

## Heritage Commission

October 18, 2023

### Draft Minutes

Members Present: Julie Gilman, Select Board Rep., John Merkle, Vice Chair, Francoise Elise, new member, Pam Gjettum , Clerk

Call Meeting to Order: Julie Gilman, Select Board Rep., called meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the Novak Room of the Exeter Town Office Building.

New Business: First on the agenda is the review of the minutes from the April 19, 2023 meeting. Julie said that it has been many months and these minutes are automatically approved.

Next is the discussion on available grants and workshops. Julie stated that Francoise has done a lot of research on this between last week and now and has found several things of interest. Julie said the first one she would like to bring up is the Heritage Commission 101 being put on by the Preservation Alliance. It is the basics of what the Heritage Commission is. Julie also said that she thinks this is the one to go to. It is November 9<sup>th</sup> from 12pm to 1pm. Francoise said it is a virtual one. Julie said that the link to this could be put on our website so our potential volunteers can look at it and see.

Francoise said there is another workshop on Growing Movement Outreach Engagement Strategy for the Heritage Commission and Historic District Commission and this one is on November 14<sup>th</sup>. This one requires a registration, but there is no fee. Francoise said this one is also virtual and same time, 12pm to 1pm.

Julie said that the Preservation Alliance is making a big push towards growing the preservation workforce. If anyone wants to contact them, it is the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance and you can find them on line and contact them about it.

Julie then asked Francoise to speak about other grant funding tools that Francoise has looked at. Francoise said they would similar organizations that the

commission has been working with all along. The New Hampshire Preservation Alliance. The Certified Local Government Program. Then there are other ones, State Council for the Arts, depending on what that is. The National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Preservation Fund.

Francoise said that it seems there are three organizations that the commission has been looking at and maybe each one of us could take one organization and make sure it is looked through each month to see what is coming up in terms of grants and workshops.

Julie said that it is a really good idea to assign things. It would be good to disperse the responsibility amongst people and not just wait for one person to find something by accident. Julie then said the commission if they want can do this now.

Julie said she certainly would be happy to continue her relationship with The Division of Historical Resources.

John said he could do the Preservation Alliance doing grants and reviews for them.

Francoise said she will do Land and Community Heritage Investment Program. Pam will do the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Julie said that Francoise had brought to her attention a grant system and Julie does not believe the State has this nor does Exeter, but it is a grant for residential properties or any property throughout the town. This is for folks who are making changes to their facades.

Julie said she thinks this would be very attractive and it would be good for us when we do a Demolition Review. I am looking at making a proposal for something like this. It will not be done for this year's ballot and I think it is really attractive to be able to offer any kind of funds to somebody to preserve their property.

Pam said wouldn't this be more for the Historic District rather than the Heritage? Julie said yes, but for us it is helpful to educate people.

Francoise said she is newer to Exeter and have only been here since March and have been fascinated by all the houses that have the sign on them and I have

done some of the research done on the different districts. I think it would be fascinating to have some presentation of the people who have done the research, that are proud of the research that has been done and maybe have some workshops or sessions where two or three people at a time presents the research they found on their house. This would educate the community on what they have done, the history of the house itself and then the process that might get other people interested in doing it too.

Julie said it would be a good opportunity to have a formal presentation of the sign to the homeowner at one of our meetings.

Next discussion is the Demolition Review Committee. Julie said at the All Boards Meeting last week it was talked about how to run a meeting, how to participate, what to do, what is a quorum. It always reminds me that there are committees and commissions that people don't know within the town structure exists.

Julie said she thought of two things that this commission might do. Some of it is for the public and some for the other boards and commissions. One is to go to the Planning Board and also the HDC. Have one member go and present this is what our purpose is and this is where we can work together. We appreciate what you do and we want to know what you do. Our interpretation is that demolition reviews need to occur before the application goes to the Planning Board when they come in to apply for a permit. A few times this has not occurred. The Planning Board went ahead and approved projects that has something that is going to be demolished and we find out about it last and sometimes they have already taken it down. Julie said, I would like to make this one of our goals too. To have the cross pollination occur and that is why we usually have a Planning Board Representative but he is not here tonight. That is part of the duties of the cross over that we have.

Julie said what I am proposing is that we do a presentation at one of our meetings but on a television spot on Channel 22. One of us will be the narrator of, this is the project that we did at Franklin Street Survey and have visuals and maps. Julie then asked if there were any volunteers. Pam said, I am still trying to work it out, but I like the idea. I would like to have a real house. I would like to bring the cameras and I would say, this is what we are looking at and this is why we like to save it. Pam then said that the owner has to be in on this too.

Julie said what we could do because the demolition calendar is so short, is have a for instance and take one of our houses or somebody you know that has a house and pretend it is going to be demolished. We would say, this is a historical resource that we think should be preserved. It does not have to be one that is really happening. John said this would be a lot safer.

John said one of the things that concerns me is we are looking at demolition as removal. We get building permits submitted all the time about making changes that are not demolition.

Julie said, is this something that we need to define better in our Zoning Ordinance if allowed? John said, if we could do it. This concerns me because people do not need to get a demolition permit to change their windows.

Julie said, I guess for next month, we divided up the grant programs, do a little research and find out about deadlines and what is the cycle because some are annual in the summer, some are annual in the fall and then we can put them on the calendar.

Julie said, we want to do programs of the work that we have done, and I would be happy to be in front of a building or whatever we work out and I will do a sample script and then we can talk about it.

Julie asked if there were any Demolition Committee review updates. Pam said, the last thing we did was the Baptist Church out on Little River Road and basically we said, go ahead.

The last agenda item is updates from representatives of the Select Board, Planning Board and Historic District Commission. Julie said the HDC has not met and is not meeting this week so no update there. Nothing from the Select Board other than the All Boards Meeting last week.

With no further business, Julie called for a motion to adjourn and Pam said, move to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick

Recording Secretary