

Heritage Commission

November 15, 2023

Final Minutes

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

Also present was Dave Sharples, Town Planner

Call Meeting to Order: John Merkle, Vice Chair, called the 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 approval of the October 18, 2023 minutes. After review and a correction, Julie made a motion to approve. Pam seconded. All were in favor and minutes approved.

Next is the review of the Commission's Rules of Procedures (ROP). Julie said, we have been talking about what time we meet and we need to formally vote to make the change.

Dave Sharples spoke and said there are a couple of things with the rules and procedures. When it talks about meetings, it says it will be the second Wednesday of every month. In order to change that you would want to amend your rules and procedures. However, under Roman numeral 1-2, Amendment, it calls out amendments to these rules and procedures shall be adopted at a regular meeting of the commission in accordance with the same requirements of the HDC outlined in RSA 75-6. But RSA 75-6 is not relevant to rules and procedures. They are relevant to regulations. Right now it says that you need to have a public hearing. You don't usually need one. The Planning Board and any other rules and procedures don't have that but I would suggest posting a public hearing. Also then change the amendment language just to be consistent with the Planning Board rules and procedures which state two things. One is an amendment that will be adopted at a regular meeting of the commission and placed on file with the Town Clerk for public inspection. I would strike the existing amendment language and add that.

Then under meetings, if you are going to schedule a new meeting time you can put that in there but I would use the word generally instead of shall.

Julie said under Officers (page 4), it lists the Vice Chairperson and Secretary and we have never named anybody Secretary. It has always been Clerk. We also still need a Treasurer because we have our own commission account and I do not think we named a Treasurer this year.

Pam said if we change our meeting time, we might lose our Secretary. What is your schedule Liz? Liz said if it is Wednesday, it should be ok.

Julie then said that Wednesdays and Thursdays are difficult for her because she works at the State House. Monday, Tuesday or Friday would work and the morning would be better.

Francoise said mornings or afternoons are ok for me. Have the commission members voiced what is best for them? Julie said that various commissioners have said morning. Pam said, I do not drive after dark so I would much prefer a morning meeting time and John Gruger feels the same way and also Bill Campbell.

Francoise asked if she could bring something up that might affect the time we meet. I understand that in the State of NH they now have a new requirement, a law that on the School Board they do recruit a student to sit on the School Board. I would be very open to have a student sit on this commission from the high school. I would like to look at that. A student on this commission could learn so much about potential careers. Julie said it is a good idea and the Energy Committee has student representation and those meeting are held at 3:30pm.

John asked if the student would have to be appointed by the Selectmen. Dave said yes. It would be just as if you were a regular member and they would have to be a resident.

Pam said the Historical Society has two student members on their board. So there are two that are already into history. Maybe every few months, we could borrow one of them. Pam then said that high school kids today are out straight. I am the rep for the Key Club. They come in at 2:30pm, get through their business and get going. Most of them play sports.

Dave said he heard no Wednesdays or Thursdays for the meeting so it will be Monday, Tuesday or Friday. Dave asked, morning or afternoon. Julie said we have heard from people that early morning would be good.

John asked, special meetings brought on by demolition will it fall under the same timeframe? Dave said no. When we amend the rules, the chairperson will be able to cancel/call meetings.

Dave said I can put it out there. Julie said she would like to put it out there. One of the other things we want to talk about is whether or not we name a seven member board or not. We could be a five member board with a student representative.

Dave said he will put out Monday and Tuesday 8am to 9 am and 9am to 10am and 3:30pm to 4:30pm to see what people think.

Julie said there are a few other things on rules and procedures. We do refer to a Secretary as one of our officers. We should probably just change that to Clerk. Dave said there are a couple of options. You can renew it or just strike it. Julie said we do need to include the processing of the minutes and they have to be done within five business days.

Julie talked about going from seven members to five and possibly merging the HC and the HDC.

John said so we are going to be looking into Mondays and Tuesdays and strike out the Secretary and Dave will work with us to cover the meeting minutes for the Clerk. John then asked if the Selectmen were already looking into the merger and Julie said yes.

John then asked if anyone had any more comments on the rules and procedures.

Dave asked, can I make a suggestion of what we talked about before with rules and procedures. They take you to a public hearing notice and all of that and generally when you do that you say specifically what you are going to amend. I would suggest at the next meeting hold a public hearing on amending your rule and procedure specifically Section Roman numeral 1.2 Amendment by striking in accordance with the same requirements of Historic District outlined in RSA 676-6. Strike this and then it reads without that in there consistent with other rules and

procedures. Dave said, I will take care of the posting and post the public hearing and you will have the ability to make that amendment and once you do that, you can change other things at a regular meeting without any notice on your rules and procedures.

John asked if it needs to be posted and voted on at the next meeting and Julie and Dave said yes.

John then asked the members if there were any more comments on rules and procedures. There were none.

Next is the discussion on possible change to the monthly meeting date/time. John said, we have taken care of this already.

Demolition Review Committee update. Pam said, we all got the information for this but I still cannot find where this place is. John said, I could not find it on the map either. Julie said, we should know exactly where it is before we set up a meeting. John said, as far as I know, there is nothing else on the demolition piece to discuss.

John then asked if there were any updates from the Select Board. Julie said the HDC has not met in a couple of months and the Select Board is undertaking to review all the boards, committees and commissions.

Dave said he has a question. I don't know how old the building is, but there is an application going before the Planning Board tomorrow for Little River Road. Julie said that was the church and it has already been taken care of.

The Demolition Review Committee will meet next week Monday or Tuesday for 45 South Street. Dave asked who the members of this committee were. Julie said it depends on who is available and it is three members at a time.

Old Business: Updates and/or discussions on various projects and initiatives. Francoise said there were a couple of workshops put on by the Preservation Alliance Heritage Commission 101 that was posted to the web page for the Heritage Commission. It was very good and very basic. Any new member would benefit by it. It is also posted to our web page now with the actual slides. I did watch the second one that the Preservation put on, Growing Movement Outreach Engagement Strategy for Heritage Commissions and Historic District Commissions.

It was very good. The leader of that was a consultant, Chris Scalley. He was very good, very relevant, very engaging from the beginning until the end. He also had a lot of good suggestions. One of them being having events where we introduce topics such as education on windows and colors. He talked about working with the realtors in the area. When the slides for that presentation come up, I will post it to our web page. I just thought they were very, very interesting.

Francoise then said at our last meeting we talked about a Residential Façade Improvement Program where we would be looking at a program that residents could apply for. It would be funds to improve their home. We also talked about forming a sub-committee that would look into that. Is there still any interest in this?

Pam said, I think I am the sub-committee and I never got in touch with the guy who owned the old grocery store on Main Street. I was thinking Peter Smith with this house would work and he is willing to do it. He taught history for many years and he pretty much ran the Historical Society for a long time and he has a beautiful old house. It would make a nice walk through.

Francoise asked if the commission would be open to Julie and me meeting on just looking into a Residential Façade Improvement Program to see if it would be a fit for Exeter. All were in agreement for them to look into it.

With no further business, John made a motion to adjourn. Julie said so moved. Pam seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick

Recording Secretary