

Heritage Commission

January 24, 2024

Final Minutes

Call Meeting to Order: John Merkle, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00pm in the Novak Room of the Exeter Town Office Building.

Members Present: John Merkle, Vice Chair, Julie Gilman, Select Board Rep., John Grueter, Planning Board Rep., Francoise Elise

Dave Sharples, Town Planner was present.

New Business: Review of minutes from the November 15, 2023 meeting. After review and no corrections, Julie made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. John Grueter was the extension for a vote but abstained because he was not at the November meeting. Francoise seconded. All were in favor and minutes were approved.

Next is the Public Hearing: Amend the Commission's Rules of Procedures – Section 1.2. Amendment by striking the language “in accordance with the same requirements of Historic District Commissions outlined in RSA 675:6” from this section. John Merkle asked Julie to speak about this. Julie said, we were going to change the meeting time. When we say changing the membership, the Select Board went ahead and put an article on the Town Warrant to reduce the size of the Heritage Commission to five members with three alternates.

Dave said what he pointed out was the membership and then also look at the meeting times. There is no other board that I am aware of that requires a public hearing to change your Rules and Procedures. Before you change your meeting dates, I would suggest you have a public hearing and strike the language as I wrote, “in accordance with the same requirements of Historic District Commissions outlined in RSA 675.6.” Once you do that, you can go ahead and change your Rules and Procedures at a regular meeting. The first thing to do is the public hearing to amend that section. Once you do that and you strike it, you are free to change the Rules and Procedures.

Julie then made a motion to open the public hearing on the amendment to change the Heritage Commission's Rules and Procedures. John Grueter seconded. All were in agreement to open the meeting to the public.

There were no people from the public present so Julie made a motion to close the public hearing. John Grueter seconded. All were in favor and the public meeting was closed.

Julie moved to strike under section 1.2, by striking the language in accordance with the same requirements of the Historic District Commission outlined in RSA 675.6 from this section. Francoise seconded. All were in favor and motion approved.

John Merkle then asked the commission if there were any more comments on the Rules and Procedures. Dave then asked if the commission wanted to talk about changing the monthly meeting time. Under Rules and Regulations now says, the commission will meet regularly on the second Wednesday of each month.

Julie said, we have talked about changing the time. John Grueter asked if other commissions have this language and does the Planning Board have to meet on Thursday.

Dave Sharples said this does say Planning Board Meeting generally meet and you say shall. Most Rules and Procedures say, shall generally meet on the second of the month generally.

Julie said she does not mind changing the time of the meeting, but Wednesdays and Thursdays the first part of the year are difficult for me to commit to the mornings. Julie then asked for thought on the time of day. John Grueter said he would prefer the morning. He also said that Bill would and Pam because they do not drive at night.

Julie said this would not have any effect on the Demolition Review Committee nor does the article. We can leave it at the second Wednesday and then just pick a new time.

Dave said he would suggest striking in Section 5 Meetings, shall and replace with will generally meet on the second Wednesday of the month. This will give you

the flexibility to move it if needed.

Julie then said, let's start with morning or afternoon before we pick a time. John Grueter suggested 10 am.

Francoise made a motion to replace 5.1 Regular Meetings. The commission shall meet regularly on the second Wednesday of the month, change to the commission would generally meet regularly on the third Wednesday of the month. Julie seconded. All were in favor and motion approved.

Dave asked if the commission wanted to discuss the time and it can be posted.

Julie said, let's try 10 am because it seems to be ok with everyone and we need to check with the TV folks about recording. We can try 10 am for next month's meeting and see how it goes.

Next on the agenda is the Demolition Review Committee updates. John Grueter said there has not been anything in months.

Last is updates from representatives of the Select Board, Planning Board and Historic District Commission. John asked Julie if there was anything from the Select Board. Julie said what she already talked about the Article to change our size. The other is not a Select Board matter. It is the Pine Street area survey we had commissioned, it got awarded a grant. It is just waiting for the Governor and Council to sign. Julie asked Dave, it is \$20,000 so do we need to do an RFP and I am asking because all the other survey has been done by one company. I was wondering if we could sole source.

Dave said, our Purchasing Policy would require us to go out to bid but there is a clause that you could sole source for a reason. I would put together these reasons, if we have them, and submit to the Town Manager for sign off.

Julie said the HDC has not met in a while, so there is nothing to compare with them. I would like to mention the donation of the 23 Water Street as a park for the town.

John Grueter said there is nothing to report from the Planning Board.

Dave said he would like to mention that they got a site plan going to the February 8th meeting. It is a single home that was approved to convert to six units. It is a

very large home, 16,000 square feet. A connection was put on post 1987 and they are proposing to demolish it.

John asked if there was any other business and Julie said that Francoise has been looking at different programs and grant that we might find helpful like renovating your home more user friendly by preserving the historical aspects of a building. We have not gone very with this. Now that the budget time is over, there will be more time to meet with the finance director to talk about it. The grant was for façade changes. There is the Heritage fund we could use for giving grants but we need to make it heftier if we go into that program.

John said the Preservation Alliance Old House and Barn Expo is March 16 & 17 at St. Anthems College.

With no further business, John called for a motion to adjourn. Julie said, so move and meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick

Recording Secretary