

## Heritage Commission

January 18, 2023

### Draft Minutes

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

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.

Old Business: Approval of minutes for the November 16, 2022 meeting. It has been three months, so minutes go into record as they are.

Jay said next on the agenda is a request for demolition at 25 Park Street. Jay said that he does not have the time to review or reach out and is hoping someone else will be able to. John Merkle said he could do it and stated that he did not get a copy of the application. Jay said he will give John the contact information. The members decided on a date that would work for all on 1/25 at 11am.

Next, are several bullet items on the agenda and Jay asked Julie to start with the CLG Grant. Julie said the Division of Historical Resources is starting their new grant round for CLG money and the first thing they are doing is having an informational session for people who have not participated before. More of the commissions should attend these things and they are at the end of January and the beginning of February. They will be Zoom discussions. It will be just information about what kind of things are covered by the CLG Grant, what the differences are between the three levels and from there they will be giving us their schedule of when Letters of Intent need to come in. The first training is January 31<sup>st</sup> at 7 pm, and the second one if February 1<sup>st</sup> is at noon. Julie thinks it would be a good opportunity for all commission members to participate in one of the meetings. There will be about a month to decide what to go ahead with. What kind of project, what kind of funding is needed if we want to match or do more surveys. Julie will send the email to all members because it has the link to the meetings. Julie said that after the February training, at the February meeting,

we can talk about ideas that you may have come up with from the training sessions.

Julie said it is too late to put anything into the budget now if we want to do anything and get matching grants beside the funds we have in the Heritage Fund, which is around \$6,000.

Julie said the Select Board agreed two meetings ago that for that grant from The New Hampshire Preservation Alliance to go forward with a Historic Building Survey Assessment that we could draw the funds out of the Town Hall Capital Reserve Fund and there is plenty in there. Julie is asking for \$4,000 and said the commission can match with \$4,500. The quote that was given to us from the Preservation Architect was \$8,500. The next step would be master planning it, documenting it and there is another quote for this that the Art Committee put together.

Julie said after the Historic Building Survey, we can go forward to get National Register status and that can get Federal Historic Preservation plans that will help us do work in the town hall. Julie said the Department of Labor came through and did health, safety for employees mostly but also for the public. They had quite a few recommendations for the town hall. Julie said the one that surprised her the most was the seating gallery around the main hall needs to be shielded because the railing is too low.

Jay said this moves us forward to the first phase of getting the town hall on the Registry.

Jay then asked Julie if the Department of Labor found other things besides the seating gallery. Julie said in the hidden rooms upstairs, rooms have been either added, divided or taken out. This seemed to have been done on an as needed basis. There are some rooms that you have to step up into and others that you have to duck to get into. There are also issues where there are height changes.

There have been many suggestions.

Jay said he thinks that the HDC would take the lead on this and make sure anything external would fit the requirements. Julie said this is the way she sees it

and most of the discussions I have had with the different groups is what is inside the building and how to use it best. The goal is to make it high end use. Julie was thinking that either the Art Committee or the Heritage Commission would take the lead as to what happens in the building and also recommend to the Select Board that we have a Town Hall Master Plan because all of these things cannot be done all at one time.

John then asked if this is the intent to put this on the National Register separately from the district. Julie said as an individual resource, yes.

Jay asked Julie if there was anything else the Heritage Commission needed to do at this point. Julie said that we are in a holding pattern until we get the results of the survey.

Jay said this may flow into one of our other bullet items related to the Master Plan, in reviewing the minutes from the November meeting, we talked about advocating for administrative staff. With all of these bodies with the same goal, a point person or some upper administration which might fall under Town Planner. Someone to help communicate or coordinate amongst all these committees.

John said he talked to Dave about this and he just X it for this year.

Julie said going forward just documenting what is there is the place to start. Next would be getting the Master Plan Committee together and we have some time to do that. Right now it is in the hands of the Select Board to make this committee up.

Julie said the Art Committee wants to go forward with upgrading the chairs. This does not affect the Master Plan. Within this is the idea of selling the chairs in order to have the funds to purchase new chairs.

Jay said next is the Perkins Cemetery, LCHIP funding. Pam said she has nothing. She did talk to Barbara and she has everything submitted and she has it under the individual property.

Jay talked about summarizing the Heritage Area Neighborhood. Jay said he created an outline back in June and he received an email back in December from a resident on Cass Street. Jay said there needs to be information out there that is accurate and on the web page. Jay does not think it was posted about the vote

on whether we were accepting or not accepting. Julie said that that information is in the minutes. Jay said that the project was voted down and that needs to be clearer and be more public on our web page and an accurate narrative of our timeline and where it ended. Julie said we need to talk to Barbara about this. Jay said he will take the lead on this and speak with Barbara.

Jay then asked if there were any updates of the Select Board and Historic District Commission. Pam said the HDC will not be meeting tomorrow night and she said she is still very upset about losing Gilman Lane. Julie said it has been very quiet and no applications.

Jay said for the Select Board he drafted year in summary of 2022.

Jay asked Julie if there was anything from the Select Board. Julie said just the Master Plan for the town hall and see what opportunities we have for grants and donations.

Jay said this is not on the agenda but he was contacted about another letter for the Dyers of the American Revolution and a plaque for the Winter Street Cemetery. Jay said two years ago we gave support but the application did not get admitted at that time and I was asked to update it, which I did.

Julie asked Jay if he knew where they were planning to locate the plaque and he did not know.

Jay asked if there was any new business and Julie said yes. She got a membership as a whole and as individuals for the Heritage Commission and also the Historic District Commission to the National Alliance of Preservation Commission. Julie said it is a great resource and they have lots of training and education opportunities.

Julie also said the NH Preservation Alliance and the Division of Historical Resources are going to put together a group of different community representatives for a discussion on what we need.

Jay asked if there was going to be a Select Board listening session at the library in February. Julie said it is an all boards committee meeting. It has been done before but there were a few years gap because of COVID. Julie said everyone will get a reminder.

With no further business, Pam made a motion to adjourn. Julie seconded and meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick

Recording Secretary