

Heritage Commission
August 17, 2022
Final Minutes

Members Present: Julie Gilman, Select Board Rep., John Merkle, Vice Chair, Bill Campbell, Jay Myers, Chairman, Pam Gjettum

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

New Business: Public Hearing: First on the agenda is the approval of the July 20th meeting minutes. After review and a few changes, Julie made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Pam seconded. All were in favor and minutes were approved.

Jay said that the next item is the discussion of the Master Plan for this commission.

Julie said she thinks this commission was looking at whether there should be more concentration on historical surveys of the town and try to get staff person to support this commission and the HDC. Julie said the commission could try and budget for this because it is budget season. We could ask for some more funds to take on some further surveys. Another item was to update the waterfront commercial Historic District National Survey. Julie said she talked about this a couple of meetings ago and it was advised that the commission note go forward with this so she is going to ask the Town Planner to just say no.

One of the things is to prioritize improvements to the town hall. Julie said this is not on our list, but should be consulted as far as the historic value of at least the exterior and she wants to talk about this more in detail at the next meeting because she has some detail information from the Arts Committee that they have gone ahead to get prices for building assessment, conditions assessments and also future needs assessment. This can be budgeted and Julie will be talking to the Town Planner about this.

Another thing is getting the town hall registered on the National Register, which Julie thinks the commission can do themselves.

Julie thinks this is all the commission has for the Master Plan for the community.

Jay said it seems like we are using the Town's Master Plan to identify our interests and also where we need to put our resources, time and money. It also is some sort of report card to the Select Board that identifies what we can accomplish and what we cannot accomplish based on our needs. Jay would like to add that there is a great deal of information relative to structures that have been demolished whether it is a picture or descriptions of some structures in town and what was in place of that. Jay said there had been some discussion of how to bring this to light in a more organized way.

Julie said this is one of the things that she brought up is that the commission has never to her knowledge gone out to the places that we have made recommendations for demolition and have not documented what came after.

Julie said as a Select Board RepShe can take all this to the Planning and Building Departments because of the budgeting things that might be necessary for anything that we do like the survey, we might need matching funds or if we don't get the CLG Grant. Julie said that another thing we should do is keep on top of the CLG cycle. They changed their handbooks and that is why we missed the deadline this year. These are the things that slip through the cracks because we do not have somebody to do that.

Pam brought up the Perkins Hill Cemetery because she said it is in terrible shape and the Cemetery Association does not even know it exists.

Julie said this would be an example of something that we would go for LCHIP funds like we did for the Winter Street Cemetery. Pam said it is one of the oldest cemeteries of Exeter.

Jay said if we are going to move forward with some action items related to the Town's Master Plan and our Master Plan, he is hearing things related to a town survey/bringing forward our demolition documentation and what is in place of it. The second item is cemetery cleanup, survey, conditioning, making this information available to the public. The third item is the Town Hall. It is not on the National Registry and it needs to be and we should be a part of this process.

The next item on the agenda is Memorializing the Neighborhood Heritage Area Proposal which falls into the town survey and has given us a chance to document that process.

Jay said we have been operating off an outline shared a few meetings ago. Jay said he went through an accordion file that Barbara McEvoy had accumulated and has made some notes on this outline of where things can be found in the binder.

John asked Jay to email this to everyone so they can work with it.

The next item is the Antique Trough Donation. Jay said we had a really nice discussion in our last meeting.

Pam said she drafted the letter and sent it and did not send copies to the commission members.

Julie said we did actually come up with a recommendation of where to install the trough. She said they did not make a formal vote but that was our recommendation to the Select Board.

Bill made a motion that the commission recommend to the Select Board that the antique trough go on Front Street in front of 12 Front Street and this is directly across from its original location. John seconded. All were in favor and motion approved.

Julie said we also talked about getting something to set the trough on for a base and she did contact the academy and they are very happy to donate something to help us make a stable base for it. We just need to coordinate when and what size.

Julie asked the Highway Superintendent and town managers executive assistant to get dimensions so she will know what size to tell the academy.

Jay said he will draft a letter to the Select Board to capture this discussion and decision.

Jay then said that he wanted to give an update on the Channel 22 Public Service Announcement. Jay met Bob last week and cut a tape of a Public Service Announcement and this will come out at some point. Jay said he shared a draft with the commission members of what he was planning to say.

Jay also thanked Bob for his help with this.

Last item on the agenda is updates from various boards and commissions.

Julie said it is budget time and we have some time to present the goals we have. Our budget falls under the General Government Budget which is all the town office services. Over the past couple of years due to COVID all we have had for expenses is our Recording Secretary and whatever we put into the Park Street documentation.

Julie said the Heritage Commission does have its fund that is separate from the town's general fund.

Julie said she might make a recommendation that Jay as Chairman and John as Vice Chair meet with the Town Planner, because she thinks he needs other voices to talk about the goals that were talked about. Julie said the town planner is very supportive as much as he can be with the work that we do.

With no further business, Jay made a motion to adjourn. Bill seconded. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick
Recording Secretary