

MERRIMACK

Multifamily housing plan approved for Depot Street

■ Planners conditionally OK conversion of single-family home to four apartments.

By **Dave Pierce**
Union Leader Staff

Merrimack planners conditionally approved a four-unit, multifamily housing plan for 8 Depot St. last week.

Planning Board members voted 6-0-1 to allow the plan to go forward Wednesday night. The vacant former single-family home sits on approximately .77 acres and will be divided into two apartments with

two bedrooms each and two apartments with three bedrooms each once developers meet the conditions set by the town.

Samuel R. Foisie, chief of engineering for Meridian Land Services of Amherst, said the developer has already received a variance to change the use of the property from single-family to multifamily and they've been before the Conservation Commission.

All that's left to do is renovate the old structure, widen the driveway to 18 feet wide, add nine outdoor parking spaces and possibly modify the sewer and water

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PROVIDED BY MERIDIAN LAND SERVICES

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Flying High Dogs in Dazzle in Derry

The Flying High Dogs team entertained young and old at Don Ball Park in Derry last week. The talented group of pups and trainer Mike Piazza of Nahant, Mass., have performed on Animal Planet, major league sporting events and the circus. The Wednesday fun series at the park continues this week when Derry Parks and Recreation presents Wildlife Encounters at 1 p.m., a program about a variety of animals and their role in the ecosystem.



PHOTOS BY DAVID LANE/UNION LEADER

Mojo makes a catch after Valentina Rosewarne, 6, of Londonderry made a toss with help from handler Mike Piazza.



Youngsters pet the dog Mojo during the show at Don Ball Park in Derry last week.



Mojo performs a trick with Mike Piazza.

GOFFSTOWN

Revolutionary War veterans to get new markers

■ Descendants launch initiative to identify graves of every soldier buried in the state.

By **Zachary Marano**
Union Leader Staff

At least five soldiers who fought in the Battle of Bunker Hill during the American Revolution eventually found their final resting places in Hillside Cemetery in Goffstown. Now, Goffstown public works staff are installing markers at the grave sites of these local patriots.

The New Hampshire Sons of the American Revolution (NHSAR) donated grave markers to Goffstown last week, following the battle's 250th anniversary.

Curtis Hermann, first vice president and commander of the NHSAR Color Guard, said the Battle of Bunker Hill was the first major engagement of the Revolutionary War, and it showed that colonial militia could fight British redcoats despite their disadvantages in experience and training.

These new grave markers at Hillside Cemetery are part of a larger initiative started by NHSAR in late 2023 to identify the graves of every Revolutionary War soldier buried in New Hampshire, which they consider a "daunting task."

But when NHSAR contacted the Goffstown Historical Society and cemetery trustees for assistance on this project, they found that a member of both organizations had already identified almost 50 gravesites in Hillside Cemetery that belonged to Revolutionary War soldiers.

"Around 2016, I started doing an inventory of every cemetery in Goffstown," said Valerie Neal, cemetery trustee and Goffstown Historical Society member. "When I did all that research for the cemeteries, I made a list of all the veterans buried here, categorizing them by conflict."

Neal said she wants to honor and remember the people buried in town cemeteries. This motivated her to compile a database of veterans and collaborate with the cemetery committee and local department of public works to clean and maintain them.

The NHSAR and Goffstown Historical Society were able to identify soldiers who were present at the Battle of Bunker Hill by comparing Neal's list to other sources, including an online roster of New Hampshire soldiers at the battle on the National Park Service website. The park service's database relies heavily on 1889 research by George C. Gilmore.

Using genealogies and other information

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1722: Rochester is permanently established

THE TOWNSHIP of Rochester in the Province of New Hampshire was chartered in May 1722. The 253 proprietors who had been granted land in Rochester were delayed in developing their properties until after 1725, which marked the end of what was called Lovewell's War.

This conflict between the New England colonies and the people of the French-allied Wabanaki Confederacy was one of several outbreaks of violence in the 18th century involving England, France and native peoples. These struggles would continue with two more conflicts, King



Looking Back

Aureore Eaton

George's War (1744-1748) and the French & Indian War (1754-1763).

According to the 1892 "History of the Town of Rochester" by Franklin McDuffee, the proprietors of Rochester met on April 24, 1727, "for the purpose of consulting upon the best means to forward the

settlement of the chartered land which as yet remained an unbroken wilderness." The town's first selectmen were chosen, and plans were put in place for surveying house lots and laying out roads.

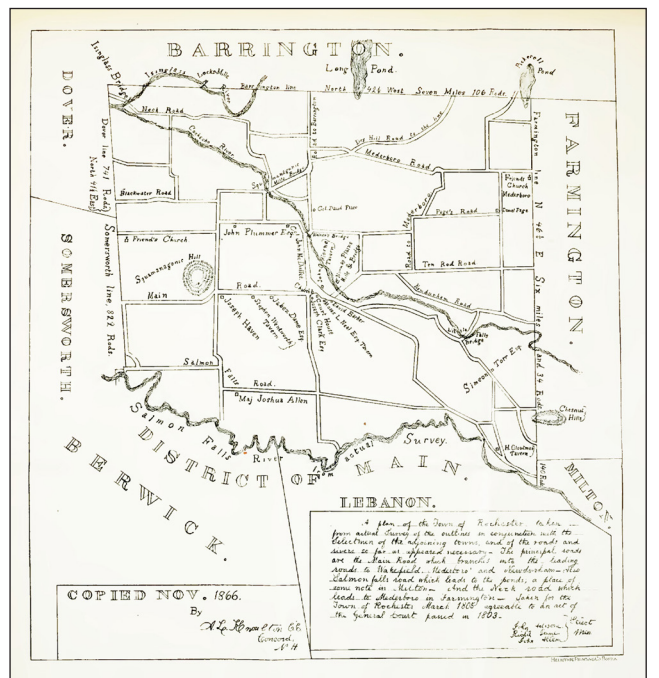
Few of the proprietors settled in Rochester. Their main interest was profit, so they generally either sold or leased the lands they had been granted in 1722. The first settlers moved into Rochester in 1729. In April 1730, the proprietors voted to build a meetinghouse that would be 40 feet long and 35 feet wide. A location was chosen near the center of the settlement on high

land that was easily accessible from different directions. This was the only meeting place in town and was vitally important to the community's well-being.

McDuffee expressed that "It soon became the most thickly settled part of the town, for everything at that period derived special value and importance from proximity to the church ... It was the political, moral and social, as well as religious center."

On April 1, 1737, through an act of the New Hampshire colonial legislature, the management of

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Map of Rochester, New Hampshire in 1805, as copied in 1866, published in the 1892 "History of the Town of Rochester."

TILTON

Historic Island Park Bridge undergoing renovation

By Dan Seufert
Union Leader Correspondent

It's been five years since people have been allowed to cross the historic Tilton Island Park Bridge to the island and bandstand, which until recent years had been used as a warm-weather venue for sightseeing and music performances.

But thanks to town Selectmen, the town's historical society, various state and national preservation groups, and U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, one of the country's top covered-bridge building and restoration companies is restoring the bridge so that future generations can enjoy it and the island's grand summer house gazebo.

"It was the place to go in Tilton on hot summer summer days and nights," said John Ciriello, chairman of the Tilton Historical Society.

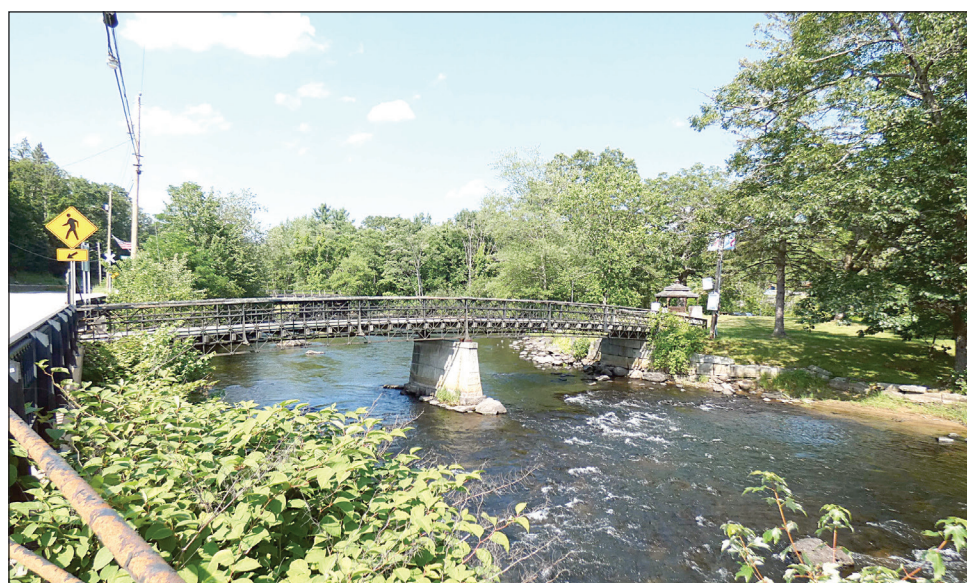
The \$518,000 restoration project, set for completion in the fall of 2026, will be done by Arnold M. Graton

Associates Inc. of Holderness, the company that has built and restored numerous bridges in New England, including famous covered bridges in Campton and Woodstock, Vermont.

The 85-foot bridge was closed five years ago due to deterioration from age and salt from the nearby highway, said Sam Thibeault, 20, a local historian and who has been working on the restoration project for several years, partly as an intern with the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance.

The town recently received a grant for the project from the Historic Preservation Fund administered by the National Parks Service.

The bridge, originally built in 1881 by A.D. Briggs and Co. of Springfield, Mass., consists of two iron truss spans that rest on granite abutments and a central granite pier. Its trusses, using a patented design similar to that of wooden lattice bridges, are an example of a unique



The Tilton Island Bridge today.

DAN SEUFERT/UNION LEADER CORRESPONDENT

chapter of the history of bridge-building and civil engineering in which designers were making the transition from wooden bridges to iron bridges, Thibeault said.

Cast iron truss bridges were popular during the 1850s as designers were moving away from wooden

bridge designs, he said. The Tilton Island Bridge, built to little Tilton Island in the middle of the Pemigewasset River, is an example of bridges built during this time of transition, he said.

By the time the Tilton Island Park Bridge was constructed, most other new bridges being constructed

were wrought-iron or steel. The bandstand was built at a time when other towns and cities in the state were holding regular community band concerts, often on Saturday and Sunday nights. The Tilton Island bandstand was the site of recent bandstand shows as well, Thibeault said, adding

that it will be open to future concerts.

The bridge was donated to the town by merchant Charles E. Tilton whose great-grandfather Nathaniel Tilton founded the town, said Scott Hilliard, the town's administrator.

"One end of the bridge, the closest side to Route 3 is worse than the rest, most likely from road salt. Otherwise it is in pretty good shape for 1881," Hilliard said. "It will (need) new decking once it is put back in place."

Town officials, particularly Selectman Jonathan Scanlon, have been seeking to restore the bridge for decades, Ciriello said. "We have been extremely conscious of history in trying to put back pieces of history in the town," he said.

Thibeault said people of his generation will happily use the bridge and the island gazebo once again.

"It's a piece of our town history and it's getting restored. That's exciting," he said.

NORTH COUNTRY

17 arrested in drug trafficking investigation

Staff Report

Authorities arrested 17 people in Coos County following a four-month investigation into drug trafficking in northern New Hampshire, State Police announced.

The State Police Narcotics Investigations Unit worked with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's Manchester office to target distribution networks for fentanyl, cocaine, crack cocaine and methamphetamine, they said in a statement.

The arrests included charges ranging from possession of controlled drugs in a motor vehicle to conspiracy to commit narcotics sales and possession with intent to distribute, according to police. Some suspects also faced charges of hindering prosecution and fugitive from justice.

Investigators seized quantities of the four drugs along with evidence of trafficking operations,

though authorities did not specify amounts.

"This investigation reflects our ongoing commitment to working with our federal and local partners to aggressively target those responsible for fueling the opioid epidemic in our communities," said Col. Mark B. Hall, director of New Hampshire State Police.

Special agent in charge Jarod Forget of the DEA's New England Division said the 17 suspects were "specifically targeted as being responsible for the majority of the fentanyl and methamphetamine distribution in the county."

The operation included assistance from the Colebrook and Berlin police departments, state police said.

Anyone with information can contact Lt. Shane W. Larkin of the Narcotics Investigations Unit at 603-234-0707 or send anonymous tips to nabdope@dos.nh.gov.

Lotteries

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Pick 3 & Pick 4 (July 20) Day: 741 & 4876 Night: 697 & 4887
Gimme 5 (July 18) 3-7-20-21-27
Lucky For Life (July 19) 12-23-33-35-36 LB 8
Megabucks Plus (July 19) 5-9-28-34-38 MB 4
Mega Millions (July 18) 11-43-54-55-63 MB 3
Powerball (July 19) 28-48-51-61-69 PB 20

MASSACHUSETTS

Daily Lottery (July 20) Day: 4808
Mass Cash (July 19) 1-2-8-14-22
Megabucks (July 19) 9-18-22-30-34-35

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Apartments

connections, Foisie said.

There will also be two parking spaces in the garage on the property. The apartments will range in size from about 1,100 square feet to 1,600 square feet, he said.

The plan for now is to rent out each apartment with a possibility of coming before the town to convert the property into condominiums at a later date, Foisie said.

Peter Albert, the Town Council's representative on

the Planning Board, said he hopes the building and grounds would be aesthetically pleasing because of the historic nature of the neighborhood.

"This is a historical neighborhood for Merrimack. A lot of history, a lot of old homes as you can see," Albert said. "A lot of people worked at the furniture factory a hundred years ago. A lot of people in that area are concerned with the maintenance of the property. From the pictures you showed

me, it looks like it's going to be a nice structure.

Albert also asked the developer to consider designing the outside lighting for the property in a way that won't create excessive light pollution in the neighborhood.

Foisie said the current design calls for most of the lighting to be mounted on the building with one or two 8-foot light poles. But he committed to scaling back the lighting.

He also agreed to limit

outside construction and work with loud equipment to Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Before approving the project, Planning Board members also voted 6-0-1 to waive the full site plan review. Foisie said the developer sought the waiver because the building wouldn't significantly change the layout of the property. Board members agreed.

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Looking Back

Rochester's affairs was turned over to the inhabitants. They now had the authority to elect their own officials and to transact all business necessary for the operation of their community. The act permitted the town government to impose taxes on residents and on the non-resident landowners. This second group included the proprietors who continued to hold property in town.

By early 1737 there was general agreement in town that Rev. Amos Main would be an excellent choice as Rochester's Congregational minister. He was a native of York, Maine, and had graduated from Harvard College in 1729. He had been a visiting preacher

in town for over a year and was well liked by the inhabitants.

As a sign of acceptance, Rev. Main was chosen as the clerk for the town meeting held on April 26. In May, he was invited to serve as the town's first settled minister and was offered a salary that was considered generous for the time. The town also agreed to build a two-story house for him and his family. Rev. Main accepted the offer and went on to serve his Rochester congregation until his death in 1760.

By 1739 around 60 families lived in Rochester, with their primary means of support being farming. Settlement proceeded

more rapidly in the coming months, and by 1744 there were around 150 families in the community. This was the year that war broke out again and, as McDuffee wrote, "For a few weeks or months they might have neglected their work and lived in garrisons or engaged in active warfare, but as the contest continued year after year they were compelled to expose themselves in order to provide means of subsistence."

These garrisons (or block houses) were fortified wooden structures, two stories high, with the upper story projecting three or four feet over the first story. The walls were pierced with loopholes wide enough to

allow a gun-barrel to be pointed through them and had shutters on the inside to close them off. The town built five public block houses, and there were others that were privately constructed.

During the French & Indian War, the residents of Rochester were less subject to attack than they had been previously. The need for the garrisons diminished with time, and the town was finally able to live in peace after the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1763.

Next week: The temperance movement in Rochester in the 19th century.

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Veterans

from the two-volume History of the Town of Goffstown by George Plummer Hadley, Neal wrote brief biographies of the soldiers who were at Bunker Hill. These can be found on the NHSAR website.

The new grave markers just recently arrived, but a ceremony for the Bunker Hill veterans was held closer to the anniversary of the battle in June.

Among the participants was Heidi Luba of Goffstown. Luba can trace her ancestry back to two survivors of the Battle of Bunker Hill who are buried in Hillside Cemetery: Capt. Peter Butterfield and his brother-in-law, Pvt. Jonathan Bell.

Luba laid flowers at Butterfield's and Bell's graves during the ceremony. She said remembering the service of veterans is important to her, and that she also regularly visits their gravesites on other occasions, such as Memorial Day.

She also said she felt able to empathize with the soldiers as a military wife. Her husband, Michael Luba Jr., served in the U.S. Air Force as a flight engineer for 25

years and in Middle East conflicts.

"I'm extremely proud of my husband's service, and I'm very proud of my children for growing up knowing that their father was in dangerous situations all the time. Flying is one of the most dangerous jobs you can have, even when you're not actively being shot at," Luba said.

She reflected that the families of these 18th century soldiers probably dealt with similar anxieties when they left home to fight in the American Revolution.

Another descendant of Bell, Sheila Knight, was also at last month's event. Knight explained that Bell's involvement in the war for independence was passed down through her family.

"It was a unique and very nice experience. I was very happy for my patriot," Knight said about the ceremony. "I knew about my ancestor since I was a very small child. My grandmother was born and raised in Goffstown, and the homestead that (Bell) lived on was part of my family."

Hermann presented a

certificate of appreciation to the Select Board and cemetery trustees on July 14. He praised the people of Goffstown for being engaged and involved in the grave marking initiative.

"We honor our patriots by promoting patriotism and educating and inspir-

ing younger generations on the founding principles of our country," he said. "And I can't think of a better way to do that than by doing the grave markings that we do, promoting public awareness of the valuable information that's out there in the cemetery."

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