

*These minutes are subject to possible corrections/revisions at a subsequent Exeter Heritage Commission meeting.*

**Exeter Heritage Commission**  
*Draft Minutes*  
Wheelwright Room, Exeter Town Offices  
August 10, 2011

**Call Meeting to Order**

Members Present: John Merkle, Mary Dupré, Peter Smith, and Peter Michaud  
Also Present: Pam Gjettum, Chairwoman from the Historic District Commission and John Hauschildt from the Zoning Board of Adjustment

Chairman, John Merkle, called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. in the Wheelwright Room of the Exeter Town Offices.

**1. Approval of the June 8, 2011 and July 13, 2011 meeting minutes.**

Peter Michaud voted to accept both June 8, 2011 and July 13, 2011 meeting minutes as presented, Vote unanimous.

**2. Follow up discussion regarding Form-Based Codes.**

John Hauschildt, member of the Exeter Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA), and Pam Gjettum, Chairwoman of the Historic District Commission, was present to discuss the subject of Form-Based Codes with the Heritage Commission. John Merkle began the discussion by explaining the recent history of how this discussion came about and the Heritage Commissions expectations of how it can help the Town of Exeter. In June, the Heritage Commission voted to support Form-Based Codes as a viable option for the Town and members began to extend the conversation to other Boards and Committees. Mr. Merkle contacted Barry Sandberg, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee (EDC), who showed interest in the idea and agreed to discuss it at EDC's next meeting and with the Zoning Ordinance Review Committee (ZORC).

Mr. Hauschildt began a discussion on the areas Form-Based Codes can be used, explaining that this tool can extend to more than just Portsmouth Avenue and how to apply the code to different regulations to fit each location. Peter Michaud explained that Form-Based Codes have had high success rates when they are utilized in areas that are under tremendous development pressure, such as along Portsmouth Avenue. This area can be used to test Form-Based Codes before extending its use to other areas of Exeter. Mr. Hauschildt explained that during the ZORC meetings, they have worked to create "village" zones, undeveloped areas located on the outskirts of Exeter's Downtown Historic District which can be made into more affordable, developed spaces with positive growth. These village zones help to avoid redeveloping the existing Downtown area with the current dimensional-based zoning laws, which would force a lot of negative growth into a historic area. An alternative to this would be to apply Form-Based Codes to the downtown area, allowing for a more flexible redevelopment of the existing area. Mr. Hauschildt explained that there have been many successful cases of utilizing Form-Based Codes within historic districts. Another limitation of the existing zoning within Exeter is along Epping Road, where the Planning Board was considering mixed-use development. With the current zoning laws,

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that option is not possible, but with Form-Based Codes, it could become an option. Mr. Hauschildt explained that the ZBA would benefit from Form-Based Codes by allowing for a more flexible set of rules to apply throughout the town.

Mr. Hauschildt explained that ZORC has only discussed Form-Based Codes as an option but has not taken any action toward or against it. He suggested that the Heritage Commission make a presentation on the subject at the October ZORC meeting and then extend the presentation to multiple Committees and Boards as part of an educational process for understanding how Form-Based Codes actually work. There are many visual case studies that would help to outline the main concepts. Peter Michaud suggested contacting people who are trained in Form-Based Code presentations and who can speak at these meetings and with the public. Pam Gjetum made the suggestion to use existing images of Exeter and overlay graphics to help show how the Town would change. The Board discussed additional ways to explain the concepts of Form-Based Codes and how best to approach each presentation. It was agreed to first present Form-Based Codes to the Zoning Ordinance Review Committee, and then organize a presentation for multiple land-use Boards. Mr. Michaud agreed to contact the Rockingham Planning Commission for help in providing additional resources for these upcoming presentations.

### **3. Follow-up discussion on recommended changes to the demolition review ordinance.**

John Merkle stated that the changes discussed during the previous Heritage Commission meeting were forwarded to Silvia von Aulock, Town Planner, to discuss at the upcoming ZORC meeting. Mr. Merkle has yet to receive a reply from Ms. Aulock and hopes to hear something soon.

### **4. Update on the status of the Certified Local Government grants for a town wide mapping survey.**

Peter Michaud explained that he was unable to draft a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Town Wide Mapping Survey before this meeting and plans to finish it soon. Once the RFP has been completed, it can be sent out immediately to begin the search for a consultant.

### **5. Update on the status of the survey for the Winter Street Cemetery.**

John Merkle stated that the Heritage Commission is holding a meeting on August 15, 2011 to review and vote on the bids for the Winter Street Cemetery survey. The Heritage Commission members present will vote on a consultant and make the recommendation to the Town Manager. There is only thirty (30) days left to complete this survey so it has to be done on this date to ensure its completion. Kelly Geis will be present to explain the bidding process and help to take minutes, as well as convey to the Town Manager the final decision during the Town Meeting.

### **6. Demolition request updates.**

John Merkle announced that the Demolition Review Committee met on July 20, 2011 to review a garage for a church building. The structure was not fifty (50) years old and after

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reviewing the property, the DRC voted that the building was not of any historical resource to the town and could be demolished. A letter was sent to Douglas Eastman, Town Building Inspector, and the HDC outlining this decision.

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

Peter Michaud asked about the status of the Jady Hill Avenue property near the golf course. Mary Dupré stated that Julie Gilman was present at a meeting regarding this property and will be able to discuss its current status when she is back in town.

John Merkle stated that he plans to contact Charlie Tucker to set up a walkthrough of the Reedy Sign building for all Heritage Commission members. A demolition request has yet to be filed on this property.

Peter Smith explained that the Eventide house is in the process of being sold. There are current plans to run an assisted living facility on the property.

Peter Michaud stated that a descendent of the Conner Family is looking to acquire a portion of the Conner Farm property, currently owned by New Hampshire Fish and Game. A five (5) to ten (10) acre front portion of the property will be sectioned off as a preservation easement in order to protect the property's resources. NH Fish and Game currently maintains the property and would continue to do so.

## **8. Other Business.**

Peter Smith stated that the Fogg-Rollins property is still on the market and is being reviewed by the Attorney General.

Peter Michaud motioned to adjourn, Mary Dupré seconded: Vote unanimous.

Chairman John Merkle adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gillian Baresich  
Recording Secretary