

Heritage Commission

March 15, 2023

Final Minutes

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

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: Jay said that we have an agenda that carried over from last month because we were unable to meet at that time. The first is the minutes from 1/18/23 and they will be in the permanent record because of the timeframe with which we were to review them.

Second item on the new business list is the Demolition Review Committee updates. It has been quite a while since the committee met, but the last time the committee met was to organize a review of 25 Park Street and in addition to that, 4-6 South Street.

John stated that Park Street was taken care of and South Street was the one the committee had the problem with.

Jay asked if 25 Park Street was for demolition and replacement. John said it was for demolition and we do not know what is going back.

Next is the CLG Grant FY23 Informational Session Update. Julie said this was put on by the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources and they just walked through their process of CLG Grants or Certified Government Grants which we have been successful in obtaining in past years. Julie said they have really stretched out the whole process which is kind of nice because we only meet monthly. It helps us meet our deadlines plus when the budgeting happens that was something I emphasized with them earlier because some towns have March town meetings and some have May or June so it was a little different meeting the deadlines. They have extended this out and it is a two year process now which is nice.

Julie said we had a Letter of Intent that was due March 3rd and I quickly put it in because it is a nice electronic format now. Julie said she put it in for further survey areas that were started from the Mapping Survey Project and for an amount of \$25,000 because this is actually a free Grant and no money needs to be paid.

Jay asked Julie what the deadline to apply was because he has somewhere in his notes that it might be in July. Julie said we will get a notice at the end of March or early April whether or not they are considering our projects and then we go further into more detail and get two quotes from Preservation Planners.

Julie explained to the members areas of the town that have already been surveyed on a map either through our work or previously from National Register applications and/or Section 106 which is Federal Preservation Guideline when the project included federal money.

Julie then showed a map which is the earliest map of Exeter. Julie pointed out what had been developed by 1802. It extends a little bit to Portsmouth Ave and past Lincoln Street and then along Water Street and Court Street. The waterfront has been done by the National Register applications that are referenced in the Zoning Ordinance.

Julie then pointed out which streets are involved. There is just a corner of Portsmouth Ave, up Water Street to Main Street. Julie said we have Front Street from the bandstand to Main Street. Then there is Lincoln Street from the middle along Railroad Ave to Main Street. We also have the Franklin Street and Park Street areas.

Julie said between the two that we already have that were done in the 80s, I will have them put on the town website.

Julie said she was thinking about the Cottage Street area around the Mill Complex because that was laid out in a plan for the folks working at the Mill. The Shoe Mill, not the Fabric Mill and it is just at the edge of what was done in 1802.

Julie said we have a lot of this covered between the waterfront, commercial, Front Street area and it maybe that we want to extend a little more.

Julie then went to the next map from 1845 for the commission members to see. There are some questions in this area around the cemetery. This is a good example of the mill housing. There was a train station at Front Street that spanned and Julie said she is not sure where the documentation comes from, but it is believed that half of it has been moved down by the cemetery and she thinks it would be really interesting to define for the town. Julie said that was my proposal for this area of Front Street.

Jay said, that was an area I was thinking of around the Mill and some of that industrial housing development.

Julie said there is a great photograph that shows how it was originally laid out.

Jay said that some of these surveys predate my time on the commission, other than the Park Street survey. What we have available for the public is documentation, a record of existing structures.

Julie said if you look at The National Register Surveys, one was done in the 1980s and another was done 1970s or late 1980s, they show who owned the buildings at the time.

Jay said it is a real benefit to have this information available of this particular area. Are there other ideas and I was also thinking the Pine Street area which kind of fits in a similar area but definitely developed in a different way. Julie said it has a lot of nice architecture and it would continue from the Front Street Historic District.

Julie went back to the map and pointed to the area that Jay was talking about. It is the area of Elliot Street to Pine Street. Julie said it is a pretty nice area of styles and purpose and is pretty compact.

Jay said, I think we can propose both but it is too broad. Julie said that it is negotiable. Once we put in that we want to do this one because and we would like to do that one because, in between the application and the award, they have a period of time that DHR recommends shrinking it or expanding it based on the information they have in their data base.

Maura asked Julie for the Front Street area would you consider the bottom side of Front Street or would you also consider and include Union Street and School Street.

Julie said it is very similar, Union Street to Elliot Street, Front Street area. Definitely something to think about.

Maura said looking at it, it seems to have two chunks to it. The Pine Elliot chunk and the other chunk are the streets that back up to the cemetery and maybe also the Union, School Street area.

Jay said given some of the conversations about the Lincoln Street corridor, it might be timely to survey that area.

Julie said that it is a good consideration and went back to the 1802 map and she said she thinks they got a lot of information from this map. In 1845 is when we started seeing the mill complex and the mill housing and the area around Front Street.

Julie said a lot of the property along Front Street has already been documented in our Historic District. We can propose a large area and refine it as the application process goes through.

Jay said the space, Pine, Elliot, Grove is well preserved. The Academy owns a good bit of that property. There is quite a bit of editing of the structures but it is well preserved. Jay said Union and School are pretty well preserved too. Jay then asked when do we need to make a decision.

Julie said once we know our Letter of Intent is approved and with your acceptance because this might come out before our next meeting, go ahead and push out the application.

Maura said I move that if we receive notification from DHR that they are interested in our proposal that we authorize Julie to push out the application of the Heritage Commission. All were in favor and motion carried.

Next on the agenda is the CLG Grant FY23. Jay said given what we were talking about regarding the CLG Grant, chronologically I think we are focusing on the right area whether we decide on Pine Street or Lincoln Street area it is the right thing to do.

Jay said he wanted to thank Julie and the rest of the Select Board for having an All Boards Meeting.

Jay asked Julie if there were any updates from the Select Board. Julie said the biggest thing is the plan for Linden, Pine and Front Street intersection because it was approved.

Old Business: Jay said there was some talk a while back about the Perkins Cemetery and there has not been much movement in that direction.

Julie said that needs to be looked at a little more before making any kind of application.

Next is the Town Hall Survey and Registry of Historic Buildings. Julie said that she put in an application to the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance to match money to do a historic building survey because she thought that was necessary to get it on the National Register. Julie said we were turned down and after I had a discussion about it and they recommended we go to LCHIP.

Jay asked Julie if there was anything for the Heritage Commission to do at this time. Julie said, I need a person. We are putting together a Town Hall Master Plan and the Heritage Commission would have a small part of that. The Arts & Culture Commission had done a survey of what people want to see in there and that is going to drive a lot of changes to the interior. I think the biggest ones are seating, heating and air conditioning and definitely sound and lighting.

Moving on, Jay said we have been creating an inventory of demolished structures and replacements from the Demolition Review Committees work over time and this is work that John put a lot of time and effort into it. I think we are at a point

where we need to talk to Barbara as to how to leave this as a record of that work.

Last is the Neighborhood Heritage Area summary narrative. Jay said, I think we are at a place where we have what we need.

With no further business, Jay made a motion to adjourn. Julie seconded. All were in favor and meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick

Recording Secretary