

Draft Minutes

Exeter Historic District Commission

Wheelwright Room

Exeter Town Office

December 15, 2011

Members present: Ron Schutz, Fred Kollmorgen, Planning Board rep. Peter Cameron, Selectman rep. Julie Gilman and Pam Gjettum, Chairwoman.

Call Meeting to Order

Chairwoman Pam Gjettum called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm in the Wheelwright Room of the Exeter Town Office building.

New Business: Public Hearings

The application of 127 Water Street Realty, Inc. for the proposed construct of a seasonal dock to the rear of the property located at 127 Water Street and for repairs/reconstruction of the existing seawall along the subject property (and extending onto the property at 129 Water Street). The subject property is located in the WC-Waterfront Commercial zoning district. Tax Map Parcel #72-22. Case#11-27.

Mr. Milton Martin Jr. was prepared to present his application for the dock but it was explained to him the Commission can't approve something that isn't allowed: Zoning Ordinance 6.12.2 prohibiting dock structures within 400' of the String Bridge downstream abutments. Mr. Martin stated he had a variance from the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) and ultimately permission from State and Federal agencies granting him permission to put in a seasonal dock. Copies of the permits were on file at The Rockingham Court House. He did say the ordinance was not in effect when the application process was first presented. Also, he did have an appointment with the ZBA on December 20, 2011 seeking a re-instatement of the variance as the 3-year permit expired on March 18, 2011, eleven days prior to receiving the last approval from the Army Corps of Engineers on April 8, 2011.

Along with the application packet members had a copy of a memorandum from the Chairman of the Conservation Commission addressed to the ZBA advising them of action taken following a review and discussion of the application at the December 13, 2011 meeting. Also attached was a timeline of the history of the 127 Water Street Dock application beginning in August of 2007 when it was initially presented to the Conservation Commission for review.

When queried about the meeting with the Conservation Commission Mr. Martin explained he was unable to attend but Kristen Murphy, Town Natural Resource Planner, reviewed the history of the application with members. Their opinion for opposition was the same as when initially presented. However, the Federal and State agencies ultimately granted approval

Ms. Gjettum explained to Mr. Martin the Commission could not approve an action/application that has not happened; can only hear after a confirmation by ZBA.

Mr. Martin was advised the next date of the HDC meeting is December 20, 2011.

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The application of 81 High Street, LLC for proposed new construction and exterior improvements at 81 High Street has been rescheduled for the January 19, 2011 HDC meeting at the Applicant's request

The application of Cross Insurance for a change of signage on the building located at 6 Center Street. The subject property is located in the C-1. Central Area commercial zoning district. Tax Map Parcel #72-218. Case #11-28.

Mr. David Hampson, representing the Cross Insurance agency (formerly the DeMerritt Agency), referenced the photographs in the handout of the existing signage. There are two signs to be replaced: a hanging sign over the entrance and a flush mounted wall sign; there would be no change in the size of the hanging sign, the size of the flush mounted wall sign will be reduced by approximately 2 sq ft. Instead of the present wooden carved signs it was planned to have them be of a vinyl/wood combination.

Mr. Schutz asked for additional information on the materials for the signage. It was explained the Commission prefers the signs be made of medium density fiberboard (MDF): a material that has similar properties as wood and can be carved. As the MDF sign ages it retains the wood character and it is able to be milled, could have a carved sign. The applicant was willing to contact the signage company if they could accommodate the request. He did not feel it would be problematic except it would deviate from the other agencies/corporate signs.

Mr. Kollmorgen moved to accept the application; seconded by Mr. Cameron. Vote: unanimous. By accepting, it permits further discussion by the applicant and Commission before approval.

Mr. Schutz asked on materials proposed for the flush mounted sign. Again, it was requested that it too be constructed of MDF re-iterating that MDF doesn't fade; one of the attributes of the material. Also it was consistent with other signage approved by the Commission.

Mr. Kollmorgen moved to approve the application with the stipulation the signs be constructed of MDF. Mr. Schutz seconded. Vote: unanimous. Ms. Gjetton asked Mr. Hampson if that was agreeable to him. Again, he felt he would need to talk with vendor to verify the request could be accommodated; but did ask if all other aspects of the application i.e. size, location, shape were acceptable. He was assured he was correct.

Other Business

Mr. Schutz asked to discuss the 81 High Street project. Having viewed the current plans the previous night at the Heritage Commission meeting he felt it would be advisable to bring the Heritage group in for discussion as there are major changes to the exterior being proposed. He felt the Heritage commission has special knowledge that would be valuable for the HDC. Or if a personal representative was not available for the meeting an opinion could be requested.

Mr. Kollmorgen requested the Chair contact Mr. Merkle, Chairman of the Heritage Commission to come to an HDC meeting or submit an opinion prior to the January meeting when the 81 High

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St, application is scheduled for a Public Hearing. Ms. Gilman also asked that any renderings included in the application be complete: to show any proposed barn renovations as the current plans do not show any elevations for the barn/carriage house.

Mr. Kollmorgen will contact the Planning Office to notify the applicant that only a complete application (with all proposed changes included) will be accepted by the HDC for review.

➤ **Approval of minutes for November 17, 2011 meeting**

Mr. Schutz made the motion to accept; seconded by Mr. Cameron. Vote: unanimous.

➤ **Correspondence from NOAA re: Invitation to participate as a consulting party in the Section 106 review of the Exeter River Great Dam Feasibility Study.**

The Chair stated she was unsure of what were the obligations to be a consulting party in the Section 106 review process. Ms. Gilman explained a consulting party is advised as information is generated in the feasibility study on the Great Dam removal; attendance at meetings is not necessarily required. The HDC as a whole is the consulting party. The Heritage Commission has also accepted an invitation to be a consulting party.

In further clarifying the role as a consulting party, Ms. Gilman added it does give the opportunity to review the material as a Commission and determine if there is agreement or concerns. It is an opportunity to have input in the project. Mr. Schutz commented in essence it is a change in the face of the Historic District if the Great Dam does get changed.

The Chair will send a formal letter to Mr. Hutchins at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) accepting the invitation for the Exeter Historic District Commission to be a consulting party in the feasibility study.

In further comments, Ms. Gilman stated she had proposed to do a plan and elevation reading workshop at this meeting but the use of a projector was needed and that was not available in the Wheelwright Room. She hoped it could be done at the January meeting. The plans as reviewed at the November meeting for renovations to the Williams House on Spring St. will be used for the presentation as they were a thorough set of drawings.

With no other business, Ms. Gilman made the motion to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Kollmorgen. Vote: unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Raub
Recording Secretary