

**Exeter Heritage Commission**  
*Approved as Submitted, April 6, 2011*  
Nowak Room, Exeter Town Offices  
March 2, 2011

**Call Meeting to Order**

Members Present: John Merkle, Don Clement, Mary Dupré, and Peter Michaud

Chairman, John Merkle, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Offices.

**1. Approval of the minutes of February 9, 2011.**

The February 9 minutes were deferred until the April Meeting.

**2. Follow up discussion with the Historic District Commission on the possible expansion of the High Street and Downtown Historic Districts to include a portion of Portsmouth Avenue.**

John: we were gonna have another meeting at some point. We didn't see there was any rush... wait until Fall planning board. I was supposed to contact the owners. Pam: we were gonna split them up so you don't have to do it all. John: I'll draft a letter.

Don: I thought we were gonna talk in more detail about the Form based code. John: I called Jeff from Stratham, but he hasn't gotten back with me. Pam: Meeting in the spring between HDC and HC with this person? John: I'll see dates available.

**3. Discussion and update on 89 Front Street.**

Town is looking for a copy of your letter (Peter Michaud). They have appealed it and they want as much info as possible. Peter: a copy of that should be on file for the case. John: Application to the Board of Adjustment. Peter drafted a letter to the HDC regarding the DRC's opinion on the matter. HDC followed all the recommendations. Applicant was good with everything except the connector. Pam: he has to get the landscaping equipment to the back of the house and demo is the only way to do it. Peter: If they are taking out the privacy wall, why can't that be the means of egress? Don: he claimed the structure was rotting and needed to come down. Peter: historic backwall with a carriage opening with horse ties. Pam: we told him that he has to replace what he demolishes with something similar. John: the meeting will be sometime in March. We will need to be present at that one. Pam: it went really well! ZBA is the 15<sup>th</sup>.

**4. Follow-up discussion on possible changes to the demolition review ordinance.**

John: interesting convos with other municipalities and the preservation alliance. I went to a meeting last week in Concord, preservation alliance and their heritage commission. They are dealing with what we are dealing with. Issue with the notification

time is something we have to address at some time. In Concord they have it as 49 days instead of 30.

John: They put a sign up as well. Is that something procedurally we have to adopt or is that an amendment to the zoning ordinance. Demo notice signs showing a public hearing date and notice. Don: Exeter Planning Board has had this discussion on and off for several years, its been rejected each time. Peter: we want to think about this: it would have been awful for the applicant for instance if the Amos Tuck House had a sign that said slated for demolition. Partial should be different from total demolition. Don: zoning ordinance change I believe, but it came up again not too long ago. John: its also an issue as to where to put the sign, the buffer between the property and the street. They could just take it off their property. Don: Julie Gilman proposed this a few years back in relation to ZBA hearings. Process for having that as a policy. Talk to Silvia to get more info on those past convos about this issue.

Don: how is the 5 day period enacted? John: we took that out of the language of Keene and Concord's Demo process. This is written in the Zoning Ordinance. Changing it to something greater would require a zoning ordinance change. That should be increased, the Town Code Enforcemnt Officer can't even get his head around it. Public hearing needs to occur with the applicant. Double it at least to 10 or go to 14 days. John: its just for an initial determination to decide we want the full 30 days or not. Don: it requires that we receive the notice, inform the Demo review committee, get in touch with applicant, schedule a site visit, etc. Peter: it has happened but it was difficult to get it done. Don: we have to live with it until the 2012 town meeting but I would increase it. Peter: I think the hardest part is organizing a meeting within 12 days. 12 days starts after the initial determination is decided. John: doesn't give you enough time to do the research and get it posted and printed in the paper. Pam: I'm almost always at the historical society and can help with research. Peter has been having some trouble with his family's health. Peter: we have only had 4 demo reviews where we have asked for the full 30 days. Several others where we were able to make the determination on site. If this is a public process and if there's not a lot of time for notification, we need more than 12 days. John: the Town Wide Survey preidentifies some of the key properties., this was explained at the Concord meeting. This takes the subjectivity out of it.

## **5. Update on the status of the Certified Local Government grants for a town wide mapping survey of historical and cultural resources and the survey for the Winter Street cemetery.**

John: Nadine e-mailed me some applications. They are sending new applications. Apparently it got tied up in governor's council, since noone was pursuing it, by the time it came to review it, it had run out of time to execute it. So it got lost. We needed to just resubmit the application. Peter: I've given your contact info to Deb Gagney (sp?), Julie had been the contact and she had received the only information, not John Merkle. He needs to be the initial contact. They are looking at the \$\$ from CLG grant round that has not been encumbered. They rae checking with our business office, to check if we can legally use that money for this year, which we have to return back to the park service if we don't spend it, and give it to Exeter to do the town wide survey. Do we need to go through the motions to fill out the paperwork nor not? John: new info regarding insurance information. Town needs to fill this out. Ask Julie if the issue came up before. Peter: I talked to Deb about the Winter Street Cemetery that has passed through governor and council. RFP is ready to be set up. We can move forward with that contractor once we hire someone through the RFP

process. This will determine eligibility for the state of National Registers. John: I was able to get from the ECC a copy of their RFP for their Natural Resource Inventory. It isn't dealing with historical, but it does mention cultural. Kristen Murphy also sent me one from Washington. Peter: I can send contractor service qualifications and draft a brief scope of work by the end of the week. John: I'll put something together and he can take it to the selectman. Peter: I can use the Inventory for Natural Resources and come up with an RFP for our project. John: we have the attention of the river study and the ECC has been very receptive with working with us, we can mesh this information together. Peter: Winter street is ready to go and we need to move forward with it. If the other one, if we can't expend those monies, we would be welcome to resubmit a quick application to receive those moneies if we can get it this year. John: in Concord, they are jumping on the GIS information just to tag each property. It shows inventory and it's a fairly easy process to do. Peter: it would be interesting to do that for our already established districts as a trial run.

Mary: Independence Museum is holding on October 29, Ghosts of Winter Street Cemetery.

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

John: building inspector said a small barn on 187 front street needs to come down because it is a threat to public safety as it stands. I drove past it in the dark, there was a dumpster on the property and it looked like the roof was partially caved in and the wall was bowed out. Building didn't look more than 16' wide. Not even 2 stories, maybe 1.5. Peter: sounds like it is naturally coming down. John: according to doug, they had to clear things out of it, and the snow banks were actively buttressing the structure. When those were removed it started to fall. Provisioning in the Demolition Review Ordinance that the Building Inspector has a right to make that determination. Don: he has to inform the DRC. It should be documented in writing. For record keeping, that's what should happen to ensure a paper trail. Peter: what does the town use for photo repository? We don't have a collection on file actively or if the Historical Society would be interested. If we ask for photo documentation for a demolition, we need to have a place to put them. Check with Doug. Prepare a property file, and prepare a filing cabinet. Keep it digitally and a hard file. Pam: we can provide a space for it at the Historical Society. Don: any pictures or documentation of any case or property reviewed by the Heritage Commission should be owned by the Heritage Commission on our own property. We have files for minutes, maybe in the Selectman's Office. Ask Planning Department for half a file cabinet to start the files for photographs.

Don: Zoning Board of Adjustment approved the Riverwoods project, the Reedy farm barnhouse will be coming down. John: we never got a full request for that one. Don: ZBA granted the variance to build their office. That may be appealed by the abutters. Formal request will be coming forward for demo request.

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

57:15

## **8. Other Business.**

Don Clement and John Merkle stated that they attended the Exeter Conservation

Don Clement motioned to adjourn, Peter Michaud seconded: Vote unanimous.

Chairman John Merkle adjourned the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gillian Baresich  
Recording Secretary

5:40 – 7:00