

Heritage Commission  
Draft Minutes  
April 17, 2024

Call Meeting to Order: John Merkle, Vice Chair, called meeting to order at 10:00 am in the Novak Room of the Exeter Town Office Building.

Members Present: John Merkle, Vice Chair, Pam Gjettum, Clerk, Francoise Elise, John Grueter, Planning Board Rep., Dave Sharples, Town Planner

New Business: Public Hearing: First on the agenda is the review of the minutes from the March 20, 2024 meeting. After review and a few changes, Pam made a motion to accept the minutes with the changes. Francoise seconded. All were in favor and the minutes were accepted.

John Merkle said the next item on the agenda is the Pine Street Grant. Dave stated that Julie contacted him about getting this started. I told her that we need a contract. A contract was sent over and I forwarded it to Primex who looks at the standard and general conditions. I have not received comments back from them yet but they are pretty good about turning it around and I expect to see it today or tomorrow. Once this is finalized, we will go to the Select Board and ask them to award the contract and then the work will start shortly thereafter.

John Merkle said, so it has been through Government Counsel and Dave said, yes but it took awhile because I had to rewrite some paperwork.

John Grueter asked Dave to explain what the Pine Street Grant is. Dave went and got the paperwork on this and then read the scope of work to the commission.

Next is to elect the officers because it is April. John Merkle said that he is stepping down but will be an alternate. Francoise said if the members did not mind, she would like to be Chairman.

John Grueter said the Heritage Commission and Historic District Commission as one committee. Wasn't there some discussion on that?

Dave Sharples said that he heard of that discussion but he believes it came out of it as a Warrant Article to reduce the size of the Heritage Commission from seven to five members and that was done.

John Merkle said that Francoise has expressed an interest in serving as Chairman. John Grueter made a motion to accept Francoise as Chairman. Pam seconded. All were in favor. Pam said she will do the Vice Chair as well as the Clerk.

John Grueter will serve as Treasurer. John said his first assignment will be to find out if there is a bank account and how much is in it.

Pam made a motion that we have a board of Françoise for Chairman, Pam for Vice Chair and John Grueter for Treasurer. Françoise seconded. All were in favor.

John Merkle said that he has not heard of any demolition. John Grueter said, remember the house at 87 Front Street, I was just up there and they were tearing down what we told them they could tear down. Pam said they are coming to the Historic District Commission tomorrow night and they want to build a two car garage with apartments on top of it.

Updates from the Select Board, Planning Board and Historic District Commission.

John Grueter said the only update is the house he just spoke about. Pam said that Trump Tower is coming up across the street where the bank drive in is and that is going to be interesting. Someone wants to put an apartment block with shops underneath and five stories up.

Dave said it is going for a preliminary with the Historic District Commission. They are proposing 56 feet five stories and the ordinance allows 50 feet 4 stories. What they are proposing will require relief from the Zoning Board. Nothing has been submitted to the Planning Board.

John Merkle asked if there was any update on 23 Water Street. He said the intent was to have a member of this commission or the Historic District Commission on a committee for that.

Pam stated that she has not heard anything on it. Françoise said there definitely should be someone from the Historic District.

Dave said he was not at the meeting, but his understanding is that they adopted the charge of the committee and have opened it for applications. There are nine members and I think they already have eleven or twelve applications. If anyone is interested in serving on this, I would encourage them to get an application in.

With no further business, John Merkle made a motion to adjourn. Pam seconded. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 10:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick  
Recording Secretary