

HERITAGE COMMISSION

Draft Minutes

August 4, 2011

The Heritage Commission held its regular monthly meeting in the City Council Chambers at 37 Green Street, Concord, New Hampshire, on Thursday, August 4, 2011, at 4:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order and Seating of Alternates:

Chairperson Donovan called the meeting to order at 4:38 p.m.

Present at the meeting were Chairperson Donovan, Vice Chair Frederick Richards, and members James McConaha, Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, and Dr. Bryant Tolles. Absent from the meeting were Steve Shurtleff, Carol Durgy Brooks, Robert V. Johnson, II, and Marilyn Fraser. Matt Walsh, Assistant for Special Projects and Administrative Specialist Donna Muir were also present.

Chairperson Donovan elevated the alternate members to full member status for the meeting.

2. Minutes of the July 7, 2011 meeting:

The Commission considered the minutes of the July 7, 2011, Heritage Commission meeting. A motion was made by Dr. Tolles to accept the minutes as presented and seconded by Vice Chair Richards. Chairperson Donovan asked if there was any discussion regarding the minutes. The motion to accept the minutes of the July 7, 2011, meeting passed unanimously.

New Business:

a. *Consideration of a request from Matthew Walsh, Assistant for Special Projects, for advice on the disposition of 31 East Street in Penacook.*

Mr. Walsh reported that the City is currently negotiating a purchase and sales agreement with DEW Construction regarding the development of the remainder of the former Allied Leather Tannery Complex located at #27-35 East Street, Penacook. The property is 3.64 +/- acres in size. Mr. Walsh reported that preliminarily, DEW plans to redevelop the site into a mixed use project featuring residential and commercial uses.

Mr. Walsh stated that the purpose of his appearance was to seek the Commission's input relative to a 2,600 SF brick structure (known as the "brick office building") located at the property which dates to circa 1900. At this juncture, the developer's intentions for this structure are unknown. Mr. Walsh explained that this structure, together with a 4,100 square foot warehouse built in 1983, are the only buildings associated with the former Tannery left at the site.

Mr. Walsh reported that he wanted to obtain input from the Heritage Commission prior to moving forward with the negotiations with DEW about the future of the "brick office building".

Mr. Walsh provided a brief history of the Tannery site and the “brick office building”. He noted that the City has completed partial asbestos abatement on the property and as part of that effort all windows were removed as they contained asbestos glazing. He noted that the interior of the building is in fair to poor condition as the previous owner was attempting a “gut renovation” at the time the City acquired the property. Vice Chair Richards asked whether the roof was sound and if water leaking was an issue. Mr. Walsh responded that it appeared to be in fair condition as there is no visible evidence of leaks in the building. Mr. Walsh noted that roof deck was constructed of heavy wood planking which is typical of the period.

Mr. Walsh reported that there is a clapboard addition to the building which dates to circa 1970. The addition sits on a slab foundation and has not been renovated since it was erected. Mr. McConaha asked if the building was structurally sound. Mr. Walsh responded that a formal structural survey of the property has not been completed, but appears to be in reasonable condition. With that in mind, Mr. Walsh further reported that the brick portion of the building has a unique foundation as it sits on an I-beam frame. This was done as the building was originally erected over a canal. The canal has since been filled. Mr. Walsh stated that it was his impression was the building was structurally sound, but cautioned that a structural engineer should review the building’s foundation before a final determination is made. Mr. McConaha asked if it would be possible to move the building to a new location on the property or another parcel elsewhere in the City. Mr. Walsh responded that, at this juncture, it appeared that such an option would not be out of the question.

Vice Chair Richards stated that the building is a classic turn of the century utility building similar to many others found in New England. He believes that this building could serve as a cue to guide the architecture of new development on the site, and the building could be used as professional offices, retail, a coffee shop, restaurant, or community building to serve the larger development.

Dr. Tolles asked if the brick cornices around the windows on the top floor was repeated on the bottom windows. Mr. Walsh wasn’t sure as the window openings had been boarded up several years ago. Dr. Tolles stated that if all the windows had the brick cornices, it would add greatly to the aesthetics of the building and would be a plus for saving the building.

Mr. McConaha asked whether a preservation easement could be attached to the building. Mr. Walsh stated that the City could negotiate such a reservation with developer with this, but questioned who would be responsible for maintaining the property. Mr. McConaha suggested that the easement could be structured so as the developer would be responsible for maintenance of the building and that the City, as the easement holder, would be responsible for monitoring the easement to ensure that future repair / renovation of the structure complied with the terms of the easement.

Mr. Walsh also reported about the impending final environmental cleanup of the property, as well as long-term plans to develop a river walk at the tannery site and surrounding properties as part of DEW’s redevelopment.

Chairperson Donovan stated that the Heritage Commission had been in favor of keeping the tannery, and this building is all that remains. He believes it is important to keep the building as it could help tell the story of the tannery.

Mr. Walsh thanked the Commission for their input and stated that the City Administration would endeavor to compel the developer to preserve and reutilize this building as part of its development plan for the property.

[Mr. Walsh left the meeting at 5:00 p.m.]

- b. *Consideration of the NHDHR requirement for archaeological monitoring for the Proposed Parking Lot Construction at NHTI, Concord, NH*

Chairperson Donovan stated that the NHDHR provided the notification to the Heritage Commission for their information. Further information will be provided to the Commission if archeological resources are either discovered or affected as a result of the proposed parking lot construction.

- c. *Consideration of the City Council hearing on August 8, 2011, relative to the appropriation of funds from the Certified Local Government Grant, which has been approved by NHDHR.*

Chairperson Donovan stated that the City Council, on August 8, 2011, would whether to appropriate funds from the Certified Local Government Grant, previously approved by NHDHR. He stated that it was important to have a representative from the Heritage Commission present at the Council meeting, in the event the City Council had questions. None of the members in attendance at the meeting were able to attend the City Council meeting, and Chairperson Donovan stated that he would contact Mr. Shurtleff, Council's representative to the Heritage Commission to speak regarding the appropriation.

- d. *Demolition Review Committee Update.*

Vice Chair Richards stated that the Demolition Review Committee received a demolition review application for 89 Hoit Road, which is owned by Charles & Diane Souther. The 8.24 acre property abuts the Apple Hill Farm property, also owned by the Southers. The owners are interested in combining the two parcels of land. A late 18th century hand-huned Cape and old barn, which has had renovations done to the roof line, set on the smaller property. The owners are looking to reduce their tax burden and are talking with the City's Director of Real Estate Assessment regarding a preservation easement. While the waiting period for demolition review has passed, the Southers continue to discuss options with the Demolition Review Committee.

- e. *Angwin – Delta Dental Rezoning Request.*

Chairperson Donovan stated that the Planning Board set a public hearing for a Master Plan Amendment affecting the Angwin property at 107 Commercial Street for September 21, 2011. The Planning Board is looking for input from the Heritage Commission, as the applicant is requesting the zoning change to allow for the removal of the last single family

residence along Commercial Street. The change would also allow for the construction of an office building with accessory parking.

Chairperson Donovan suggested that the Heritage Commission members review the report provided prior to the September 1st Heritage Commission meeting. At that meeting, the Heritage Commission will prepare its comments to present to the Planning Board at their September 21, 2011, public hearing.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, a motion was made by Mr. McConaha and seconded by Vice Chair Richards to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST:

Donna Muir
Administrative Specialist