

Exeter Historic District Commission  
February 16, 2017  
Final Minutes

Call meeting to Order: Patrick Gordon, Chairman, called meeting to order at 7:08 pm in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Office Building.

Members present: Julie Gilman, Selectwoman, Pam Gjettum, Vice Chair, Curtis Boivin, Patrick Gordon, Chairman

New Business: Public Hearing: Continued discussion on the application of Julie Williams (for the American Independence Museum) for a change to the existing appearance of landscape design on the property at One Governor's Lane and 164 Water Street. Proposed improvements include a continued pathway along Governor's Lane, replacement of drainage around the foundation of the Ladd-Gilman House and creation of a safe pathway into the Ladd-Gilman House for visitors. Julie Williams was not present and no other member of the museum was either so Patrick then asked for a motion to continue this at the next meeting. Pam made the motion and Julie seconded. All were in favor and the application was tabled until the next meeting.

The application of Kristin Poulin for a proposed change in appearance to the window configuration in a portion of the existing structure located at 42 Water Street. Kristin stated that she owns two businesses in town and would like to purchase 42 Water Street and move one of the businesses to this location. The business is retail. Kristin then stated that the current windows in that building are terrible for their retail space because you cannot see into the space and for retail you really need great windows to have window displays, etc. This is your advertising. Patrick asked the commission if they had any questions and there were none. Curtis asked Kristin if she was purchasing this as a condo portion of the building and she stated that she was. She stated that she would like to put manikins in the window. She stated that it would have to be a custom window and she would use the appropriate materials. Patrick stated that as a change of appearance, the larger windows do exactly address the purpose of why you want them there for the display purposes. Patrick then stated that this would take away from the style of the building. Julie stated that it is good that they keep with the same style of the other windows. The only difference is the height of them.

Julie stated that the commission should decide if the application is complete before they get into a discussion. Julie made a motion to accept the application as complete. Curtis seconded. All were in favor and application accepted. Patrick then asked the commission if there were any questions. Julie stated that she would just like to make the observation that this building has been compromised along its life. The setup of the windows is what it has been, not necessarily what it was. Julie sees this as a benefit for the building. It is going to be a big change having the sill so low, but she does not have an issue with it. Julie then stated as a commercial street, it is actually more appropriate than what is there now. Julie also stated that she thinks the materials are good. Patrick stated that he thinks the building was originally set up to have privacy from the street with the sills being so high. Julie then stated that it was a restaurant for a long time.

An owner of the building spoke stating that she has not seen any pictures. She just did not know how you could change the windows in part of the building and not the whole building. Julie asked if the building was a condo association and it is. Julie asked if the association had discussed this and the owner stated that they had not been approached on it. Curtis stated that the condo association should talk about this if it is a concern to them. The owner then stated that she always thought that the owner had rights from the inside wall and the outside belonged to the condo association. Julie then stated that

it depends on the drawings and what the agreement is and she also stated that the condo association should be aware of this. The owner then stated that if she was changing the inside of the windows, that would be the tenant or the owner.

Patrick stated that since she was listed on the abutters and she has a concern, he would recommend that the condo association get together and discuss it. He then stated that in terms of the application the commission has in front of them, what the commission is charged with is the proposed change and appearance and if it is appropriate to the historic district, as well as being appropriate to the building. Patrick stated to her that the commission is not a legal entity in terms of should the building be touched or not and who has the right to do that or not. The commission is for historical appropriateness. The ruling the commission would make would either allow this to proceed or not for that building. Julie then stated that what would happen is when the commission makes its decision, the applicant would have to bring it back if there were any changes from what was on the application. Patrick then asked the condo owner that was present if she had anything to say for or against the application. She stated that she has not seen anything on it and she only received the certified letter. She then stated that she owns units A and C.

Patrick then stated the commission has enough information to call for a motion. Pam made a motion to approve. Julie seconded. All were in favor and the application approved.

Next on the agenda is the application of Janelle Gambino (d/b/a Ardath & Leroy) for new signage on the structure located at 39 High Street. Janelle stated that she would like to replace a sign at a location where she will be opening a business. She passed out a sample of what the sign would be made of. She stated the border will be reclaimed wood. Janelle stated that the sign would be one piece and the letters will be carved to be raised up. She stated that she would like to flat mount it onto the wall. Julie then stated if the commission had no further questions on the presentation of the project, she would make a motion to accept it. Curtis seconded. All were in favor and application accepted. Patrick then asked the commission if they had any questions or comments. Julie stated that her comment was the position of the sign. She asked her to consider raising the sign up so it is even with the windows. Curtis asked if the sign would be lit and Janelle stated that it would not be. Patrick then asked if there were any additional comments or questions. Curtis asked what the width of trim would be. She was not sure and asked if it had to be a certain size. Janelle asked Curtis if he was saying to make the frame slightly wider and he said he thinks so. Janelle then asked the commission a question. She wanted to know if she was to put a building number on the right side of the window, does the commission have to approve that too. Curtis stated that he did not think it was. He asked if Exeter had a requirement for there to be a house number. Janelle stated that right now it is above the front door, but it is painted the same color and you can't really see it. Patrick stated that what she has proposed is appropriate and Julie stated it is to be centered. Curtis then made a motion to approve with the higher mid rail matching the mid rail of the window. Julie seconded. Patrick then asked if there were any additional comments about the frame. Curtis stated that changing the frame is a minor change and the commission would not have to revisit that. If the frame has a minor change to it, it is not a problem. Curtis then stated that he would recommend that it have a wider frame on it. No need to revisit it. Curtis then made a motion to accept the sign with a wider frame and perhaps a shadow line to it. The sign located with the mid rail, mid window. Pam seconded. All were in favor and the application approved.

Patrick then stated moving to the next application for the commission is the application of Soaring Hawk, LLC for new signage on the structure located at 1-9 Water Street. Steve Keenan spoke stating that he is representing Soaring Hawk, LLC and as you know, he has been there before for renovations. He stated that he has been looking for the right tenant and has found the perfect match, Sea Dog Brewery Company. He stated he was there for signage and addition on the rear deck. He stated that

these are the two changes that are before the commission tonight and he asked a representative from Sea Dog to come up and introduce themselves. Robert Cokeran stated he was from the Sea Dog Brewery in Portland, Maine. He stated they were happy to have this opportunity in Exeter. His rule is to make sure the branding is consistent at all of their properties. They have seven locations right now. There are two in Florida, three in Maine, one in North Conway and Exeter would be the seventh location. He stated they are trying to make sure their look is consistent as they start to grow. He showed the commission a slight variation to the signage they had. It shows four locations on the building where they would like to have signage and his understanding is that they have forty square feet that is allowed. They have tried to stay within that limitation and use two signs that are on the street side and a hanging sign over the front door, which would be the entrance sign and then one sign on the river side of the building. This will be the most visible sign for traffic coming down the street. The revision he is showing the commission is just that the material of the signs is different than what they had drawn before. The materials of the signs is meant to be wooden. He stated they are working with Summit

Signs in Exeter to try and get the best signage. They have some experience with doing wooden signs on some of the streets here in Exeter. Robert stated that his understanding is that they will be using cedar and some sort of framed element to go around the outside of the sign. Patrick asked if the background of the sign would be a natural stain and Robert stated it would be and also painted. Curtis asked if the red color was a stain. Robert is not sure. He has not seen any samples yet. Robert stated that if the wood presents too light, then they would not want to use a white lettering because you would not be able to see it. He stated that the print out the commission was looking at shows the wood as a red cedar and he thinks this should be fairly dark. Patrick stated that he is curious about the finishing of the sign. Robert stated that it would definitely have to have as much protection on it as possible, given it is the wood. He stated that it would have some sort of poly on it. Patrick then asked if the letters themselves would be carved, recessed and painted white. Robert stated they would be. Patrick then asked if they would be painted black. Robert does not know the answer to that detail. He stated that on the darker wood, they would not have to trim the letters out in white. Patrick then stated that the first images Robert showed the commission, seemed to work with the colors of the building. Julie then stated that she would like to make a motion to accept the application before going on with questions. Patrick asked the commission if they were looking at one of the images, or both for the application. Robert stated that their preference would be using wood. Julie then stated that the question is what was originally submitted on the application for the signage. Patrick asked if this new signage kind of thinking of modernizing it. Robert stated that it is more contemporary and it is a bit of an upgrade in the branding. The question is the actual end design of the sign. A square edge vs the detail of the scalloped edge. Curtis then asked if one is more historically appropriate than the other. Patrick stated that he tends to think so. He stated the one with the scrolled ends speaks more to the age of the building and it looks more appropriate with the building. Curtis then stated that the question now is do we accept the application to accept both the black and red, or are we only accepting one to review. Julie stated she thinks they should accept what was submitted on the original application because that is what the commission is going to accept. Patrick then stated that given the original application, he feels they have enough information to accept. Pam made motion to accept. Julie seconded. All were in favor and application accepted. Julie stated that now they go on to the second proposal. Patrick again stated that he thinks the design of the ends of the sign with scallops are more historically appropriate. He asked if they would be inclined to do a combination of both. Robert stated that as far as the detail goes, they have used the signage with the little details on the end of it at another location and it works just fine. He stated that if that is the direction they need to go it, they can certainly do that. Curtis stated that what he likes about the black on white is that there is a real contrast to it and this is something you see on historic signs. He is not sure about the red colored signs. He is not sure if the white is going to have

enough contrast and look appropriate. Robert stated this is a concern for him as well. Pam stated they have used the black before and have been happy with it and Robert said that was correct. Robert stated that the way the building is shaped, it has three faces on the front. The hanging sign above the door allows them great visibility from the street as well. As you scoot around the building, the spaces could stand to be a little bit taller in height with the lettering, but there is not much room. Patrick asked how the lights were going to be mounted to the building. They will have to cut the azac into it, flat pine. They would use the composet and paint it like the rest of the trim. They would then mount them because they are individual. Julie asked if they could take about location. She stated that the hanging sign was going to be the main entrance. Robert stated it would be. Julie stated that the sign closet to down town is it not centered. Robert showed them on the diagram that it will be centered. Patrick asked if Robert knew what the height of the hanging sign would be off the ground. He does not have that dimension. Julie stated they were asking this for safety reasons. Patrick then stated, going back to the proportions of the signs on the Water Street side, is the commission in agreement or want to discuss the potential of allowing them to make the signage larger. Patrick stated that the sizing of the 18" sign, looks nice. Robert stated that when he first did the drawings for the signs, it was 14". Patrick asked the commission if there was any further discussion about materials for the sign, or the style of the sign. Curtis stated to go back to the frame and they introduced another color and it does not have much contrast. Three color side, white, red, black vs a simpler two color side. Patrick stated that without the frame, the light is not casting a shadow over the lettering. Patrick stated that the original application with the two colors is more appropriate. Julie stated that the information on the original application is that the signs have black and gold lettering. Robert stated that he was not stuck on the gold. Patrick stated that the white and black seems more appropriate than the gold. It is a better contrast. Curtis stated that what concerns him more is the frame on the red colored signs is more perfect with the 1940s. This style does not seem like it is in the family with the rest of the building. Robert stated that the commission did raise a good point about the gold. As they do the sign design, it makes him think of two things. One is their branding does not have gold in it. They have yellow, black and white. Doing it in black and white would suit the branding better. The other problem they had when they used gold in the past is that if they use a fabricated gold and not gold leaf, then in some instances it is really driven by how the light works on the building, it gets washed out. Gold leaf is really what makes it work. However, the expense for that is far more than what they have budgeted. Patrick thinks the black and white sign is a great look. You still get the great hand crafted value out of it and it is a solid wood sign with the scalloping on the ends. Robert stated that the gold question for him is how to treat the ends. Robert stated there are plenty of paint treatments that can be used within the lettering that are gold treated. They just would not be gold leaf. Pam stated they would be very happy with white and black. Curtis asked if the commission wanted to say something about the size and how to raise that to 14". How is that presented as an acceptable thing if this was 14" tall and that same proportion carried in the width. Do we scale the whole thing. Patrick stated that they would have to. Looking at the proportion on the river side, it looks very appropriate to the elevation of that building. Curtis stated that 12" would become 14". Patrick stated it exceeds 40, but not 80. Julie asked what the determinations would be and Curtis stated that 14' by 14" is acceptable. A hanging sign of 30" by 18" is acceptable and that the presented as is for side sign is 8' by 18". Curtis stated all of these he would move to accept and accept as a high contrast and up the client as to whether he wants to do a white on black or a gold on black. This was Curtis's motion. Pam seconded. All were in favor and application approved. Julie made a motion that on the Water Street side, she would approve the sign location 9 Water Street be centered. She also wants to relocate the second sign above the triple windows. Curtis seconded Julie's motion. All were in favor and motion approved.

Patrick stated as a recap on the second motion, center the sign on the 9 Water Street side and also the other sign be centered above the three store front windows on that spot. The first motion is to allow an

increase above and beyond the square feet of the signage to allow the signs 14" tall by 14' long because it would be more appropriate for that location. Also to allow the choice of either black with white lettering, or black with gold lettering and also the commissions approving of the scalloping design on the solid wood sign.

Part 2 is the application of Soaring Hawk, LLC for the proposed construction of an additional deck to the rear of the existing structure located at 1-9 Water Street. Steve stated that it is the identical deck that is there today. It will be the same materials. He stated that he did not anticipate having a restaurant there in the beginning. The commission looked over the paperwork that was included with this application. Pam made the motion to accept the application. Julie seconded. All were in favor and the application accepted. Julie stated that the materials would be the same and she does not have a problem with it. Patrick asked Steve if the railing was steel and it is. Julie stated that with the first deck, the commission felt it was appropriate for the water side. Patrick stated that it is somewhat hidden from public view. Julie stated that she has no concerns. Curtis asked if there should be a post right above where the column comes up. Would this be more appropriate vs a long metal railing and the white post that came up on the upper level. He was shown that the posts are behind it and it is all black railing. Patrick asked if there were any more questions or comments and there were not. He then asked for a motion to approve. Pam made the motion to approve. Julie seconded. All were in favor and the application approved.

Other Business: Approval of Minutes: December 15, 2016 and January 19, 2017. The December 15<sup>th</sup> minutes were tabled as there were not enough members present to approve. The January 19<sup>th</sup> minutes Curtis made a correction and also Pam. Curtis made a motion to approve the January 19<sup>th</sup> minutes as amended. Pam seconded. All were in favor and minutes approved.

With no further business, Julie made motion to adjourn. Curtis seconded. All were in favor and meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Herrick  
Recording Secretary