

## Heritage Commission

February 16, 2021

### Final Minutes

Members Present: John Merkle, Chairman, Jay Myers, Vice Chair, John Grueter, Planning Board Rep., Julie Gilman, Select Board Rep., Maura Fay, Treasurer

John Merkle, Chairman, called meeting to order at 12:30 pm via ZOOM.

Business: First is the approval of the January 19, 2021 meeting minutes. John Merkle asked if everyone had the opportunity to review them. They had so Julie made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Maura seconded. All were in favor except John Grueter, who abstained, because he was not at the meeting and minutes approved.

Next on the agenda is the Black Heritage Pocket Park update. John asked Maura if there was any progress on this. Maura said there was nothing new to report except this Friday there will be a public open forum to talk about the project. She said it will be at 7:00 pm.

The next topic is the continued discussion on Park/Cass Streets Heritage District. Public presentation will be February 24, 2021 at 6:30 pm. John said that he thought Maura did a wonderful job putting it all together. He said it is very informative, very easy to read and the flyer turned out wonderful. John then said that the commission needs to develop some strategies for the meeting next week. Maura said she thinks it would be a good idea to do a brief recap because some of the people who attend may not have been at the first one. John asked her if they would use the same powerpoint that she put together the first time. Maura said they could and she is happy to make edits to it and changes. Jay said he thinks a shorter slide presentation would be good to recap some key highlights and maybe represent the priorities as to what the goal of the evening is about. He said he thinks the commission would be at a point of trying to solicit participation in the committee with the timeline moving forward into 2021. Julie said she thinks this is a good idea. Maura asked John Merkle if he thought it would be a good idea to put some of the Q&As on some of the slides as a way to walk through some of the information. John thinks this is a good idea and the questions are very appropriate and the responses are very clear.

John Merkle asked the commission members if they had a chance to review the questions and responses on the flyer. Julie said that she had. John said he likes the fact that they have a Heritage Neighborhood Area instead of a Heritage District. He said it stays within the realm of what Heritage Districts are supposed to be. He also thinks it is a lot less threatening.

Jay suggested the commission update the language on the first powerpoint to Neighborhood Heritage Area. John Merkle said they should have some goals at this meeting to seek support to move forward.

Maura shared her screen with the slides from October. All the members reviewed the slides and deleted a few and changed some others and this shortened it up some. Maura will share a link to the new presentation so everyone can do some editing before the meeting. John Merkle said between now and next Wednesday, the commission members can email back and forth to refine things.

John Merkle then asked if anyone had any other business. Julie said she had one thing. There is a bill in the house that is being heard tomorrow, HB 621. It is a bill to give The Land and Community Heritage Improvement Program, the LCHIP to give the Registry of Deeds more of a percentage of money raised by dealing with deeds. This proposal is to move it up from 10% to 30% for handling fees. LCHIP thinks it will cost them around \$350,000 to \$450,000 a year. They get millions now but the projects they get proposals for are hundreds of millions. Maura asked what committee this is and Julie said Ways and Means and this is scheduled for tomorrow at 2 pm.

With no further business, John Merkle entertained a motion to adjourn. Julie so moved. Jay seconded. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 1:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick  
Recording Secretary