

Exeter Heritage Commission

Wheelwright Room

Exeter Town Office Bldg.

November 21, 2012

Members present: *Selectwoman Julie Gilman Mary Dupré Ron Schutz John Merkle and Chairman Peter Michaud*

Chairman Michaud called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm in the Wheelwright Room in the Town Office building

- **Approval of minutes**

Ms. Gilman moved to approve the minutes of the August 15, 2012 meeting; seconded by Ms. Dupré. Motion passed with Mr. Merkle and Mr. Schutz abstaining.

In reviewing the minutes of the October 10, 2012 meeting Ms. Dupré noted the word *Commission* was omitted in referencing the Heritage group. With that correction noted Ms. Gilman moved to approve with edits; seconded by Ms. Dupré. Motion carried with Mr. Merkle and Mr. Schutz abstaining.

- **Discussion of the study for removal of Exeter River Great Dam**

Ms. Gilman stated no date has been set for the next public meeting. More time is needed to fine tune the engineering designs and costs of any alternative design/modification options other than the actual removal of the Dam.

- **Possible joint meeting with Conservation Commission**

Mr. Michaud reported he had been in conversation with Kristen Murphy, Natural Resource Planner for the Town of Exeter and support to the Conservation Commission, regarding the Raynes Barn and the role the Heritage Commission may have in the ConCom's discussion of developing long range plans for the property; felt they could act in an advisory capacity. He wanted the groups' thoughts before inviting the Conservation members to a joint meeting; perhaps in December. Those members present felt it was in keeping with the objectives of the Heritage Commission and concurred. Mr. Michaud will contact Ms. Murphy to see what can be scheduled.

- **CLG wrap up**

Ms. Gilman reported all the paper work has been submitted to the appropriate agencies; does need to document finances. But all should be complete by end of month. As for having a public program with the mapping survey report, Ms. Gilman felt it will possibly be worked into an event for the 375 Anniversary of Exeter.

- **Form Based Code update**

A meeting with interested parties on Portsmouth Ave was held and the changes outlined. At this time, the larger commercial C zone will be changed to a C-1 zone which allows for a smaller footprint and changes some of the uses permitted. It has been before the Planning Board and will be voted upon in December. It was agreed although simple it is a start.

- **Baggage Building project**

Ms. Gilman stated after some delay things are moving forward. An RFP was sent out for a consultant for the project-architect/project manager for both interior and exterior changes and multiple responses have been received. Now they are in need of appraisers; must have two. One has been procured and Planning is seeking out a second. It was agreed DOT does have stringent procedural guidelines so it will be important to have the manager work within the outline.

- **Future project discussion**

- a. **Walking Tour**

Ms. Gilman stated when meeting with the group interested in the 375 Anniversary events, members of the Historical Society, Lionel Ingram, Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Lynn Dowling, program manager for the Society remarked they wished to update the Society's walking tours and would like a member of the Heritage Commission to work with them. Ms. Gilman felt more than updating was needed perhaps additions to the packet. Mr. Michaud asked how you are going to make it available. The suggestion of making it a downloadable app for androids was discussed. After Mr. Michaud shared how Strawberry Bank has their self- guided tours it was agreed there are many options to explore to do electronically other than just a printed brochure. Because the Historical Society members wished to have a Heritage Commission member join in this venture, Mr. Michaud will reach out to possible candidates.

- b. **375 Anniversary of Exeter**

The group has met once and not all members who had indicated an interest were in attendance; more of a general introductory meeting. They do intend to reach out to various civic groups to see if there is any interest in sponsoring an event involving/pertaining to their organization.

Ms. Gilman asked what role did the Heritage Commission wish to assume (in the birthday celebration); advisory, validator of events/facts or to sponsor an event. Mr. Michaud suggested if the mapping survey was presented early on, perhaps in March, it could start off the events with "these are our layers". Ms. Gilman agreed. Discussion followed on reprinting local historians' books, using the Town website and the suggestion of setting up a Blog as a go-to place for those looking for information on what is going on in Exeter. A second meeting will be held at the end of this month.

- **Demolition requests update**

No further information or action on the residence at 12 Front St. In discussing the role of the HDC in this instance to approve the demolition of a structure without knowing what was happening in its place, Mr. Schutz pointed out what was approved was the space is to be left "opened". Later, if any other structure is proposed, they will have to return to HDC for approval.

- a. **Update to Ordinance**

The Chair commented there was discussion last year of adding language to the ordinance to allow for more review time if needed but it did not go anywhere. Mr. Michaud used the 12 Front St. case as an example of the entire process being expedited if there'd been more time initially to seek out the needed information to establish the date of the structure. Ms. Gilman felt if that wording could be retrieved it could be passed on to the Planning Department for action and perhaps not go before ZORC for approval. Mr. Merkle will search his computer files for the wording.

- **Properties at risk**

Upon inquiry on the status of the Connor Farm, Mr. Michaud replied the transfer of ownership of the house and a parcel of the land to a private party is still winding its way through the State approval process.

- **Other business**

Ms. Gilman spoke again on the need for a Treasurer as it appears the Heritage Commission will have an ongoing financial account. Ms. Gilman will pursue the final details and workings of such a fund through the municipal and State guidelines. Mr. Michaud did ask the Commission members to think and consider assuming this position. It was ascertained there would be no handling of funds but work in conjunction with the Town Finance Department to oversee the funds. More details of the position will be outlined at the December meeting.

Activity with the Ioka project was discussed and their possibly applying for a National Arts Endowment Grant and other potential financial partnerships in the municipal and non-profit arenas.

With no further business, the Chair called for a motion to adjourn. So moved by Mr. Schutz; seconded by Ms. Gilman.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Ginny Raub
Recording Secretary