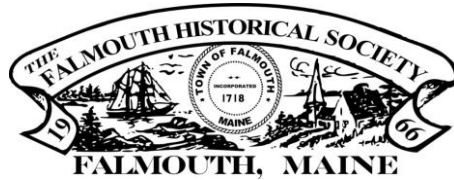


MUSEUM
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October 15, 2019

Theo Holtwijk
Director of Long Range Planning
and Economic Development
Town of Falmouth
271 Falmouth Road
Falmouth, Maine 04105

Dear Theo:

You asked for our assistance in understanding the historical significance of the buildings at Tidewater Farm. You want to know “what will be lost if these buildings (house and barn) are demolished?”

There are two parts to the question. First, are the buildings old?

The answer is unequivocally “Yes.” Deeds and town records suggest that the buildings were constructed by Jonathan Moody between 1795 and 1820. The period from 1806 to 1812 is most likely. This is consistent with the observations of experts in historical buildings. Greg Paxton of Maine Preservation focused on the Georgian features of the structure. Other experts examining the building were overheard discussing specific aspects of construction dating to around 1800. So, yes, the original parts of the buildings are old and, according to Mr. Paxton, in surprisingly good condition.

One surprise emerged during our research. There was at least one previous structure on that site. The first farmhouse was built around 1655 and was probably destroyed in 1690 during King William’s War.

Next comes the “So what?” Are the buildings historic?

The answer is a resounding “Yes.” For a building to be historic, it must connect us to past events. The story of the land, the buildings, and the people who lived at Tidewater Farm is the story of Falmouth. It is the story of immigrants extending from the first English settlers of our town through the 20th century. It is a story involving some of our most prominent citizens over the centuries. The story illuminates the close ties between the people who lived on the farm and the broader community. The buildings at Tidewater Farm connect us to our maritime and agricultural heritage. The “long read” version of the story is attached.

Our mission at the Falmouth Historical Society is preserving the heritage of our town and making it accessible to the community. Tidewater Farm represents a unique slice of our town's heritage. There are other houses in Falmouth just as old but not on town land. Few of those houses have such deep roots in Falmouth's history. If feasible, we would like to see the town preserve this piece of our heritage to inform future generations.

That leaves the issue of whether preserving the buildings is practical—technically and fiscally. Examining options for preservation is the purpose of the feasibility study.

From the perspective of the Falmouth Historical Society, retaining and restoring the original parts of the farmhouse and barn would be a “home run” for historic preservation. If that isn't feasible, salvaging portions for use in a new building would still be a “base hit.”

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

David Farnham
President

Att - as