Exeter Heritage Commission
Approved as Amended, October 6, 2010
Nowak Room, Exeter Town Offices
September 1, 2010

Call Meeting to Order

Members Present: John Merkle, Amy Bailey, Don Clement, Mary Dupré, and Peter Michaud
Absent: Ron Schutz.

Chairman, John Merkle, called the meeting to order at 6:58 p.m.

1. Approval of the minutes of recent meetings

        The Board had a discussion concerning minutes that still needed to be finalized. Mr. Michaud explained that he would write the May 12 meeting minutes, Ms. Dupré presented the Board with her notes from the April meeting, and Ms. Bailey agreed to write the July 21 minutes. It was noted that Ms. McEvoy from the Planning and Building Department would distribute the draft minutes to the Board once they were written and submitted. The Board read over and discussed the June, July, and August draft minutes.
        Peter Michaud moved to approve the June 9, 2010 DRC minutes, John Merkle seconded: Vote unanimous.
        Don Clement moved to approve the July 14, 2010 minutes, Mary Dupré seconded: Vote unanimous.
        Peter Michaud moved to approve the August 11, 2010 minutes, Amy Bailey seconded: Vote unanimous.
        Peter Michaud moved to approve the August 27, 2010 Site Visit minutes, Amy Bailey seconded: Vote unanimous

2. Follow up discussion regarding the request by River Woods at Exeter to demolish the buildings at 77 Kingston Road, (former Reedy Sign property).

        Mr. Merkle began the conversation about how the conversation ended with Attorney Tucker. Mr. Tucker agreed to allow the entire Heritage Commission to experience a Demolition Review site visit for the 77 Kingston Road property. Since then, River Woods applied for a zoning change to the property and was denied by the Zoning Board. The Board discussed the conditions of the zoning change and agreed to remove the application from the agenda until the demolition process can resume. However, if the property is submitted for Demolition Review at a later date, the Board agreed that a group site visit would be beneficial.

3. Request for input from the Heritage Commission regarding a request to rejuvenate the George Leonard Smith cannon monument as part of an Eagle Scout project.

John Merkle explained that he spoke with Peter Smith concerning the Eagle Scout project. Mr. Smith agreed to be the Scout's mentor for the project, and would present several ideas for projects to the Heritage Commission. The Board discussed matters of safety and felt that Mr. Smith would lead the project in the right direction. Mary Dupré inspected the cannon and discovered a stamp that explained it was deactivated.

4. Follow up discussion on the possible expansion of the High Street and Downtown Historic Districts to include a portion of Portsmouth Avenue.

The Board began a conversation about the possible expansion of the Historic District to include a portion of Portsmouth Avenue. After a conversation with the Heritage District Commission, Mr. Merkle was recommended by Kathy Corsen to set up a meeting between the Planning Board, Historic District Commission, and the Heritage Commission to discuss all the options and provide other ideas. Mr. Merkle sent the Board information about Form-based code, but still felt more research is necessary before presenting the option to other Boards. The Board discussed the several options they had brought up during the August meeting and agreed that each direction had a different outcome. Mr. Clement excused himself from the meeting at 7:30 and agreed to provide Board with maps for the October meeting.

The Board discussed several buildings within the area, explaining that the East side of the street has upheld its historic nature better than the West. Mr. Michaud agreed to gather information concerning an expansion of the historic district, and suggested the Board contact Alan Manoian, City of Nashua, who could provide more information concerning form-based code. Ms. Bailey suggested the Board speak with Russ Dean, Town Manager who could involve the Economic Development Committee in the discussion.

5. Status of the Certified Local Government grant for a town wide mapping survey of historical and cultural resources.

There was no update to the status of the grant.

6. Demolition request updates.

The Board discussed the current condition of the demolition request of 55 High Street. The applicant, Christopher Roseberry, who has yet to speak with the Demolition Review Committee directly, requested to demolish the barn on the property. The DRC did visit the site, but was only able to review the exterior of the barn. Due to the current Demolition Review procedures, the Board felt the process could have been handled more appropriately.

A discussion followed concerning a change in the Demolition Review procedures. Mary Dupré suggested placing a sign on properties currently under Demolition Review in order to inform the public. John Merkle suggested extending the review period from seven days to thirty in order to contact the press and to allow

enough time to mount a campaign against demolition. The Board also discussed matters of documentation, suggesting that applicants should be responsible for providing the means for recording the building's history before demolition. Mr. Michaud offered to gather information on how other Towns carry out Demolition Reviews for the next meeting.

The Board agreed to speak about other options during next month's meeting with more information.

7. Update and discussion concerning other properties at possible risk.

There was no additional discussion concerning properties at possible risk at this time.

8. Other Business.

The Board discussed several dates for a public meeting for the demolition request of 55 High Street and agreed on September 15th. Mr. Merkle explained that if the applicant is not present at the meeting, the Board members will need to contact the applicant to offer alternatives for demolition.

Peter Michaud motioned to adjourn, Amy Bailey seconded: Vote unanimous.

Chairman John Merkle adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gillian Baresich
Recording Secretary