

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HERITAGE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, January 11, 2017 4:00 PM Trustee's Room, Library

Members Present:

Louise Zerba
Katherine Snow (Late)
Jonathan Foskett, Alternate
Robert O'Connor, Councilor
Susan D'Egidio, Vice-Chair

Staff Present:

Tara Kessler, Planner

Members Not Present:

Kevin Dremel
Rose Carey, Chair
Marilyn Gemmell

1) Call to Order/Roll Call -

Chair Zerba called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. Roll call was conducted.

2) Approval of Minutes – November 9, 2016

Mr. Foskett made a motion to adopt the minutes of November 9, 2016 as submitted. Councilor O'Connor seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

3) Election of Chair and Vice Chair -

Chair Zerba nominated Rose Carey to serve as Commission Chair for 2017. Ms. D'Egidio seconded the nomination, which carried unanimously.

Chair Zerba nominated Susan D'Egidio to serve as Commission Vice-Chair for 2017. Councilor O'Connor seconded the nomination, which carried unanimously.

Ms. Kessler reported Ms. Carey was willing to accept the Chair position. Ms. D'Egidio also noted she was willing to accept the Vice-Chair position. Ms. Kessler also advised the City Attorney is offering training for new Chairs and Vice-Chairs. Ms. D'Egidio noted her interest in attending the training.

4) 2017 Meeting Calendar -

Chair Zerba noted the Commission would continue to meet every other month unless otherwise needed.

Councilor O'Connor motioned to adopt the 2017 Meeting Schedule as presented. Mr. Foskett seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

5) Certified Local Government Grant Application –

Ms. Kessler reported she submitted the Letter of Intent on behalf of the Commission. She noted the NHDHR reviewed all the Letters of Intent and they have offered modifications to the grant request. NHDHR has noted that survey work that is not targeted to a specific geographic area or to a category of historic buildings or sites, such as agricultural properties, would not be eligible for funding. Ms. Kessler reported NHDHR also felt the proposal for the survey was too much of an undertaking for the two-year timeframe. Continuing, she noted they did give encouragement to move forward with the proposed workshops and outreach. Ms. Kessler recommended moving forward on the workshops and outreach and dropping the survey work. Commission members agreed to move forward with the workshops and outreach.

Ms. Kessler addressed the questions that are included in the grant application and noted that she was hoping to discuss potential answers to these questions with Commission members. These questions were emailed to Commission members in advance of the meeting. Ms. Kessler also distributed a copy of Ms. Carey's responses to the questions to be included in the discussion. Ms. Carey's responses included four workshop choices.

She noted that the application deadline is on or before 4:30 PM, Friday, January 20, 2017. She reminded the group that they discussed holding two to three public workshops facilitated by a subject matter expert. These workshops would cover topics such as learning how to research the history of your property, how to complete the National Register nomination form, local and state preservation resources, etc.

Some of the questions for the Commission to consider that are part of the grant application are listed below.

1. Specifically, what workshop topics do you think would be of interest and of use to the community?

After discussion Commission members agreed on the following workshop topics: teaching people how to research their homes, historic restoration resources, how to get on the National Register, and the architectural history of Keene. Commission members also agreed it would be a good idea to start with a broad topic, such as the history of architecture in Keene, and then narrow down to more action-oriented topics.

At a later date, Commission members will discuss whether Ms. Carey's Workshop Choice #2 should be the first workshop. Ms. D'Egidio also suggested that Workshop Choice #2 and #3 could be combined. Ms. Snow suggested producing maps instead of the walking tours. Councilor O'Connor suggested the Historical Society may already have some of these maps. Ms. Zerba also recommended concentrating on only residential properties the first year.

2. How many workshops should be held?

Commission members agreed upon two workshops; one in September/October 2017 and another in April/May 2018. Continuing the topic discussion, Commission members suggested Ms. Carey's Workshop Choice #1 could be the first workshop. Ms. Kessler agreed to work on language for the history, architecture, preservation, which could be the second workshop. No definitive decision was made.

Discussion ensued with regards to the workshop duration. Chair Zerba suggested a week night from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM with two topics each workshop. Ms. Snow suggested Workshop Choice #2 as the first workshop as it could possibly generate more interest.

Ms. Kessler clarified the consensus she has to this point is starting with the history and development patterns in Keene/history of architectural patterns in Keene, then learning how to research your property (maybe two separate workshops fall and spring). The timeframe would be two to four hours on a week night. A question for the first workshop is would a walking tour be a way to engage more people. Ms. Kessler and the Commission members agreed these are details that can be worked out further down the road if the grant is obtained. Commission members agreed walking tours would not take place on lower Main Street.

3. Where will these workshops be held?

The following locations were suggested; Heberton Hall, the Library, the Historical Society, KSC Alumni Center, the Michael E.J. Blastos Room, and the Parks & Recreation Department. Addressing the costs, Ms. Kessler noted the Commission could look into partnerships. Chair Zerba noted her choice would be the Historical Society if available; no objections were presented.

4. How will the public be informed about the purpose of this project and the value of historic preservation?

Suggestions included utilizing the local media, sending out postcards, inviting Heritage Commissions/Historic District Commissions statewide and utilizing their resources, and creating a flyer for direct mailing. Chair Zerba suggested targeting all the homes over 100 years of age. Ms. Kessler asked if this could be an opportunity to fund the mailer discussed at previous meetings to homeowners of homes 100 years old. Commission members were in favor of this idea.

Councilor O'Connor had to leave the meeting at 4:32 PM; a quorum was still present.

5. Describe the impact that this project will have on historic resources. Will it be significant and long lasting?

Commission members agreed with Chair Zerba; the project would have a major impact if the Commission can get people to attend.

6. Describe the project schedule assuming starting date of March 2017 and completion date of August 1, 2018.

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

7. Who will participate in the project and what will they do? Relate the personnel listed in the budget (CLG staff and commissioners, consultants, volunteers) to their role in completing the project.

Commission members were in agreement that Consultants should be utilized. Chair Zerba mentioned Nadine Miller and Liz Hengen Durfee. Ms. Kessler offered Planning Department staff and volunteers.

Ms. Kessler noted she would need to draft a budget; she already has the costs for the mailing. Chair Zerba noted the Commission would have to discuss continuing on a smaller scale if the funding is not approved. She noted Alan Rumrill and Jeananne Farrar as possible resources. In response to Ms. Snow, Chair Zerba noted the Commission did receive information on Neighborhood Heritage Districts; she recommended the information be included in the next meeting packet for discussion. Ms. Kessler reported the Commission should know by the next

meeting if the grant has been approved. Ms. Kessler will also confirm the number of grant rounds annually.

6) Action Plan & Commission Goals -

Chair Zerba noted this document was provided to the Commission in November 2016. Ms. Kessler commented this has been a standing agenda item. Ms. Kessler reported out on the progress made under Education & Encouragement during 2016. Ms. Kessler also reported she did make changes to the Commission's webpage noting limitations due to the City's web design. Ms. Kessler will pursue information regarding the creation of the Commission's own website; she has not yet researched the Commission having its own Facebook page. Ms. Kessler also noted those action items that would be covered if the grant is obtained. Ms. Kessler reported she had scanned the area wide electronic form and would forward it to Commission members.

After discussion Commission members agreed they should consider applying again for the LCHIP and Moose Plate grants to continue work on the Stone Arch Bridge. They also agreed work on the Court Street Bridge should not be started until work on the Stone Arch Bridge is completed.

Commission members also agreed to continue with the Demolition Sub-Committee's role. After discussion it was agreed the action plan would be kept as a running list. Ms. Kessler agreed to add a progress column.

7. Subcommittee Reports – No additional comments at this time.

- a. Demolition Review Committee –
- b. Community Outreach Committee –
- c. Research Committee –

8) Staff Updates – None at this time.

9) New or Other Business –

1. Ms. Snow asked if the Commission had the ability to look into protecting open land. Ms. Kessler reviewed the Commission's Charge and noted the Commission has 12 Powers and Duties. Chair Zerba clarified Ms. Snow was talking about the property on West Surry Road where a Zoning change is being requested. Ms. Kessler noted this issue was not on the agenda and recommended this issue be added to the next March meeting agenda.

10) Next Meeting- March 8, 2017

11) Adjourn – There being no further Commission business Chair Zerba adjourned the meeting at 4:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Mary Lou Sheats-Hall, Minute-taker
January 12, 2017

Reviewed and edited by Tara Kessler, Planner