

HERITAGE COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
June 2, 2022

The Heritage Commission held its regular monthly meeting at Council Chambers, 37 Green Street, Concord, New Hampshire, on Thursday, June 2, 2022.

Attendees: Chair Richard Jaques, Councilor Jennifer Kretovic, Members Carol Durgy Brooks, Dr. Bryant Tolles Jr., Alternate Mike Dunn, and Alternate Althea Barton.

Absent: Vice-Chair Jim Spain

Staff: Lisa Fellows-Weaver, Administrative Specialist

1. Call to Order and Seating of Alternates

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jaques at 4:30 p.m.

Councilor Kretovic made a motion to seat Alternate Members Dunn and Barton to the Commission for this meeting. Ms. Brooks, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Dunn made a motion to approve the minutes of May 5, 2022. Ms. Barton seconded the motion. The motion passed; Councilor Kretovic and Ms. Brooks abstained as they were not at the May meeting.

3. New Business

• ***Heritage Trust – Letter to Council***

Ms. Barton gave an overview of the letter she had drafted and provided to the Commission in May. She noted the Town of Springfield, MA and their program to Build Back Springfield and their use of ARPA funds; the City of Concord ARPA funds have been expended for this year. She mentioned creating incentives for property owners to make home improvements and the potential for the Commission to create a Heritage Trust Fund with funding and revenue sources for this purpose.

Ms. Barton also mentioned the discussions held by the Commission relative to the ‘Magnificent 10’ concept, including a preservation award or façade improvement program similar to that of Main Street done years ago. She suggested the Commission look at the pros and cons of each of these things noting that some would be easier than others, and there will be staff time and other resources needed.

Mr. Jaques stated that there have been many great ideas suggested over the past few months. He suggested that the Commission use the letter to format what the Heritage Commission would like to focus on.

A discussion was held regarding setting up a work session to prioritize the ideas and set goals, then create an initial letter to send to City Council. Ms. Brooks stated that since the City is asking the Commission to be proactive, it would be important to rephrase the charge of the Heritage Commission as well as the State statutes, and emphasize where these projects come in.

Mr. Dunn asked if there would be any limitations specific to residential, businesses, or commercial. Mr. Jaques replied that he does not see that there would be any limitations; however, would lean more towards buildings and houses, barns, carriage sheds; something that is historic. He added that an applicant is already aware that the Heritage Commission can only delay the demolition, which they typically have already factored in with their application.

Ms. Barton suggested the Commission explore things that are more immediate. Mr. Jaques replied that the property owner of 185 South Main Street previously met with the Commission

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looking for options. One suggestion was to move the building; how does the Commission take that idea and move forward as there are always costs involved and what is the tax impact? He stated that this building has been rehabbed and is currently being used; however, how long will that last.

Ms. Barton stated that a process would need to be established, especially with funding. She stated that with the 185 South Main Street scenario, the first issue to address would be to have funding available for the relocation. She asked if funds could be provided by private investors? She stated it would also be important to reference why the buildings are there and what their importance and significance is as well; publicity is a good tool as well.

Councilor Kretovic made a motion, second by Ms. Brooks, to schedule a public meeting for the purpose of promoting what the Commission is going to be doing towards saving City historic buildings and how to make it happen; invite the public and contact the Concord Monitor. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Jaques will send out a poll for potential work session dates for further discussions, and to narrow down the options and set some goals. He will also send out a poll for dates for a future promotional meeting.

- ***Magnificent Ten***

A general discussion was held regarding what properties should be included on the “Magnificent 10” list. Members suggested the following:

- Gas Holder Building
- 49 Summer Street (Penacook)
- 185 South Main Street
- Stickney Ave (State of NH sheds; 50 year protection of historic buildings)
- Phonix Hall and neighboring buildings
- Merrimack Street and streetscape
- Sanders Block
- Summer Street School
- Jobin Family barn

It was also suggested that the Commission look into establishing additional historic districts to include Penacook Village, Merrimack Street, Concord Historic District, and the downtown historic district. These additional items will be discussed at the upcoming work session.

Ms. Barton suggested that members look at other town/city heritage commissions to see what their communities are working on.

Councilor Kretovic described “Landmark Society”, which is when top areas are designated as a perpetual designation. Current owners are asked to become a part of the society and even with a sale, the society would still maintain the landmark/building.

4. Demolition Review Committee – Jim Spain

In Mr. Spain’s absence, Dr. Tolles stated that there was no new activity for the Committee during the month of May.

5. Heritage Sign Program – Carol Brooks

Ms. Brooks stated that no new applications have been submitted and there was some further contact from a prior inquiry.

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It was noted that the sign program was publicized in the City Manager's Newsletter during the month of May, which is Historic Preservation month.

6. Planning Board Update – Heather Shank

Ms. Weaver stated that there have not been any projects before the Planning Board with historic resources.

7. Council Update – Councilor Kretovic

Councilor Kretovic stated that Council is in the budget season.

8. Old Business

• **Gas Holder Building**

Ms. Barton provided an update on the Gas Holder building. She stated the work continues on the structural steel work. This phase includes constructing the heavy duty structural support for the roof and the temporary closing of the windows and sealing up for the winter months. This phase should be completed by July. There is still work to be done to the building including straitening the roof and building, and repair the existing brick work; this is all part of the stabilization and the building cannot be stabilized until the roof is completed.

• **Website – Councilor Kretovic & Mike Dunn**

Councilor Kretovic reviewed the statistics for the website and stated that the work continues.

• **Monuments & Granite Markers – Jim Spain**

Mr. Dunn stated that there was nothing new to report.

9. Any other business to come before the Commission

a. Correspondence – 310 Pleasant Street

Mr. Jaques referenced the emails that were forwarded by staff relative to 310 Pleasant Street, they were sent only as an FYI; there is no application before the Heritage Commission or Planning Board at this time. The Commission is now aware of the concerns.

Councilor Kretovic stated that the project may or may not come to fruition. Additional discussion was held regarding the role of the Commission. Ms. Barton asked if the Commission looks at projects/applications from the Commission's point of view or developer, and/or, how does the Commission understand their responsibilities to take recommendations and have necessary conversations with keeping the heritage in mind foremost, or do we also feel responsible to consider the developers interest or other things that may be opposite of the Commission's function.

Councilor Kretovic left the meeting at 5:24 p.m.

Ms. Brooks referred to the ordinances specific to this Commission and stated that if any of the items could be considered, then the issue cannot be excluded; any of the things that come up are under the Commission's umbrella.

Mr. Jaques stated that when talking about a property, buildings and/or historic values, this Commission always stresses over what the Commission's limitations are and there are always struggles with the homeowners/applicants with being able to have the opportunity to save the structures via grants, other means of funding, etc.

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Mr. Jaques stated that he would email members a copy of the City Ordinances and the State statutes relative to the Heritage Commission.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Ms. Brooks made a motion to adjourn at 5:54 p.m. Mr. Tolles seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Administrative Specialist