

**Exeter Heritage Commission**

**Wheelwright Room**

**Exeter Town Office Bldg.**

**October 10, 2012**

**Members present:** Mary Dupré, Julie Gilman, Jaime Lopez and Peter Michaud, Chairman.

Also in attendance: Anne Bushnell and Betty LaBranche

Chairman Michaud called the meeting to order at 7:18 pm in the Wheelwright Room of the Town Office building.

- **Discussion of garage structure at 12 Front St.**

Mr. Michaud turned the discussion over to the Demolition Review Committee (DRC) with Ms. Gilman speaking for the subcommittee.

The site was visited once but because there was not the necessary number of members at that time, three members did return to determine when the structure was built. It remained unclear when the garage was built; wants to be sure not removing a resource to the Historic District. The DRC is allowed to spend up to 20 days to investigate the history of the building in making a determination of its age; presently are 10 days into the process for this application. Ms. Gilman stated she hoped a decision would be made at this meeting what direction the members wished the investigation to go forward. Also, she noted within this 20-day period a public hearing could be held to permit the public to discuss the topic as the Historic District belongs to the Town.

Following an exchange of comments between the attendees and members of the Commission, the Chairman stated for clarification this is a public meeting opened to the public and are welcomed to be present but not a public hearing. Time would be allowed for questions and comments. He added the Commission has not had the opportunity to discuss the application in a formal setting; that is the purpose of the posted item on agenda. There is the need for a discussion on the issue and what was found and how the group wished to proceed.

Recapping, Mr. Michaud stated three members visited the site and those three members were in attendance at this meeting. They found a structure with colonial revival elements associated with a colonial house with modifications. Upon inspection they determined it was a structure made up of older parts; salvaged materials. It was decided each member would take on an area of research to try to determine the age of the structure; this was the time needed/granted before going to a public hearing.

Ms. Gilman looked at building permits for a construction date but the Town did not adopt building codes until late 60's and a building inspector was not in place until 70's. There were no records (for the garage) at the Assessor's office. Summarizing, Mr. Michaud restated from that information there was nothing to indicate the garage was built after then.

Mr. Michaud went to Sanborn Maps for his research. He explained Sanborn maps were insurance maps published for municipal centers that indicated the locale of the buildings and often their use. He had

various maps from the 1800's up until 1924 when the format of denoting the location of building changed; but basically he was unable to obtain maps for the rest of the 20's and 30's.

A two-story carriage barn on the property was documented through a photo from the Historical Society but in 1943 the building is not evident. It is assumed the garage was then built after WW II –but before 1970-with salvaged materials.

With the absence of documentation herein lies the dilemma for discussion and a decision. Construction details and materials, architectural elements—all were discussed; even the presence of the automobile in this area was explored. Mr. Michaud then opened it for public comment and Ms. Bushnell provided what she understood.

Discussion between Mr. Michaud and Ms. Bushnell on activity in the (now) historic district during the 1960's and 70's ensued including the deeding of the back portion of the Dudley House to the Town (for the present municipal parking lot) and the possibility of the building materials for the garage coming from the demolition of out buildings on the Dudley property. Ms. Bushnell did state she had a copy of the Sanborn map dated in the middle sixties that indicates the garage was not present. Mr. Michaud stated if that could be retrieved it would validate the structure is less than 50 years of age and would not fall under the purview of the Heritage Commission and a ruling from the Demolition Review Committee.

It was decided if Ms. Bushnell submits the document to Mr. Eastman in the Planning Office, a special meeting of the Commission would be scheduled to make a decision in a timely manner. With the confirmation of the availability of three members and with a receipt of the document a meeting was set for Friday October 12, 2012 at 8:30 am.

After Ms. Bushnell and Ms. LaBranche left the meeting it was verified applicant will need to submit an application to the Historic District Commission as well. It was mentioned while the applicant was in attendance but was unsure if she was aware of the timeline for posting on the HDC agenda.

- **Approval of Minutes**

Approval of the minutes for the August 15, 2012 meeting was tabled and the minutes will be redistributed for the November meeting.

Ms. Gilman moved to approve the draft minutes of the September 12, 2012 meeting; seconded by Ms. Dupré. Motion carried.

- **Other Business**

Ms. Gilman spoke of amending the language of the Demo Review ordinance to note that it would be looking at properties 50 years or older; to make clear this is just a review committee and would still need to apply to Historic District Commission (HDC). Clarification was provided on submitting applications 2-weeks prior to a scheduled HDC meeting to permit time for notifying abutters if necessary.

Ms. Gilman reported she is finalizing the report to the State for the CLG grant. If any members had comments about working with the consultants please advise her. She added she would like to have a public meeting to share the report using the images and maps with the overlays. Further discussion

*Minutes approved at 11.21.12 meeting*

determined it could be discussed at November meeting but best delay the actual presentation until 2013. It will be downloaded onto the Town web site and when done send out a press release so citizens may view online. Additional copies may be made available at Town library and to the Historical Society.

Following an explanation of the roles of the Historical Society, the Historic District Commission and the Heritage Commission for the newest member of the Commission, Mr. Michaud also added the Heritage can also hold easements. Ms. Gilman suggested that might be a discussion item; how to take on an easement, the process and responsibility of.

Also as a future agenda item, Ms. Gilman spoke of the need for an individual to serve as Treasurer now with the determination the Heritage Commission may have a designated fund. Ms. Gilman will review the RSA's for such a position. Any remaining appropriated Town Budget dollars may be placed into a Heritage Account for future use as voted upon by its members.

With no further business, Ms. Gilman motioned to adjourned; seconded by Ms. Dupré.  
Meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Raub  
Recording Secretary