name Center Harbor Townhouse
2. District or area \_\_\_\_\_
3. Street and number 175 Daniel Webster Highway
4. City or town Center Harbor
5. County Belknap
6. Current owner Town of Center Harbor

**Function or Use**

7. Current use(s) Vacant/Not in use
8. Historic use(s) Meeting hall, Clubhouse, School

**Architectural Information**

9. Style Greek Revival
10. Architect/builder \_\_\_\_\_
11. Source \_\_\_\_\_
12. Construction date 1844
13. Source Warren Perkins Interview
14. Alterations, with dates 1907 (changes to fenestration and interior); 1939 (addition of woodshed/ell)
15. Moved? no ☒ yes ☐ date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exterior Features**

16. Foundation Fieldstone
17. Cladding Clapboard
18. Roof material Asphalt shingles
19. Chimney material Brick
20. Type of roof Front gable
21. Chimney location Ridge, off-center
22. Number of stories 1
23. Entry location Facade, center
24. Windows Double-hung 2/2  
Replacement? no ☒ yes ☐ date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Site Features**

25. Setting Rural highway
26. Outbuildings \_\_\_\_\_
27. Landscape features \_\_\_\_\_



36. Date: October 30, 2014

37. Reference (file name or frame#): DSC\_0058.JPG

28. Acreage 0.99
29. Tax map/parcel # 220-036
30. Map reference 19.297705E, 4840525N
31. USGS quadrangle and scale Holderness 1:2400

**Form prepared by**

32. Name Mae H. Williams
33. Organization Town of Center Harbor
34. Date of survey September 18, 2014

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

**NHDHR INVENTORY # CEN007**

**41. Historical Background and Role in the Town or City's Development:**

The Center Harbor Townhouse is located at the intersection of Route 3 and Waukegan Road in Center Harbor, Belknap County, New Hampshire. The single-story wood frame Greek Revival meeting house was built in 1844 as a centralized secular meeting place for the townspeople. Between 1844 and the 1960s, the building was adapted and repurposed as a meeting place, polling location and school.

The first European settlers came to Center Harbor in 1765 when Ebenezer Chamberlain and Col. Joseph Senter arrived from Manchester.<sup>1</sup> There are multiple versions of the story as to how the town obtained its name and disputes over whether the proper spelling of the town name is Center Harbor or Centre Harbor. According to one version of the story, "Center Harbor derived its name from one of the first settlers, Mr. Senter, but its spelling was changed, probably in consequence of its location on the lake."<sup>2</sup> Another version of the story does not make reference to Mr. Senter at all, but suggests that "Moultonborough harbor being east and Meredith harbor west, made this the centre [sic] harbor, and from this source the town derived its name."<sup>3</sup> Originally Center Harbor was part of New Hampton. Center Harbor branched off and was officially incorporated on December 17, 1797.<sup>4</sup>

The first town meeting was called by Nathan Hoit and held on March 12, 1798 at the home of Benning Moulton.<sup>5</sup> Though the modern town center is located on the shores of Winnepesaukee, the original town center was located on Sunset Hill. This historic town center was located to the northwest along what is now 25B in an area of higher elevation that was actually closer to Squam Lake than Winnepesaukee and was settled by Ebenezer Chamberlain between 1765 and 1767.<sup>6</sup> Mr. Moulton's home and saw mill are known to have been located along a stream near an unnamed pond on the northern shoulder of Sunset Hill on property that is currently owned by Nathaniel and Arabella Dane.

By 1800 the population of Center Harbor had reached 263.<sup>7</sup> In 1812 the first meeting house in town was built at Sunset Hill, somewhere along 25B below the Morse Cemetery. The east side of Center Harbor was settled by Congregationalists and the west side of town was settled by Freewill Baptists and Methodists. Early records call the 1812 meeting house on Sunset Hill the East Meeting House. A second meeting house (the West Meeting House) was built at the foot of Piper Hill near Hawkins Pond at the western edge of town soon after.<sup>8</sup> (This structure is identified on the 1860 Map as the Free Will Bapt Ch. See page 11)

Like many New Hampshire meetinghouses in the late 1700 and early 1800s, the East Meeting House was where town meeting was usually held (though it was also held from time-to-time in private houses). It also served as the Congregational church. The building was described to have been 35 by 40 feet, one story in height with a "pointed hip roof."<sup>9</sup>

About the same time as this church was built on Sunset Hill, another was erected in the Town of Meredith Village and among the parsons was David Smith, ordained February 21, 1810. One parson preached alternatively between the two churches. The records show that the two churches long continued together in unity and usually in prosperity.<sup>10</sup>

Rev. Smith became the first congregational minister in Center Harbor in 1819.<sup>11</sup> On the other side of town the West Meeting House was shared between the Freewill Baptists and Methodists. The Freewill Baptists would get to occupy the meetinghouse one half of the time, the Methodists the other half.

The Toleration Act was passed in New Hampshire in the year 1819. Up until this point the term "church" referred not to a building, but to an organization of people.<sup>12</sup> The Orthodox Church was a town function and town responsibility with town meeting and church often held in the same "meeting house." These meeting houses were the only public buildings

<sup>1</sup> John Hayward, *A Gazetteer of New Hampshire, Containing Descriptions of All the Counties, Towns, and Districts in the State; also, of its Principal Mountains, Rivers, Waterfalls, Harbors, Islands and Fashionable Resorts* (Boston, MA: John P. Jewett, 1849), 45.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Duane Hamilton Hurd, ed, *History of Merrimack and Belknap Counties, New Hampshire* (Philadelphia: J. W. Lewis & Co., 1885), 725.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 725. Also Hayward, *Gazetteer of New Hampshire*, 160.

<sup>5</sup> Center Harbor Historical Society, *Center Harbor New Hampshire Historical Society 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 1971-1896* (Laconia, NH: J & J Printing Inc., 1986), 9.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>11</sup> Hayward, *Gazetteer of New Hampshire*, 46

<sup>12</sup> Eva A. Speare, *Colonial Meeting Houses of New Hampshire* (Littleton, NH: Courier Printing Company, 1938), 1.

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

**NHDHR INVENTORY # CEN007**

that existed during the first two centuries of history for many New England towns. The Toleration Act stated that no person shall be taxed against his will to support a specific religion and called for the legal and often physical separation of church and state. Prior to the Toleration Act, the minister was employed by the town and his salary was a separate tax on all voters.<sup>13</sup> Separation was a slow process because ministers with pre-existing contracts were allowed to continue to receive public support until their contracts ran out.<sup>14</sup> Many churches and meeting houses were built across New Hampshire between 1820 and 1850 as a result.

Center Harbor is an oddly shaped town with several "town centers". As earlier stated, the original "town center" was west of Lake Winnepesaukee, on the crest of a steep hill off what is now 25B. Due to its location, Center Harbor was a common stopping point for steamers and stagecoaches. As the town became more settled, a tourist industry grew up along the shores of Lake Winnepesaukee and the current town center began to emerge in this location. Concurrent with this development, the Freewill Baptists and Methodists farmed in the western part of town. A thriving lumber industry developed along a stream that runs between Hawkins Pond and "Long Pond" (now Winona Lake) and became a natural place for water-powered lumber mills. This area came to be called Slab City and is now commonly referred to as West Center Harbor.

Travel throughout the scattered town brought about its challenges in the early history of Center Harbor, well before the advent of the automobile.

During the summer of 1836 many visitors remarked 'They had to go out of town to find the Sabbath Day.' This brought about the benevolences, which in 1837, resulted in the building of the present Congregational Church.<sup>15</sup>

The grade up from the shore of Winnepesaukee to the former East Meeting House is very steep and would not have been easy to travel with horse and buggy. To avoid the hill, one would have to walk several extra miles. To meet the needs of the growing tourist population, a new Congregational Church was built at the shores of the lake and held its first Sunday meeting on January 14, 1838.

The Town of Center Harbor purchased the land on which to construct the Town House on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1843 from Paul & JJ Perkins for \$5.<sup>16</sup> The Center Harbor Town House was built the following year to serve as a new, secular town meeting place. By 1840 the population of Center Harbor was still only 584 and was dispersed over 16.4 square miles. Thus the site of the Town House was chosen "as near as possible to the geographical center of town."<sup>17</sup> The chosen site was by no means bustling with activity. Though at a crossroads, the only public building in the area was one of the town's six one-room school houses. Geographically, it was about half way between the Congregationalist center on Winnepesaukee and the Freewill Baptist/Methodist-settled center in Slab City.

Quickly after the Town House was built the East and West Meeting Houses began to fall into disuse. The East Meeting House was taken down in 1856<sup>18</sup> due to lack of use with town meetings now being held at the new Town House and the Congregationalists meeting at the Congregational Church on Winnepesaukee. The West Meeting House caught fire in 1860, was rebuilt, caught fire again in 1889, was rebuilt, and eventually services were discontinued in 1920.<sup>19</sup> Sometime in the 1980s the building was heavily renovated and transformed into a private home, currently owned by Donald & Barbara Picard.

When it was built in 1844, the Center Harbor Town House consisted of one room with a single door.<sup>20</sup> In 1907, the building was renovated in order to be in compliance with a law passed in 1881 that stated that "Polling Places to be Provided."<sup>21</sup> The town raised one thousand dollars for the renovations.

This included an addition of a raised platform built in the back of the room with steps on either side...the single door was removed and double doors installed. James P. Leighton prepared the plans and most of the work was done by Perley O. York.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>14</sup> Everett S. Stackpole, *History of New Hampshire*, vol. IV (New York: The American Historical Society, 1916), 230.

<sup>15</sup> Gladys S. Bickford, *The Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Center Harbor, New Hampshire: 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 1838-1988* (Meredith, NH: Meredith Media Incorporated, 1988).

<sup>16</sup> Warren Perkins (Former Center Harbor Townhouse student) in conversation with the author, October 30, 2014.

<sup>17</sup> Center Harbor Historical Society, 68.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 32.

<sup>19</sup> David Ruell, "Belknap County Church Survey" (New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources Survey Form, 1988), CH-C-3.

<sup>20</sup> Center Harbor Historical Society, 68.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.



**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

**NHDHR INVENTORY # CEN007**

James Place Leighton (1856-1926) was a carpenter by trade and resident of Center Harbor. Leighton was born in Moultonborough in 1856 and married Harriet Ellen Smith in Laconia in 1879.<sup>23</sup> He lived on Bean Road in Center Harbor between 1900 and 1920 and was listed by the Census as a carpenter and builder.<sup>24</sup> He constructed the former Independence Hall<sup>25</sup>, the Morse & Stanley Block (34 Plymouth Street), the Grange Hall (9 Kelley Court), and several Center Harbor residences.<sup>26</sup>

The 1908 Center Harbor Town Report does not list all of the building alterations but does specify some work that was completed by Perley O. York in addition to the original \$1,000 contract: "extra on cellar, window frames, 2 windows and frames, cement doorstep, rail wood box, floor, bulletin board, labor on laying floor and changes" for an additional \$83.76.<sup>27</sup> Perley O. York was born in Holderness in about 1865 and was the son of Oscar York and Mary E. Brown.<sup>28</sup> On May 26, 1892 he married Vina B. Hawkins in Ashland, NH.<sup>29</sup> He lived in West Center Harbor, between Slab City and the Ashland town line from about 1900 until the 1930s and worked as a carpenter.<sup>30</sup> He died May 4, 1944.<sup>31</sup>

Town meetings were held in the Center Harbor Town House from 1844 through the 1964. Nancy Kelley of the Center Harbor Historical Society recalls that her mother-in-law worked at the Town House as a ballot clerk when she was first married in the late 1940s.<sup>32</sup> Though the Town House was still used for voting through the 1960s, meetings were moved to the larger grange hall until the "new" municipal offices and firehouse were completed on November 29, 1970. The current municipal offices are located on the shores of Winnepesaukee, between the town Post Office and the Library on Main Street.

The first schools in Center Harbor were located in one-room district school houses. As early as 1825, there were five districts with eight by 1865.<sup>33</sup> By 1930, these districts had been reconfigured and the children of Center Harbor attended one of three schools: the West Center Harbor Rural School (Grades 1-8), the Moultonborough-Center Harbor School (Grades 1-3) or the Center Harbor School (Grades 4-8). The Superintendent, E. W. Small, realized that the schools were filled to capacity and began looking to the Town House as a possible new school location.<sup>34</sup>

In 1933, the Town House was converted into a school house, moving students down the hill from the cramped schoolhouse on College Road. The building was re-furnished and the interior was refinished with "paint, oil, shellac and some other material": provided by Mr. Moore of Pine Hill without cost to the district.<sup>35</sup> Additionally, a fence was added for \$1,222.11, \$190.85 was spent on grading the property, and \$429.68 in new equipment was purchased. The equipment included moveable desks, blackboards, and the addition of chemical toilets to a small building at the rear of the Town House.<sup>36</sup>

Classes commenced at the Town House in 1934 and continued in this location through 1945.<sup>37</sup> Initially the school teacher employed was Beatrice Lovering, who was formerly a teacher at the Town School. Later teachers included Anna Sargent and Ruby Weeks. A music teacher named Donald Musgrove visited the school once a week to demonstrate different instruments to the students.<sup>38</sup> In 1934 there were 24 students in the Town House.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Ancestry.com, *New Hampshire, Marriage and Divorce Records, 1659-1947*.

<sup>24</sup> United State of America, Bureau of the Census. *Census of the United States: 1900, 1910, and 1920*.

<sup>25</sup> Independence Hall was located on Plymouth Street and became incorporated into the Garnet Inn in 1922 and was demolished in 1995.

<sup>26</sup> Center Harbor Historical Society, 27.

<sup>27</sup> Town of Center Harbor, *Annual Report of the Town of Center Harbor for the Year Ending February 15, 1908* (Meredith, NH: W. T. Lawrence, 1908), 41.

<sup>28</sup> United State of America, Bureau of the Census. *Census of the United States, 1870*.

<sup>29</sup> Ancestry.com, *New Hampshire, Marriage and Divorce Records, 1659-1947*.

<sup>30</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census. *Census of the United States: 1900, 1910, 1920 and 1930*.

<sup>31</sup> Ancestry.com, *New Hampshire, Death and Disinterment Records, 1754-1947*.

<sup>32</sup> Nancy Kelley (Center Harbor Historical Society) in discussion with the author, October 31, 2012.

<sup>33</sup> Center Harbor Historical Society, 37.

<sup>34</sup> Town of Center Harbor, *Annual Report of the Officers of the Town of Center Harbor for the Year Ending January 31, 1930* (Meredith, NH: Meredith Weekly News, 1930), 67. Historically, School District No. 4 had been located at 19 College Road. This building was known as the Fox, Norris or Town House School because of its location. The old school house remained in town ownership through 1947, at which time the town voted at town meeting to sell it. Later it was converted into a private residence.

<sup>35</sup> Town of Center Harbor, *Annual Report of the Officers of the Town of Center Harbor for the Year Ending January 31, 1933* (Meredith, NH: Meredith Weekly News, 1933), 67.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>37</sup> Warren Perkins spent first and second grade at the College Road School and moved to the Townhouse School for grades 3 to 8. (Perkins Interview, October 30, 2014.)

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM****NHDHR INVENTORY # CEN007**

The building was improved in 1939, when an addition was built onto the Townhouse School "to be used as a woodshed and storage room. The heater at this school has been moved to bring it nearer the chimney, thus getting rid of the long stove pipe which has been troublesome on account of creosote."<sup>40</sup>

By 1945 there were only 11 students at the Townhouse School.<sup>41</sup> In 1946, the Town House School combined with the Village Grammar and Primary School. By 1950, Center Harbor began discussion of forming a cooperative district with Meredith and the Village School closed shortly thereafter.

Town meetings continued at the Center Harbor Town House through 1964. The building was leased to the Disabled American Veterans for use as a meeting hall in the mid-1970s through the mid-1980s. In the second half of the 1980s, the Town of Center Harbor reclaimed the building as a storage location. At present, the building is used for storage only.

**42. Applicable NHDHR Historic Contexts (please list names from appendix C):**

Local government, 1630-present.

Elementary and secondary education, 1770-present

**43. Architectural Description and Comparative Evaluation:**

The Center Harbor Town House is a single story gable-front Greek Revival style public building with single-story ell and shed addition. The gable-end faces Route 3. The main block is 3 x 3 bays, the ell is 2 x 1 bays and there is a very small shed-roofed addition off of the back of the main block.

The building sits on a stone foundation. The foundation of the main block is low random rubble made from slightly rounded stones. The mortar joints are deep, creating a dramatic profile to this section of the foundation. The foundation of the ell is high and made of flatter uncoursed field stone with a shallow mortar profile.

The gable roof has medium pitch and is sheathed in very dark gray architectural asphalt shingles. The exterior walls are clad with narrow-reveal clapboard. There are flat corner pilasters with plain caps on the front of the building. They run into a narrow frieze and boxed cornice with returns. The corners to the back of the building are sheathed in cornerboards that run directly into the frieze without a cap. The building is painted white with white trim.

The Town House has 2/2 historic wooden sash windows with narrow muntins and a shallow profile. The window surrounds are flat with decorative projecting molded drip caps. The Center Harbor Town House has a single brick chimney, located at the rear exterior gable end of the main block. The chimney is quite narrow and does not have a corbelled cap. There appears to be a flat stone (possibly cut granite) placed on top of the chimney. There is a very small stove-pipe projecting from the center of the shed-roofed addition directly behind the brick chimney.

The primary facade (to the east side of the building) is symmetrical with a 2/2 window on either side of a one-bay square entrance porch. The primary entrance is sheltered by a hip roof supported by two square columns with plain caps that match the corner pilasters of the front of the main block. Two pilasters mark the intersection of the porch and the main block. The porch railing is molded with square columns at the railing terminals. The column bases and the lower portions of the porch itself have been damaged by rot. The porch floor is made of narrow pine boards that have been placed parallel to each other with a narrow strip in between for drainage. The floor has been painted gray, and some of the boards are weathered and cupped. The boxed cornice around the roof of the porch matches that of the main block.

The porch is approached from the east by a single large granite step. Alternatively, the porch may be approached by a wooden access ramp from the south. The access ramp continues up onto the porch, forming a platform over the porch floor, and eliminating a step up into the building from the porch. The main entry itself features paired five panel doors. There is a cornice above the doors. The porch ceiling is sheathed in narrow stained or varnished bead-board. There is a low-profile ceiling light fixture with a rounded milk glass shade in the center of the ceiling. The bead-board and light fixture most likely were installed during the 1907 renovations, along with the double-doors.

The south facade of the main block has 7 2/2 windows. Six of these windows are strung together toward the front of the building, allowing a massive amount of natural light and passive solar heat gain into the building. The seventh window

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Town of Center Harbor. *Annual Report of the Officers of the Town of Center Harbor for the Fiscal Year Ending January 31, 1939* (Meredith, NH: Meredith Weekly News, 1939), 47.

<sup>41</sup> Town of Center Harbor. *Annual Report of the Officers of the Town of Center Harbor for the Fiscal Year Ending January 31, 1945* (Meredith, NH: Meredith Weekly News, 1945)

**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

**NHDHR INVENTORY # CEN007**

is located near the rear of this elevation, slightly higher on the wall. In contrast, the north facade of the main block only has two windows.

There is an ell to the north of the main block. The ell is 2 x 1 bays. The east facade has one 2/2 window that is set high in the wall, nearly to the eave of the first bay. The second bay is occupied by a secondary entrance. The entrance door is suspended above the ground with no steps leading up to it. The door itself is 5 panel with heavy cornice above. Two of the door panels have been replaced by ventilation screening, which has also been inserted into the top of the open window in the first bay. There are no openings in the north facade of the ell.

The west facade has very few windows. There are no openings in the west facade of the ell. The north (left) bay of the main block has a 2/2 window with a small, square louvered ventilation window below. There is a small shed-roofed addition built over the middle of the west facade, obscuring what would have been the center bay. There is a small metal stove-pipe chimney protruding from the back of the shed roof, lined up just in front of the brick chimney. There are two small horizontal 3 light windows near the top of the west wall of the shed structure. The lower portion of the wall is extremely degraded due to rot. A portion of the siding is missing near the center and two rusty strap hinges may indicate a former hatch here, possibly into a wood or coal storage area below. The foundation to the shed addition appears to also be of field-stone but is very hard to see due to the high grade.

The Center Harbor Townhouse was once one of several Greek-Revival style public buildings in Center Harbor. The West Center Harbor Meetinghouse historically had a very similar appearance to the Center Harbor Townhouse but was heavily renovated sometime between when it was surveyed in 1988 by David Rule for the Belknap County Church Survey and the present date. Like the Center Harbor Townhouse, the West Center Harbor Meetinghouse is a gable-front, single-story building with symmetrical facade. There is some remaining Greek Revival detailing on this structure, including corner boards, boxed cornice and returns. The structure is also about the same size as the main block of the Center Harbor Townhouse. **(See photograph, page 13)**

A second Greek Revival style public building survives in West Center Harbor and is stylistically similar to the Townhouse. The former one-room school house at 292 Waukegan Road was built around the same time as the Townhouse. Like the townhouse and the West Center Harbor Meetinghouse, the main block of the former school house is one story with frieze, boxed cornice, returns, and corner pilasters. Like the West Center Harbor Meetinghouse, the school house has been converted into a dwelling and heavily altered in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. **(See photograph, page 14)**

Though there are other examples of small Greek-Revival Style public buildings within Center Harbor, the Center Harbor Townhouse is unique for its high level of architectural integrity. Since the Townhouse was in use as a public structure, the building has not been significantly altered.

**44. National or State Register Criteria Statement of Significance:**

The Center Harbor Townhouse is individually eligible for the State Register under criterion A and C.

The Center Harbor Townhouse is eligible for the New Hampshire State Register under Criterion A for the role it played in the civic and social history of the town. Since it was constructed in 1844, the Townhouse has been at the center of town administration in Center Harbor and has been a center of communal use. The buildings' central location allowed it to be used for Town Voting and Meetings between 1844 and 1964. No other municipal structures survive from this period. Between 1933 and 1946 the Townhouse was also used as a school house. The Townhouse is the only one room school house in Center Harbor that has not been converted to residential use.

The Center Harbor Townhouse is also eligible for the New Hampshire State Register under Criterion C as an example of a Greek Revival meetinghouse. The Townhouse is a well preserved example of an architectural style that was very common for civic structures through the 1820s to 1860s. Americans embraced the romanticized idea of Greek Democracy in their public buildings throughout the country. Center Harbor created its own vernacular version of the Greek Revival public buildings of larger cities across the country in their first purpose-built public meeting house. The Townhouse displays many architectural details that are distinctive of the style: overall temple form, wide trim at the cornice, corner pilasters, and heavy drip lines over windows.

**45. Period of Significance:**

A. 1843-1964

C. 1844, 1907, 1933, 1939 (the date of construction, and the dates of major renovations to the Townhouse)



**INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**

**NHDHR INVENTORY # CEN007**

**46. Statement of Integrity:**

The Center Harbor Townhouse retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The Townhouse has not been moved since its construction and retains its original form, plan and architectural style. The Townhouse retains its original parcel and the area immediately surrounding the structure has retained its rural character. The building closely resembles its historic appearance, despite the addition of a barrier-free access ramp to the main entrance in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The overall sense of design and feeling has not changed since the structure was used as a school. Likewise, the materials have remained unaltered. The building still reads as a rural meeting hall or school.

**47. Boundary Discussion:**

The State Register-eligible property consists of the current tax map of the property, as shown on the Property Map on page 2. The property is bounded to the north by Waukegan Road, to the south and east by the Daniel Webster Highway (Route 3), and to the west by the properties at 13 Waukegan Road and 167 Daniel Webster Highway.

*7/15 5:00 PM*  
**CODE ENFORCEMENT  
CENTER HARBOR, NH  
KEN BALLANCE  
603-455-6823  
603-253-4561**

**EMAIL [chcode@metrocast.net](mailto:chcode@metrocast.net)**

As per your request I have inspected the electrical situation at the town house..

For the use **as is** the electric is at bare minimum. if the use of the building changes i.e. any type of attended event, the building would have to be rewired to the present code for the


intended purpose. I would also suggest that the service entrance should be changed to the accepted norm for our area an external disconnect no matter what the buildings use is now or in the future.

Any question feel free to call

ken



**INSPECTED  
KEN BALLANCE  
Compliance/Health  
Town of Center Harbor, NH  
603-253-4561  
Date: 7/24/15**



**INSPECTED  
KEN BALLANCE  
Compliance/Health  
Town of Center Harbor, NH  
603-253-4561  
Date: 7/24/15**

## **HERITAGE FUND**

*RSA 674:44-d*

One of the innovations of the heritage commission legislation is that it allows a municipality to establish a non-lapsing heritage fund, which the heritage commission can use for activities. The fund can receive public or private monies and accumulate from year to year. The commission can expend money from the fund without approval from the local legislative body, as long as the expenditure is for an activity allowed under the heritage commission ordinance. If the money is to be used to purchase an interest in real property, the commission must first hold a public hearing. Furthermore, to protect private property rights, neither the municipality nor the commission can use the fund to condemn property. This is equivalent to the provisions of a conservation fund, which have been used successfully by conservation commissions for over thirty years.

### **Are Contributions to the Heritage Fund Tax Deductible?**

Yes, donations to municipalities are tax deductible if they are made for public purposes. The town's EIN should be provided in the thank-you letter to people who have donated. When you search for "donations to municipalities" there are lots of sites that provide similar guidance from lawyers and tax accountants.

<http://www.irs.gov/Government-Entities/Federal,-State-&-Local-Governments/Governmental-Information-Letter>

# New Center Harbor Heritage Commission looking at historic buildings

BY ERIN PLUMMER

epummer@salmonpress.com

**CENTER HARBOR** - An effort is getting off the ground to renovate the old Town House as well as take a look at every historical structure in town.

The Heritage Commission was recently formed to examine options for the historic Center Harbor Town House as well as looking at other properties in town with historic value. The group is now doing much planning and preparation for what could be a staged process to renovate the Town House.

Kim Baker said the group's initial project was the Town House. Their efforts turned into a Heritage Commission that will allow the effort to put money into the project and write grants. The board of selectmen appointed commissioners during its meeting on April 1.

Built in 1844, the Town House is located in the far corner of Center Harbor. This year the building was listed on the state's historic register.

Baker said there are people on the west side of town looking to open it up for different meetings and uses. Currently, the main meeting and function place in town is the Cary Mead Room in the municipal building. She said the selectmen



PHOTO BY ERIN PLUMMER

The Center Harbor Town House is being examined for possible renovation projects by the newly formed Heritage Commission.

have expressed interest in having a meeting at the Town House.

Baker said the entire building needs to be updated, including the sep-

tic system, handicap accessibility, and parking.

SEE BUILDINGS PAGE A6

## Buildings

Continued from Page A1

"It's a huge project, but we're trying to break it down into bite sized chunks," Baker said.

They are now getting in contact with different architects and structural engineers to get an assessment of the building.

They are also putting together a reuse plan.

"Our goal for the Town House is to use it again," Baker said.

The commission is writing a grant and looking for a 50/50 match and they are looking for money for the project. She

said the town is going to offer some money for the project to get the ball rolling. Once they have a site assessment and a review by an expert, they can break down the different projects and costs; including what can be done this year.

Baker said their primary focus is the Town House, though there are other historical properties in town that could use a look.

The Heritage Commission is also working on an inventory of all the different historical

structures in town. Baker said this does not have to just include whole buildings but also historic cellars and other structures with a significance to the community.

"That is kind of an ongoing project, as different people being

different things to our awareness," Baker said.

Once the inventory is complete, they will form subcommittees to look at the different items.

Baker said the Heritage commission is still in its early stages.