General email Requests

Always acknowledge receipt of an email. If you can’t answer their question immediately, reply that you have received their query and will get back to them as soon as possible.

Questions Requiring Research

Researchers, particularly former residents, may contact you with questions about the town’s history or queries about individuals.

Consider:

♦ How much time it will take to respond to the query

♦ Whether you’ve already answered the question in response to a similar query.

♦ How much time you can devote to extensive queries. For example, if you receive a query such as: “I was told my house is over 100 years old. Can you tell me the history of my house? I’d like to know when it was built and who has owned it in the past.”

Unless the research has already been done and is in your files, this query could require a great deal of research at the county clerk’s office. How do you handle this type of query? You could:

♦ Reply by asking if they have the abstract for the property. An abstract will show all previous owners; or, at a minimum, for the last 40 years.

♦ Look on your county Graphical Information System (GIS) for information such as year built, and deed book/page numbers.

♦ Reply by explaining that the information would require research at the county clerk’s office and you will put it on your list to research as time permits.

♦ Suggest the person do the research if they live locally.

Note: If you receive the same questions often, consider adding a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) page listing common questions and answers.