

CHAPTER 8 – CIVIC LIFE

Vision

We recognize that working together that gives us our hometown feel. This takes many forms, such as encountering each other as we get our mail, visit the transfer station or do business at Town Hall. It is expressed through our involvements in social groups; supporting our children, addressing town issues, volunteering on town boards/committees/commissions and participating in service organizations and other ad-hoc forums.

We recognize that it takes the energy and idealism of our young; as well as, the experience and wisdom of our elders to get things done well; and it takes the fresh eyes of our newcomers and the histories of our long-timers to create our future.

Thus our vision of civic life in Rye includes the following:

- Increasing cultural and recreational opportunities for our residents to share;
- Increasing voter turnouts;
- Expanding lists to serve on Town boards, committees and commissions;
- Recognizing residents of all ages will recognize that they have roles that are important in making their town their home; and
- Our out-of-doors will be enhanced and preserved through informed stewardship.

We want to protect, preserve, and reinforce the semi-rural character and integrity of our Town Center. Residents as well as visitors should feel a palpable identity that they are in a place that is uniquely Rye. To that end we will create an atmosphere that will welcome small locally owned retail establishments such as coffee shops and micro bakeries where people may congregate. It will be a physically welcoming part of town characterized by human-scale design and architecture reflecting our historic roots.

Overview

There are many aspects that go into creating a sense of civic life within a community. Basically, it comes down to people. It is the coming and going of the many people that live in, pass through, do business, and visit that give a town its personality. It is people that give Rye its character. Every person, in some way, makes his or her mark.

1.0 CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Rye has experienced a spectrum of views toward getting involved in local government. Residents want to maximize the extent to which its local laws, ordinances and regulations reflect their personal values and those that they hold of their community. The only means to that end is citizen involvement.

There are numerous ways for people to get involved. Some citizens of Rye are making it a better place through their professions and volunteer efforts. These include our teachers and librarians, nurses and doctors, police and fire personnel, town hall and public works employees. Our elderly citizens also bring a wealth of experience and history that helps narrow our focus on the past and guide us to better manage the future. All of our small businesses lend character and provide vital services that would otherwise require an out of town trip.

There are numerous groups staffed by our volunteer neighbors who fill the boards, committees and commissions that help define this town. A partial list includes; the Beach, Sewer, Historic, Heritage and Mosquito Control Commissions. There are the trustees for the Town's trust funds, the cemeteries and library. Rye volunteers serve all the Rye Water District, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Planning Board, Budget and Capital Improvement Project committees.

However, there are also numerous groups not formally linked to town government that help to shape the town. Among these are; the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, school project groups and sports teams who make us proud. Also included but not limited to are the PTA and Eagle Scout programs. None of the above activities would be possible by devoted adult volunteers. Additionally our Churches remind us of Rye's historic roots and serve a vital spiritual role.

Rye SERVE (Serving Elder Residents through Volunteer Efforts), the Garden Club, the Lions Club, Historical Society, Civic League and all other volunteer entities as well. We have people involved with groups outside of Rye that provide services to our residents. This includes people involved with Families First, Red Cross, the Seacoast Land Trust, and UNH's Marine Research Program. There are many less visible contributors as well. Rye is what it is because of the efforts of many people through the years.

Many Rye residences commute out of town and / or to other states to work. As a result, some newcomers may not have the same level of investment in their adopted community as long-time residents have had. The amount of time it takes for individuals to really feel ownership in the shaping of a community could be highly variable due to a variety circumstances.

This does not imply that newcomers are not involved. These individuals are more likely to become involved in more "immediate" efforts. For example, adults would volunteer for groups that focus on their kids' age groups, like sports or scouts. Individuals would join churches or conservation groups, gravitating toward established topical interests with which they are already familiar.

It is incumbent upon our well-established residents to extend their friendly, involved hands to newcomers and offer the hospitality that makes Rye "home". Increasing participation will rely on extending invitations to contribute. Personal introductions to community participation are

most effective. Through experience and by example everyone will learn they are qualified to make a difference here by virtue of their residency, intelligence and experience.

We should also foster our involvement of children and youth in town politics. These adults-in-training can learn at young ages that local politics is approachable and that their voices carry weight. We will welcome the attendance of our youth at the various regularly held board meetings.

The town should also recognize the implications of changes in household characteristics. The assertion that we want to encourage younger people to live here carries with it the responsibility to provide the services they seek. The availability of jobs, affordable housing and other issues that affect the ability to live in Rye should be addressed. Because of the household dynamics we should also be aware that day care services should be studied and addressed; as well as, adequate safety should be an issue to ways for walking strollers and a need for playgrounds where children live.

In past visioning sessions there were further suggestions utilizing the library and the recycling center to disseminate news of interest to Rye residents. The suggestions were weighted towards posting all information on the Town web site. Other less popular suggestions were; a cable TV link to our meetings, increased frequency of the Town newsletter-and a Town “hot line”. As of May 1, 2013, the Town provides broadcasts to meetings of town boards at the Town Hall via the internet with live on-line streaming and on demand access to archived broadcasts including those per Article 9 of the 2013 Warrant.

In the decade since the survey was conducted, some of these recommendations have already been incorporated. Meetings are posted on the Town website, in addition to that required by State Law. The authors of the Town newsletter should be thanked for their good work. Relatively few people thought the newsletter format should be changed.

Communications with the Town is a two-way street. Citizenship is a valuable asset and should not be taken lightly. If the character of Rye is to be maintained while moving into the 21st century then the citizenry needs to be involved. There are various opportunities all of which are described on the Town web site. A more hands on approach is attendance at various meetings where the course of Rye is plotted. The most obvious and comprehensive is the deliberation meeting held each February.

All Rye residents should be encouraged to subscribe on the Rye website for e-alerts. This will provide timely information regarding Town events and meetings.

2.0 TOWN CENTER

Several recommendations for Rye’s Town Center came from past visioning sessions. Participants embraced a vibrant center with small-scale local commerce to augment the government services already available. This vision includes increased pedestrian access and as mentioned in vision statement limited retail opportunities. Nobody wants to increase traffic or parking congestion, we recognize that we can plan wisely to avoid those consequences.

It is worth recognizing some of the opportunities:

- Safe walkways within the Town Center;
- Senior housing near the Town Center;
- Protect the scale, proportion and semi-rural character that exist;
- Increase recreational opportunities for all ages;
- Enhance the role of the library for communications on town issues.
- Create a natural outdoor experience in Parson's field by adding more recreational opportunities for children; and
- Establish an internet "hot Spot" in our Town center. By doing so we encourage our citizens and visitors to enjoy the ambience of the Town center.

The combination of future Town Center amenities and its usage will provide opportunities for social interactions for all members of the Community. With increased resources, this will contribute to the social and economic vitality of Rye.

In achieving the desired results we will need to struggle with our resistance to change. We like our town uncluttered. We associate retail with traffic. The creation of zoning was based upon the notion that uses should be separated. Large lots were thought desirable in order to protect personal space.

We have since learned that in town, i.e., in our Town Center, it is appropriate to concentrate some residences and services both for convenience and to protect larger tracts of land away from the center. Providing housing over shops creates affordable housing. Low Impact development near services reduces traffic.

3:0 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

We understand the importance of the implementation of effective policies and controls to protect the special character of the Town and preserve its historical, cultural and architectural resources. These resources, which include structures, farms, historic sites and seacoast, contribute to the community's quality of life and the town's visual beauty. Historic buildings and sites are integral to Rye's semi-rural and seacoast character. Recent development in residential areas, particularly the coastal zone of the town, has prompted renewed discussion of the value of historical structures and locations.

Vision

It is in the public interest to protect the character and beauty of the Town of Rye, through both voluntary and regulatory measures. The challenge is to maintain Rye's semi-rural and coastal atmosphere by effectively managing growth and development. Historic, cultural and environmental preservation should be integral to land use planning for growth and change of all private and public development to insure that development is compatible with the desired semi-rural and coastal character of the town.

3.1 Overview

The Town of Rye is fortunate that many buildings, landscapes and seascapes, illustrative of all periods of town history, remain intact. The potential exists to preserve the fabric of this special semi-rural and coastal townscape for generations to benefit from and enjoy.

3.2 Chronological Periods

Native Settlement – By 1600 tribes of the Penacook Confederacy (Algonquin stock), most notably the Piscataqua tribe, had been living in this seacoast area for approximately 1,000 years. Signs of human activity date back several thousand years before then.

European Exploration – Settlement - Itinerant fishermen and others used and explored Rye's shores especially in the 1500s and early 1600s. In 1605, Samuel de Champlain landed at Odiorne Point. In 1614, Captain John Smith landed at the Isles of Shoals. In 1623, David Thomson and ten others established the first permanent settlement at Pannaway Plantation, now Odiorne Point.

Sandy Beach Settlement to 1726 – From 1675 to 1713 attacks and reprisals by Europeans and Indians made life precarious for the approximately 100 people living in Sandy Beach, c. 1700. In 1692, Indians massacred settlers in the location of what is 605 Brackett Road today. After many years of petitioning the Provincial Legislature, parish status was granted in 1726 and the name of Rye was adopted in honor of the ancestral home town of Rye, England of the founding Jenness family.

1726 - 1785 – After building its first church and developing a real community, Rye became incorporated as an independent town with officials and clear boundaries by

the New Hampshire Legislature in 1785. During the Revolutionary War, thirty-seven Rye men, including two freed slaves, died in battle.

Early national period –1785 - 1830s - Rye grew to over 1,000 residents and on April 3, 1814, as the War of 1812 ended, Rye fought off the British under the command of General Thomas Goss in the Battle of Rye Harbor. The citizens participated in active land and sea trading and interaction with other seacoast communities and beyond.

Victorian Resort Era: 1830s - Civil War - late 1800s - From early fish shacks and fish parties at Ephraim Philbrick's farmhouse to first hotels in the 1840s to the Golden Era of the 1860s, increasingly more summer guests found their way to Rye with its eight hotels and twenty-five boarding houses. Rye developed a national and international reputation as a summer resort area. Significant benefits flowed into the local economy from the resort activities.

The Civil War had a major impact on Rye as eighty-six men served and thirty-three paid a bounty to avoid service. Town reports from 1863 indicate the continuing challenge and expense of building, maintaining and clearing roads after storms. The Cable House (now privately owned) on Old Beach Road in Rye was the office for the first undersea transatlantic telegraph cable run from Ireland through Newfoundland to Rye in 1874. The 1880s and 1890s saw greatly increasing summer populations enjoying the beauty of Rye's natural coastline and the amenities of its fancy hotels and boarding houses.

Early 20th century through World War I - A well-established town government functioned at the renovated Town Hall. Rye adjusted to and benefited from long-established regular railroad service, the advent of the trolley in 1899 and the registration of the first automobile in 1913. In 1902, Ocean Boulevard was the last of Rye's original roads to be completed. Residents experienced change and growth with early 20th century electrification and new opportunities with regular employment at the Navy Yard. In 1905, Rye Beach separated as a Village District/Precinct. Thirty-nine Rye residents served in World War I and three died.

The 1920s, the Great Depression, World War II - The end of the Victorian Era, World War I and its aftermath, and Prohibition combined to create Rye's version of the Roaring 20's. New improvement groups such as Rye Harbor and Jenness Beach emerged. The fabulous resort hotels: the Farragut, the Drake House, the Ocean Wave, and the Wentworth were still going strong.

In 1934, the consolidation of Rye's four schools into one new center school was a major change.

The new jetties in 1939 made Rye Harbor a safe haven.

During the Great Depression, Rye did not hit 25% unemployment in 1933 but many were out of work and needed new public assistance from the federal government. Steady population growth continued because of military job opportunities in the seacoast. As World War II came on, it boosted the local economy. Two hundred and forty-four Rye residents served in World War II with only one death.

Midcentury through the 1960's – Post-War growth resulted in growing pains, including refuse disposal and unregulated building. In the 1950s and 1960s the advent of planning/zoning boards, the Historic District Commission and the Conservation Commission helped Rye to meet preservation and conservation challenges. These town groups demonstrated the need for organized citizens' boards to preserve the town from rampant growth and environmental degradation. Beach issues emerged as the expanding population jostled for finite space. The Rye Civic League, with its monthly Town News, gave citizens a voice and a chance to engage in town issues. The first Master Plan was adopted in 1964 with citizen input.

The 1970s – In the midst of war and national recession, Rye was at its best. The citizens and the town helped to defeat the Onassis Oil Refinery proposal. A great three-day celebration to honor the 250th anniversary of its parish status and the national Bicentennial was held. Citizens formed the Rye Historical Society. The town pioneered the establishment of a recycling center. Citizens also worked together to form the Parsons Park Corporation which preserved fifty acres at the center of Rye.

The 1980s to the present –The current period is characterized by significant struggles with growth, housing developments and pollution, with resulting growth of town government and continued citizen participation in town issues through informal and formal groups. Conservation work moved forward in the areas of salt marsh restoration and the purchase of land and easements. The Zoning Ordinance was amended to protect buildings over fifty years of age. Public buildings were expanded as the population broke the 5,000 mark. Many initiatives for private and public building and land and water preservation occurred through easements,

purchase, and restoration. Rye has grown five-fold from the early 1800s and has managed to preserve many of its historical and cultural sites and vistas. There is legitimate concern, however, that the pressure to build more and bigger buildings will deprive the town of its scenic beauty and semi-rural coastal character.

3.3 Significant Properties and Resources

In Rye, there are approximately 350 buildings built before 1950. Some of these will require considerable care. Some of these are located in proximity and together could constitute an historic district. Among them are the oldest houses and barns from the 18th and 19th centuries: the Town Hall, Sugden House (part of the Seacoast Science Center), three surviving 19th century village school houses (which are now privately owned), the Library, and the Junior High School. The Drake House and Locke Bathing Pavilion/Beach Club are two Rye Beach examples.

There are many sites and landmarks around town whose preservation would educate the public about Rye's past: Grange Park, Rye Harbor, the Veteran's Memorial in Rye Center, historic graveyards, Central Cemetery, buildings which have served as businesses over many years (Tate and Foss is the fourth occupant of their building since 1870 when it was a general store; Christine's Crossing is also the fourth to use that early 19th century building.)

Rye Harbor – In active use from the earliest times of Rye's settlement, the harbor was originally dug by hand in the 1790s and dredged by machines in the 1930s and the 1960s and the 1990s. It has been a bustling port since the 1800s. The jetties were built in 1939. The state pier was built in 1962. The south side fishing shacks were landmarks for years and houses continue to be built along the southern edge of the Harbor. Moss Cottage was the original Saunders Restaurant from the early 1900s to late 1960s. Expanded under new ownership, it remained open until the fall of 2010 when, after significant local opposition, it was torn down for housing.

The Churches of Rye –

Rye Congregational Church at 580 Washington Road in the Historical District is the fourth church to be erected on the site, originally known as Rye's Meeting House Hill. The first meeting house was erected in 1725, after a petition of the local inhabitants to the Governor of the Province of New Hampshire to establish a parish. The meeting house was built by the Town and used for public worship and for town meetings. "The Church of Christ in Rye" was the second meeting house.

Constructed in 1755, it was 40' by 60' with a tower. In 1836, the Congregational Society formed to erect the third structure. In 1891, extensive changes were made including seven outside steps and the installation of pews. The Rye Christian Church merged with the Congregational Church in 1945 to form the Bethany Congregational Church. In 1957, a Parish House connected to the church was built. Fire completely destroyed the third church on the night of March 19, 1959. With strong congregational and community support the church was rebuilt in 1960 and the first services were held at Easter in 1961. In 2000, the Rye Congregational Church organization purchased the buildings from Bethany Church. It is a Rye historical and cultural landmark.

St. Andrew's-by-the-Sea is located on Church Road in Rye Beach. In the late 1800s, Rye was a summer destination with grand hotels and rooming houses filled with vacationers. Church services were important. In 1876, land for a new Episcopal church was given to the Bishop of New Hampshire by Frank and Lizzie Philbrick. The first service in the chapel was held on August 4, 1876, before the chapel was completed in 1877 with the bell tower. St. Andrew's is an example of a rural stone chapel embellished by wood trim, of the late Gothic Revival style. A significant architectural detail of the interior is the first window on the south side created in memory of Ogden Nash, a renowned poet and a member of St. Andrew's for 25 years. St. Andrew's was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the US Department of Interior in 2002.

Gosport Chapel is located on Star Island at the Isles of Shoals. Gosport was incorporated on December 24, 1715 and annexed to Rye on March 14, 1876. The stone church, built after fire ravaged several wooden churches on the site, was dedicated on November 29, 1800.

St. Theresa's Catholic Church located at 820 Central Road in Rye Beach was built in 1947. It is part of the Manchester Catholic diocese.

The Town Hall was originally a Methodist church built in 1839 sold to the town in 1873 for \$1,000 and opened for town business in 1874.

3.4 History of Preservation Activity

Zoning. The Town of Rye enacted its first zoning ordinance in 1953. It has been amended a number of times, as recently as March of 2013. The stated purpose of the ordinance is to promote "the health, safety and general welfare of the community." Preservation of the historic and cultural resources of the community

is not specifically set forth in the purpose statement. The section describing the Historic District does state the goal of maintaining visual harmony of the buildings and structures in that specific district.

Farms and Agricultural Buildings. Agricultural buildings are significant to Rye's history. The preservation of the barns in Rye is critical to preserving the town's semi-rural character. State of New Hampshire RSA 79-D was passed in 2002 to provide Discretionary Preservation Easements. The Selectmen should publicize and grant these easements which provide property tax incentive as a mechanism to save historic agricultural buildings. Rye tax payers support preservation efforts as demonstrated by passage of the March, 2013 warrant article which will fund the renovation of the barn at Goss Farm.

Rye Historical Society. The Historical Society is a tax exempt organization whose membership is open to all. Founded in 1976, as an off-shoot of the Rye Bicentennial Celebration, the Historical Society owns and operates the Rye Town Museum. The mission of the Rye Historical Society is to preserve the town's past and appreciate its heritage by collecting and displaying hundreds of artifacts, documents, photos and oral histories at the Rye Town Museum. The museum houses significant primary source material including tavern ledgers, diaries, town government records, news clippings and other 19th and early 20th century items.

The Society has documented and restored old graveyards. Through on-going and special exhibits, regular public programs and museum hours, the society aims to engage people in the vital aspects of Rye's history so that current issues may be better understood and future plans respect the natural and human history of the town. RHS is in the early stages of writing a new history of Rye which will utilize all of these resources.

The society has also created a road-by-road historic and cultural inventory of the town which includes the location of many former buildings and much of the town's human and natural history. It has also photographed most of the approximately 350 buildings and barns built prior to 1950 and is in the process of identifying specific addresses and histories of these structures. This initiative will contribute to the necessary project of a Historical Resources Inventory. This inventory will be overseen by the Rye Heritage Commission and will enhance preservation efforts.

Rye Historic District Commission. The Rye Historic District Commission was created by a vote of the people in 1966. The Commission is a land use board with members appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The HDC is committed to

promoting preservation and maintenance of properties within the Historic District of Rye Center from the Veterans' monument to Grange Park and within 500 feet on either side of the centerline of Washington Road. Any visual modifications, improvements or other changes within the District must come before the Commission. Other properties included under HDC oversight are the 1874 Cable House at 20 Old Beach Road, the 1691 Brackett Massacre Site at 605 Brackett Road, and those islands of the Isles of Shoals annexed to Rye in 1876 (Lunging, Star, White and Seavey).

Rye Heritage Commission. Establishment of the Rye Heritage Commission was in large measure the result of a need to provide an appropriate means for transfer of the historic World War II Pulpit Rock Tower from the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department to the Town of Rye, if and when conditions of transfer are met. A selectmen's article on the March 2011 ballot to establish a Heritage Commission was approved by voters. The Commission consists of five members appointed by the Board of Selectmen, one of whom shall be a selectperson, plus five alternates.

The RHC promotes the proper recognition, use and protection of resources, tangible or intangible, primarily man-made, that are valued for their historic, cultural, aesthetic, or community significance within their natural, built or cultural contexts. The RHC has the authority to survey and inventory cultural resources conduct research and publish findings, assist the Planning Board, as requested, to review cultural or historic resource related sections of the Master Plan and advise, upon request, local agencies and boards on matters affecting or potentially affecting cultural and historic resources.

The RHC can also publish its activities, hire consultants and contractors, receive gifts of money and property, hold meetings and hearings as necessary and consult and collaborate with the Historic District Commission. A number of concerns brought forward during the 2005 Visioning Sessions fall under the purview of the newly established Heritage Commission. Unlike the HDC which has a finite area of responsibility, Heritage Commission powers apply to the town as a whole.

Since holding its first meeting in November of 2011, the Heritage Commission has developed a program with goals to undertake: the updating of the Town's Historic Resource Inventory; the Old House Project; the Graveyard Project; preservation/restoration discussion of Town Hall; and continued interest in Pulpit Rock Tower. Collaboration with the Rye Historical Society and the State of New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, as well as the use of its archives will provide important background and documentation.

Demolition Review Committee. Section 509 of the Zoning Ordinance of Rye, NH provides for a review prior to demolition of any building fifty years or older and five hundred feet or larger. The review focuses on criteria to determine if a building is "significant" as follows:

- A. The building is of such interest or quality that it would meet national, state or local criteria for designation as an historic, cultural or architectural landmark.
- B. The building is of such unusual or uncommon design, texture or materials that it could not be reproduced or could be reproduced only with great difficulty and expense.
- C. The building is of such historic, architectural or community value that its removal would be to the detriment of the public interest.
- D. Retention of the building would help preserve and protect an historic place or area of historic interest. The implementation of this review guarantees that if a significant structure is allowed to be demolished the committee will be able to photograph and even save features for posterity.

State Register of Historic Places. At present, three properties are listed on the NH State Register of Historic Places (site, date of listing, ownership): 10 Central Road Rye Town Hall RYE0016 04/29/2013; 251 Harbor Road Goss Farm Barn RYE0017 04/25/11 and 505 Ocean Boulevard Odiorne Farm RYE0005 7/30/2007. A number of other properties and districts in Rye would likely be eligible for the State Register if application were to be made: Seavey Creek and Odiorne Park District, and Abenauqui Country Club, for example.

National Register of Historic Places.

The National Register properties in Rye are the Isles of Shoals, the Elijah Locke House, the Parsons Homestead, Pulpit Rock Base End Station, and St. Andrews by-the-Sea. The Elijah Locke House, 5 Grove Road, was the first Rye property to be listed on December 19, 1979. The Parsons Homestead, 520 Washington Road, came next on December 5, 1980. The Isles of Shoals was entered as a district on the Register on December 10, 1980. St. Andrews-by-the-Sea Church, an architectural jewel in Rye Beach, was listed on December 13, 2001. Recently, the Pulpit Rock Base-End Station of World War II, 9 Davis Road, received the recognition on April 16, 2010.

Land Conservation. The Rye Conservation Commission is committed to the protection and proper utilization of Rye’s natural resources. In keeping with its mission one of its primary goals is to conserve open space and protect the wetlands. The Town of Rye voted five million dollars to the Open Space Fund in 2003. Over the past ten years those funds were used to acquire land and easements on 625 acres and protected over 1,219 acres in Rye. The Commission has assumed responsibility for developing a community garden at the Goss Farm and planning the reconstruction of the Goss Barn which is on the New Hampshire State Register of Historic Places.

Preservation Issues and Challenges. The Rye Town Hall is an historic resource. It is also the building within which the Town conducts the business of the citizens of Rye. Built as a Methodist Episcopal church in 1838, it was purchased by the Town and dedicated as the Rye Town Hall in 1873. It served as the Town Meeting location through nearly three quarters of the 20th century; but gradually as population increased, town affairs became more complicated and technology brought rapid changes, the meeting space was increasingly taken over by offices. Selectmen throughout this period were mindful of the historic significance of the building; thus, the Great Hall with its proscenium arch, tin ceiling, wainscoting and the twin winding staircases, although nearly hidden, all remain intact. Because of these significant features, Rye's Town Hall has been placed on the State Register of Historic Places. This designation does not restrict addressing the needs of that building for safety and maintenance upgrades. The Town Hall should be in the center of Rye.

The Rye Memorial Library is an historic building, dating from 1911, as well as a resource of historical information. Books about Rye and its history, documentation of individual families and Annual Reports of the Town of Rye are part of the Library’s historical resource collection. The State of New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources records also contain a significant collection of materials on the history of Rye and its buildings and sites.

3.5 Next Steps

While some proposals derived from the 2005 Master Plan Visioning Sessions have come to fruition, such as the establishment of a Heritage Commission, and progress has been made on others, some suggestions of merit remain on the to do list. Among them:

- Creating a map of key sites in town and interpretive signs for each location;
- Offering an historic homes walk-through; and
- Publicizing that the Isles of Shoals National Historic District is a Rye historic asset.

The establishment of a Heritage Commission and dialogue concerning the future of the Town Hall have inspired renewed interest in our historical resources, as we seek to preserve our past while planning responsibly and thoughtfully for the future. The Heritage Commission has set out new goals for its Commissioners and also for the community, as follows:

1. A professional planner should be engaged to review and revise the Zoning Ordinance to address historical and cultural resources and to identify and resolve potential conflicts with preservation goals. The planner should coordinate the approaches of the land use boards of the town to avoid inconsistent procedures and results. The goal is to elevate the Master Plan to be the framework for the future decisions of land use boards in the Town of Rye.
2. The Zoning Ordinance will be amended to include the preservation of cultural and historical resources as part of the vision and goals of planning for the Town of Rye.
3. The Heritage Commission has expertise and information valuable to the planning process. When applications involve properties more than 50 years old or evidence the possibility of impacting an historic site or resource, the Commission should be consulted on historic preservation.
4. All land use boards in the town will encourage adaptive re-use of historic buildings, rather than demolition or new construction. The Selectmen will support this effort with easements for conservation/preservation pursuant to State of New Hampshire RSA 79-E.
5. The members of all town boards and commissions and committees will be educated regarding the vision and recommendations of the Master Plan.
6. Educating the public of the importance of historic preservation is essential to retaining the special semi-rural and coastal character of the town. The

Heritage Commission will raise preservation awareness and promote community education regarding town resources that have value for their historic, cultural, aesthetic, or community significance.

7. The present Town Hall will be preserved. The Great Hall will be reclaimed for meeting space and community activity. The decision will influence the amount of additional space that is required for town business. The size of any addition to this historic structure should be to scale and in harmony with its historic architecture. Resolving the future of Town Hall will require community participation in addition to investment of time and energy by those holding Town offices.
8. The Rye Heritage Commission will pursue grants (including New Hampshire Moose Plate and L-CHIP) to raise money for preservation efforts.
9. The Town of Rye will foster an increasingly vibrant Town Center.
10. The Heritage Commission shall conduct a survey of historic structures, sites and cultural resources. It will create an inventory of these resources. Conducting a town-wide survey of historic structures and sites by trained volunteers and then publishing an illustrated list of the landmarks of the town on the town's website would be valuable to all ages.
11. The Heritage Commission will expand the Historical Society inventory. This inventory will be overseen by the Rye Heritage Commission and will enhance preservation efforts. The RHC will map the sites to reveal the important historical trends which the sites represent. Once the mapping is completed, this resource will be utilized to create walking, biking and driving self-guided tours which can be available on the town website.
12. The Heritage Commission will investigate and advance the preservation of the more than sixty historic graveyards in town located on private properties. The Commission will seek grants for this project.
13. The Heritage Commission will investigate and advance the registration of Rye historic places and districts with the National and the New Hampshire Registers of Historic Places. Examples are: Seavey Creek and Odiorne Park

District with Odiorne Farm, the Fort and Indian Burial Ground, the Abenaki Country Club, and early family cemeteries.

14. The Heritage Commission will encourage the Selectmen to work with state officials to implement traffic calming for Route 1 A.
15. It would be beneficial for Rye to establish an Agricultural Commission to manage its farm properties. Agricultural Commissions are new to the State of New Hampshire, as a vehicle to encourage local agriculture. The pertinent RSAs define “agriculture” to include farms, agricultures, and farming. For a town seeking to balance growth and quality of life while preserving local character, an Agricultural Commission can function for local farms as a heritage commission functions for historical resources or as a conservation commission functions for natural resources. The purpose of an agricultural commission is for the proper recognition, promotion, enhancement, encouragement, use, management, and protection of agriculture and agricultural resources, tangible or intangible, that are valued for their economic, aesthetic, cultural, historic, or community significance within their natural, built, or cultural contexts.