

## YARMOUTH VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Presented on June 6, 2017

The 2016-17 year started on June 7, 2016 following the Annual Meeting for 2016. Fourteen trustees held their first Board meeting immediately following this meeting. The Board elected from the trustees, the executive officer positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Asst. Treasurer and Historian for one year terms.

The first membership and program meeting was a lovely coffee and treats held on Oct. 4th at Pam Adams beautiful seaside home. Denise Clavette, Yarmouth's Economic Development Director, held a discussion with the group about projects that could be done in the community and attracting new members to the organization.

On November 1<sup>st</sup> the public program speaker was Town Manager Nat Tupper. The meeting was held at the History Center. The VIS thanks the Historical Society for lending us the space for a well-attended and informative presentation.

Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup> the popular gift wrapping holiday luncheon was held at Toddy Brook. Gifts for children ages 0-18 were brought by members. The children are recommended by the school nurse from families that may not receive gifts from other organizations. Over 100 gifts were wrapped and labeled according to age categories. The school and families were most appreciative of these gifts.

At the January Board meeting there was a presentation by Sarah Witte and Alex Jagerman, Town Planner, on the design of the Route 1 overpass replacement bridge. This included the proposed design for underneath the bridge which will be an enlarged public use space. The public program on Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> was by the Town Gardener, Andrew Gabrielson.

At the Feb. Board meeting Andrew Gabrielson presented a proposed plan for a redo of Latchstring Park. The March public program was with Royal River Conservation Trust.

April's public program was co-sponsored with the Library and held at the Library. It was a most interesting presentation and discussion by Kevin Mannix and Linda Rota, "Weathering Shame".

In May, despite cold and dreary weather our public program was held at the Old Meeting House on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. The program was with the Yarmouth Artist in Residence and shared with the Kismet Foundation.

Our annual meeting is being held today at the Yarmouth History Center with a display of period clothing which was once part of the VIS clothing collection, previous to the founding of the Historical Society.

The two National Register sites, the Meeting House and the Grand Trunk Railway Station have continued to be maintained. A proposal to the Town Council in January for a partial painting of the Meeting House costing \$9500 was approved. The money will come from the Town's Preservation Fund and the work will be done in the summer, 2017.

An energy audit was held for the restoration needs of the Railway Station. Following that audit contractors provided the VIS bids for the necessary weatherization projects in this 1906 building. In February the VIS was given notice that the current owner of Yarmouth Florist would not be renewing the lease. After much discussion of the future of this building, a subcommittee was appointed to consider the future of the building. This committee proposed to the Trustees and subsequently to the entire

membership that the building be sold with the stipulation that the building would have historic preservation easements, provided thru Maine Preservation. This building is a major landmark on Main Street. The Society purchased the building in 1968 when it was proposed that the building be torn down. The Canadian National Railroad was no longer going to provide service to Yarmouth and had no use for the building. The VIS felt strongly that the building should be preserved as part of Yarmouth's history. To continue preservation of the building the VIS will only sell the building with preservation easements, supervised by Maine Preservation . These easements will insure that the building will continue to have architectural integrity and remain a focal point for Yarmouth. Although there is much interest at this time in purchase or lease of the building several steps are necessary before the building can be put on the market and sold in its current condition.

There was a Clean Up day of the Village Green Park, in front of the RR station on April 28<sup>th</sup> by VIS members. Thank you to members and friends who came up with several bags of garden debris. A feature in the park, the water fountain with a pet dispenser, at this time does not operate correctly. The fountain was a VIS gift in 2010 to the town. Trustees are pursuing if it can be repaired or should be taken out of the Park. VIS also is responsible financially for the drip irrigation in this park and provides the water for the irrigation and the fountain.

During this past year we have had liaisons to four other major organizations affecting the community. These were the Bridge Advisory Committee, Laurie Broberg and Pam Adams; Tree Committee, Christie Harriman; YCan, Wendy Ralph; and YArts, Linda Grant.

The VIS continues contributions to many Yarmouth projects that benefit the wellbeing of the Town residents. This year those activities are Lunch Crunch Summer Program with Community Services, sponsoring the Summer Arts Program in Royal River Park, Easter Egg Hunt, design work for Latchstring Park and the maintenance and care of the two buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. At this time we have also pledged a donation of benches for the new pedestrian area under the Rt. 1 overpass bridge. VIS is also considering plans for a redeveloped Latchstring Park, and commitment thru volunteers for maintenance of the park grounds.

The focus for this next year will be determining how we can better serve the community, being aware of needs in the community and projects that will interest new members in helping the VIS continue its mission in Yarmouth, reevaluating updating the Marker Program. And doing our best to continue having the RR Station remain a focal part of Main Street.

Thank you to the Trustees and other members who have contributed time, energy and interest in this our 105<sup>th</sup> year.

Linda Grant, President