

Draft Minutes

Heritage Commission

Wheelwright Room

Exeter Town Office Bldg.

April 11, 2012

Members present: *Selectman Rep. Julie Gilman, Peter Michaud, Historic District Rep. Ron Schutz, Planning Board Rep. Kathy Corson, Mary Dupré, Jaime Lopez and John Merkle, Chairman*

Guest: *Carrie Baldrige*

- Chairman Merkle introduced and welcomed Mr. Jaime Lopez as a new member of the Heritage Commission.
Ms. Carrie Baldrige was introduced as a guest for the meeting.
- Approval of minutes of March 14, 2012 meeting.
A misspelled word was noted. Mr. Schutz motioned to accept the draft minutes with the correction; seconded by Ms. Gilman. Motion carried.
(Ms. Corson abstained as she was not present at the meeting)
- Update on status of town wide mapping survey
Bruce Harvey and his associate returned to NH this month to start their data gathering and map research at Dartmouth College and Concord as well as in Exeter. At a recent meeting with Mr. Harvey, Ms. Gilman learned of the maps referenced to date in the study:
 - a. 1802 Map of Village and Town
 - b. 1832 Village map
 - c. 1845 Dow map
 - d. 1874 Sanborn and Everett Map
 - e. 1892 Hurd Atlas
 - f. Sanborn maps of 1885,1892,1898, 1904, 1913, and 1924

In a visit to the Exeter Historical Society, it was learned at one time Curator Barbara Rumkunas had college interns use tax maps to go out and identify and document the year the buildings were built; uncertain as to their research process.

The Town wide mapping survey will develop a series of maps showing the growth in the Town; will be able to better prioritize what areas will want to look at in further detail. Another benefit (of the survey) is to have the documentation and information in one place.

The Harvey group will return in May to meet with the Commission and provide an update on their work. Ms. Gilman did speak with them on the second phase of the mapping survey. Bruce Harvey and his company will develop the feasibility of covering up to two hundred properties. Again, their intent remains to coordinate their maps with the Town's GIS format.

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Ms. Gilman added she submitted two letters of intent to NH Division of Historic Resources (DHR) for the Certified Local Government grants; one to continue with the Town mapping survey and the other on behalf of the Historic District for digitized identification of historical resources.

- Follow up in the study for the removal of Exeter River Great Dam

The April public meeting is postponed: no further information on rescheduling. Mr. Michaud provided more details on being designated a *consulting party*. Members offered additional background information on the history of the Dam and the events leading to the River study.

- Update on progress of the adoption of Form Based Codes for specific areas of Exeter
Mr. Merkle spoke of the subcommittee for the Zoning Ordinance Review Committee (that has been studying this topic for about a year. Form Based Codes deal with regulation by design; not by mandate. Presently, projects going before the Planning Board are subject to specific ordinances; form base codes looks at the context of existing neighborhood. When altering a building or proposing new construction (in a FBC zone) need to be sensitive to scale and proportion; graphic-type code approach rather than an analytic approach.

FBC don't necessarily deal only with buildings; can be bike trails, roads, sidewalks, set backs/road frontage. It has the potential to stabilize a neighborhood and preserve transition between historic portion of Town and the commercial portion.

Ms. Corson stated they hope to have something on the Town ballot in March 2013; need to have it finalized by September to allow for the required public hearings etc.

- Update on the Winter Street Cemetery National Register nomination.

Mr. Michaud reported the required letter from the Town (for the application to proceed) was received by the State. The application now goes before the State Historic Council on April 30, 2012 in Concord and if approved will be listed that day to the State Register. Mr. Michaud was thanked for the update and his assistance in helping to guide the project along.

Mr. Michaud explained the Heritage Commission's first CLG grant was to determine if the Winter St. cemetery was eligible for the National Register. At this time, being listed in the State Register does not guarantee a listing at the National level; elaborated on criteria. National listing does increase potential of securing grant monies; additional study will follow to obtain National status.

- Demolition requests updates

Mr. Merkle noted the Heritage Commission also serves as the Demolition Review Committee. Any building over 50 years old and eligible for National Register the DRC has opportunity to review. The Committee can't stop the demolition but does "buy" time for review, research, to perhaps offer the owner additional information, suggestions or if possible, re-locate the building.

- Update and discussion of other properties at possible risk

It appears the sale of the Foggs-Rollins house is complete. With the property now in private ownership they will be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the property. After reviewing the history and the restrictions placed upon the property, Mr. Michaud felt it was a good solution.

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The unoccupied home at the Conner Farm, (on the left heading west on Rt. 101), is in the process of being purchased by a descendent of the original builder. Because it is State owned property, there are a number of government agencies needed to sign off on a transfer. The house will have 5 acres and the remainder two hundred+ acres will remain with the State Fish and Game as a Wildlife Management Area.

Ms. Corson reported the house at Gooch Corner (corner of Pickpocket Rd and Kingston Road) was in the process of coming down. It is the property of Riverwoods and will be "green spaces".

- Other Business:

Mr. Merkle stated after two full terms with the Heritage Commission he does not wish to continue in his current role of Chairman. He asked to be placed as an alternate but wished to stay involved. With that, Ms. Gilman said there is the need to form a slate of officers for 2012-2013: Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Treasurer.

It was determined the Commission does have a bank account with funds carried over from year to year until spent. The funds are held by the Trustees of the Trust funds but there is a need for a treasurer; although the position was unfilled this year.

Following some discussion, a slate of officers was finalized:

Peter Michaud	Chairman
Julie Gilman	Vice Chairman
Ron Schutz	Treasurer

Mr. Schutz moved to cast one vote for the slate as presented; seconded by Ms. Dupré.
Vote: unanimous.

Mr. Michaud will assume the Chairmanship at the May meeting of the Heritage Commission.

Ms. Corson invited members to a program on April 19, 2012 developed by the UNH Cooperative Extension and the UNH Stormwater Center and hosted by the Planning Board entitled Forging the Link: linking the economic benefits of low impact development and community decisions. She felt it to be a very timely presentation as communities are faced with stormwater challenges as it presents the economic and ecological benefits of LID.

Before adjourning, Mr. Schutz offered thanks to Mr. Merkle for leading the group these past years and acknowledging most of what the Commission has accomplished is due to his guidance and personal initiative. All the members agreed. Mr. Merkle returned the compliment saying this group was one of the most professional Heritage Commission's in the State.

Mr. Schutz moved to adjourn; seconded by Ms. Gilman. Motion carried.
Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ginny Raub, Recording secretary