

The Ryde Society Minutes

18/06/2018

1. Jonathan Dent opened the first meeting of the Ryde Society.
 - 1.1. Jonathan was concerned regarding the plans shown by the regeneration team. He felt that they are inappropriate. Most people that make up the society are concerned about the grade 2 listed buildings 429 in Ryde - Ryde Town Hall, Vectis Hall.
 - 1.2. There are 3 points of concern; the state of heritage buildings, green spaces and no meeting spaces and amenities. All of these are being sold off. There is now no ice rink, but many children, and a good team.
 - 1.3. Unknown to most are the plans put forward to regenerate the sea front.
 - 1.4. Stella Davis is away at the moment - she has been leading this group.
2. To discuss the purpose and constitution of the society.
3. To approve the name of the group. The Ryde Society is put forward, and gives a wide remit.
 - 3.1. Anyone with a concern can bring it to the society's attention.
 - 3.2. It was pointed out that there a several societies with similar names, but it was felt that this would not prove to be too much of an issue.
4. The enforcement officer has only had one complaint about The Ryde Town Hall.
 - 4.1. The town hall was inspected. Nothing has yet been done, but the buddleia has gone. Rendering, flaking etc. It still looks very run down.
 - 4.2. Empty buildings meeting with regen team.
 - 4.3. Chris Ashman said that the group should get stuck in as volunteers, but the level of support is very thin. The people that knew the owners were there and not sure about how the owners would be approached.
 - 4.4. Experience there but the key factor is that it is privately owned.
 - 4.5. Not confident that the regeneration team would help with this.
 - 4.6. They would support whatever the Ryde Society (RS) could do.
 - 4.7. Wayne Whittle noted that the council had to leave the hall because the public gallery was too small, and was closed because the lift didn't work etc. Once closed it was up for sale.
 - 4.8. Sold at the end of brown era.
 - 4.9. Work has started, but it is grade 2 listed - not paying rates if empty
 - 4.10. Should be sold with business plans in place.
 - 4.11. Chair of Ryde business association noted that it would probably cost millions to get the Theatre going.
 - 4.12. There was uncertainty as to whether any legal action can be taken.
 - 4.13. It wouldn't take a lot of money initially, but Wayne has heard that the Theatre is on the market for sale.
 - 4.14. Wayne noted that the owner of the Theatre paid three hundred thousand, and is looking for seven hundred thousand.
 - 4.15. Joseph Cohn who bought St Thomas has made clear that if he cannot overcome planning problems it will be left.
 - 4.16. Regarding Vectis Hall, Wayne would like to see Vectis Hall traded off for flats and a cafe that would have some community use.
 - 4.17. The only way to preserve buildings is to live in them.

- 4.18. Regarding the Royal York, there have been issues to do with the mast. While there is grant funding for a new radio mast, there is a license and electricity costs that must be paid for as ongoing costs.
 - 4.19. It is very hard as the problem is that the councils don't always get on.
 - 4.20. Regarding community use - there was a sense that community use, was an idealistic dream.
 - 4.21. Condescending that RS didn't think that there needed to be a commercial arm.
 - 4.22. The Committee asked Wayne whether the town council could put together a small statement about the regeneration plans.
 - 4.23. Wayne cannot comment on this on behalf of or to the Town Council as his interests are vested.
 - 4.24. Adrian noted that the Ryde Town Council (RTC) planning committee is tomorrow night
 - 4.25. Helen is addressing the planning committee, which is hoped to be a first step for the plans to be considered by the whole town council.
5. Wayne suggested that the RS could meet with Ken Gladdis (owner of Ryde Town Hall), along with council members.
 - 5.1. Helen asked if there could be a compulsory purchase order, and Jonathan enquired whether one could regrade buildings.
 - 5.2. Wayne felt that RTC would not do a CPO due to the cost.
 - 5.3. Wayne suggested that if enough people complained about the state of Ryde Theatre, there could be some success in its maintenance. The Royal York was only pushed due to complaint.
 - **Actionpoint 1 - Everyone must email Lee Byrne (lee.byrne@iow.gov.uk) the at the Council regarding the state of the Town Hall**
 - 5.4. Wayne noted that RS needs to say what they do want, and suggest solutions, rather than say what it does not like.
6. Third on agenda, was Jonathan's meeting with Bob Seely.
 - 6.1. Jonathan noted how concerned residents are about regeneration plans, but Seeley said that they are now defunct.
 - 6.2. Wayne noted that they have now moved on to Shanklin, where the councillors are more amenable, as there are car parks that could be regenerated
 - 6.3. What they found in Ryde was that they wouldn't make much money. However, that was only residential.
 - 6.4. Jonathan noted that this was not regeneration but development.
 - 6.5. The RS is committed to the improvement of common areas.
 - 6.6. Wayne noted that the Newport Quay had a covenant on it for 3 years.
 - 6.7. There is a revision order to change this, and it could be developed, but to do this, it would cost businesses, so they needed residential development.
 - 6.8. The aim is to regenerate buildings to make them viable.
 - 6.9. Jonathan noted that Bob Seeley gave the RS his blessing and will send a copy to James Brokenshire
 - 6.10. Abbey felt that she personally did not have a resistance to developing but as there is only private investment, there isn't a body that is looking at the whole. The man and wife development team taking on the Hall, but is the provision to the community enough if a private entity adds another cafe to a sea full of cafes that only does a small bit of community. This is not a joined up community provision.
 - 6.11. Wayne suggested that Ryde have a Place Plan, like Newport.

- 6.12. Jo noted that they started with a town plan but it fizzled out. The Isle of Wight Council (IOWC) did not take it forward.
- 6.13. The Chamber of Commerce came up with the master plan presented in Garfield road, which then went to the town council, but it was not adopted by the council.
- 6.14. Ww - Newport place plan.
- 6.15. Helen suggested a neighbourhood plan.
- 6.16. Ian Boyd with Arc Consulting spoke about the Place Plan in Newport, how he consulted the stakeholders, that this was consulting from a non profit background.
- 6.17. This piece of work started with a commission from the council and the regeneration team. They were able to get people together, to produce a collective vision, to talk to people, with the intention of boiling down the data to a set of principles.
- 6.18. Wayne suggested a meeting with Lee Byrne, Pauline Lee, historic buildings monitor. It is not possible for the RS, or anyone else to go against the law and policy.

- **Actionpoint 2 - Jonathan to email Ian**

- 6.19. Helen said that she had heard good reports of place plan. This would be a good first step in working toward neighbourhood plan as it has statutory standing.
 - 6.20. Ian noted that the Neighbourhood Plan is an enormous undertaking, with 50% of funding having to be secured before it can start. Place planning has more maneuverability than this.
7. The Committee then moved to discuss organising a website and having a central email address.
- 7.1. Mo's son will sort this out in the next few weeks.
 - 7.2. Mo and Helen were against subscription, and the Committee will move to ask the RTC whether a grant would be possible.
 - 7.3. It was noted that the Newport Place Plan was funded by the Council.
 - 7.4. Wayne suggested putting forward a case stating the purpose of the group and its aims.
 - 7.5. The RS would like to have RTC endorse the Society financially.
 - 7.6. Ian then explained how the Newport Place Plan was achieved. It was completed in two halves, with a collation of all existing information, taking into account any local work that has already been completed.
 - 7.7. Zoe from the Ryde Business Association noted that some of the Chamber of Commerce's plans were completely unimplementable.
 - 7.8. The Ryde Society would like a set of rules that every planning application must recognise, and adhere to, which would mean that the 106 money would still be invested in Ryde.
 - 7.9. Adrian noted that the RTC elections were a year ago and that RTC stretches from Binstead to Quarr, with 16 councillors.
 - 7.10. Most don't represent historic parts of Ryde, and it will be necessary to get cooperation by convincing them.
 - 7.11. The Place Plan could be a starting point for implementing a Neighbourhood plan, which take two years to complete.
 - 7.12. The Society was asked whether they thought they should endorse a Place Plan, which could be a starting point for the Neighbourhood plan.
 - 7.13. The majority voted for a place plan. This was carried with a strong majority.
 - 7.14. Mike Fitt noted that Appley Park is going to ruin as there is no money to maintain it.
 - 7.15. Ian felt that if public works are supported, it would then push the private sector.
 - 7.16. The aim with the place plan would be to start with a set of principles, to capture the spirit of the town, to make it more coherent and consistent, which would build optimism.
8. Anne read through the constitution of Ryde society.

- 8.1. Mo felt that to support Ryde Council should be number one.
 - 8.2. Mike Fitt felt that the words preservation and conservation needed more flexibility, and that this should be changed to conservation.
 - 8.3. A member from the floor said that there was no mention of business and that an aim should be to promote business, entrepreneurs, and startups.
 - 8.4. The group felt that this was a forum that would join up with other Ryde groups.
 - 8.5. Regeneration meetings have already felt that they have covered what they have done in this meeting.
 - 8.6. This is a knowledgeable forum that can feed into The Ryde Plan.
 - 8.7. Helen noted that a lot of us are concerned about the genuine regeneration.
 - 8.8. Zoe felt that small things would make a difference.
 - 8.9. Ryde high street is finally being fully pedestrianised.
 - 8.10. Helen wants this to be a coordinating body.
 - 8.11. The RS needs to show a united front to RTC, as it will not be a useful body with divisions. .
 - 8.12. The RS would like the Place Plan to feed into the core strategy.
 - 8.13. Mo enquired where the resistance comes from?
 - 8.14. Chris Ashman approached Jim Moody and the Planning Committee and they were not interested in a place plan.
 - 8.15. Jonathan was concerned that the Council meetings public questions covered irrelevant items, such as public restrooms.
 - 8.16. Wayne said that previously on the Island, there have been workshops, developed from an online survey, of which Ryde was always best attended.
 - 8.17. Mike Fitt noted that the RS is an umbrella organisation, listen to the whole of Ryde, but with a certain focus.
9. Any other business.
 - **Actionpoint 3 Send out constitution and ask for comments.**
 - **Actionpoint 4 Ian send place plan to chairman.**
10. Vote of thanks to the chair and committee.