

Heritage Commission
March 16, 2022
Draft Minutes

Members Present: Jay Myers, Chairman, John Merkle, Vice Chair, Bill Campbell, John Grueter, Pam Gjettum, Clerk

Call Meeting to Order: Jay Myers, Chairman, called meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the Wheelwright Room of the Exeter Town Office Building.

New Business: Public Hearing: Present from the public tonight is Janelle Schanders from Park Street.

First is the approval of the February 16th minutes, but there were only three commission members present from that meeting so they will be reviewed and approved at next month's meeting.

Jay then talked about the update of the Park/Cass Streets surveys. Jay said the letter going out will be an 8 1/2" by 11" sheet of paper and that will go into a regular size envelope and it will have a survey question with two responses. In favor of the proposed language or opposed to it in terms of the language and an indication to where the responder lived. This response card would fit into the envelope with the letter.

Jay then said he had some suggestions for the letter in terms of layout. His suggestions do not change the language of the proposed regulation, but he thought he had a different way of maybe presenting it to the public. Jay said the visitor at the last meeting shared that there are still some questions out there of what it is and there may be some confusion on what we are attempting to do. Jay thinks that by grooming some language up and simplifying it at the top of the letter and keeping the proposed language at the bottom as a reference material and this may approve the clarity.

Jay shared with the commission member how he organized the letter a little bit differently. Jay said he also included a date of April 15th, when we expect the card to be returned. Jay also included a statement of what is the next step. It was unclear as to what the next step would be in the current letter. Jay added, a majority response in favor would move the proposal forward to the Exeter Planning Board for review and opinion.

Pam said that is the whole point and Jay said it is the whole point but it is not in the original letter. Jay said in the original letter in the last statement, the enclosed card indicates whether you are in favor of having your property included in this area. Jay said that is confusing and John Merkle said that is not the question anymore.

Jay asked the members if the language needed to be changed so there is not any confusion and our purpose is clear. We have a deadline when we want a response and we let them know what this actually means. If they are in favor, we move forward with the Planning Board. If it is not approved then it is not moving forward.

Jay said he does not have the ability to copy his changes but he can circulate what he is proposing. Jay said his input to the letter is structural and he made clear what the letter's objective was and he added a deadline. Jay said he will share this with Maura and Julie by email so we can move forward with it.

Bill said we have a quest and asked Janelle if she was here for this part of the meeting. Janelle said she was and she lives in the neighborhood.

Bill then asked Janelle if she thought it was a good idea to poll the people. Janelle said she thinks it is a great idea to poll them. She said the survey that was done before really did not cover everyone and it was not taken as formally as this one will.

Pam asked about money to do this. Jay said he is not sure what we have. He said there was an interest of a donation towards the actual survey itself.

Jay then asked the commission members if there is anything else with this agenda of Cass/Park Street Neighborhood Heritage Area and there was none.

Next is discussion on the Certified Government Grant and this is a carry over from last month's agenda. Jay said there was a deadline of the 20th and Jay asked if it was the 20th of this month or February. Bill said it was February because Julie said they needed to decide that night so she could get it in. Jay then said so there is nothing left unfinished for today.

The next agenda item is updates from the Planning Board and Historic District Commission.

John Grueter said there is one thing in reference to the demolition review. John had a photo of 50 Newfields Road to show the members. He said it used to be a dry cleaning business. They want to take the building down and make three condos. John said one of the things that bothered him was the Town Planner's notes from February, the applicant is seeking approval for a multifamily site plan review for the proposed conversion of the structure located at 50 Newfields Road. John said the words they used were conversion of the structure and then he gets paperwork saying they want to tear it down. Also, the foundation they were going to rebuild on is no good and he is not sure what is going to happen. John said he has already been out there and does not need to see it again, but told the members they could go and look at it if they wanted to do so.

Jay said he is strapped for time and asked if one of the members could contact the owner to set up a site visit. John Merkle said he would do this. Bill and Pam are available to go with John. A date for next week is tentatively set for Thursday 3/24 at 9 am.

Jay asked if there were any updates from the Historic District Commission. Pam spoke and said the 8 Gilman Lane house will be taken down and put in academy housing for teachers. Bill said the ZBA took up the church next door to the Historical Society and they approved the fact that it will be a residential multifamily complex but they hung up on the parking. The applicants have to come back with a plan because they want to put 24 cars out on the street.

With no further business, Bill made a motion to adjourn. John Grueter seconded. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick
Recording Secretary