

HERITAGE COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
July 11, 2024

The Heritage Commission held its regular monthly meeting in Council Chambers at 37 Green St, on Thursday, July 11, 2024.

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

Absent: Vice-Chair Jim Spain

Guests: David Gill (City of Concord Parks and Recreation)
Chris Miller (25 Portsmouth St)
Wendy Follansbee (72 Merrimack St, Penacook)

Staff: Matt Walsh (Deputy City Manager – Community Development)
Krista Tremblay, Administrative Specialist II

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jaques at 4:31 p.m.

2. Minutes – Approve June 6, 2024 meeting minutes

Ms. Durgy Brooks moved, seconded by Mr. Dunn, to accept the June 6, 2024, minutes with a correction to agenda item 2 to remove the letter “c” from Jaques and agenda item 4a regarding the correct person who informed the group about contacting Concord Historical Society. All in favor. Motion passed.

3. New Business

- a. Update on Eastman Clock Tower restoration project – David Gill, Parks & Recreation Director
Mr. Gill from City of Concord Parks and Recreation and Chris Miller are present to discuss this agenda item.

Mr. Miller stated he has lived in the neighborhood for 35 years and the Eastman clock has never functioned, noting that this is a community project that should be achievable. The clock expert who completed the clock on Main Street was asked to review the Eastman clock and provide an estimate to fix it.

Councilor Kretovic arrived at 4:36 p.m.

Mr. Gill stated the City of Concord Parks and Recreation cut the grass at the Eastman Clock Tower, but have not done anything to address the history of the monument. They applied for an \$18,000 grant with City Council approval for the clock restoration. They will get four historical clock faces and run electric to the new clock. There is a monument preservation team that will clean the granite to make it look new. Mr. Gill stated the \$18,000 completes the base concept.

Mr. Miller stated the \$18,000 will get power to tower, fabricate the new clock faces, and provide a new electric digital clock mechanism that can adjust for daylight saving and is maintenance free.

Mr. Gill stated the purchase order is open and they will do the clock cleaning and power installation this calendar year. They do have other wish list items for the next phase.

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- b. Revising the website's paragraph of history under Concord's history
Councilor Kretovic made a recommendation to send this to the Penacook Historical Society and Concord Historical Society to come up with a collective message for the City and return it back to the Heritage Commission for review. Chair Jaques seconded. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Old/Continuing Business

- a. Property Recognition

Chair Jaques has an outline that he will share with the group at the next Heritage Commission meeting.

- b. Gas Holder Building

Ms. Barton stated there are no major updates on this agenda item.

- c. Website

Councilor Kretovic made an update on the landing page for the repository website. The Norris House had been featured. Councilor Kretovic asked Mr. Dunn to take pictures of the construction site for the gallery. Councilor Kretovic will contact the Concord Monitor to get links to the stories on the Norris House as well as what is coming to that location.

- d. Monuments and Granite Markers

Councilor Kretovic stated the Concord Historic Society received an inquiry for the 106 review and asked the question about what the view was from City Plaza along with the skyline for those towers. The response they received back is that they are replacing existing towers and there is no change.

- e. CSX Tower

No updates.

- f. Airport Terminal

Mr. Walsh stated the airport terminal continues to go through the environmental review process.

Ms. Barton asked if the plan is to demolish the old building?

Mr. Walsh stated yes.

Chair Jaques asked if there will be a demolition permit?

Mr. Walsh stated yes, the federal government will pay for the removal of the existing terminal and there will be a timing issue to make sure the funds are used accordingly. At this time the City does not feel there will be a use for the building. The building would require maintenance. The City tries not to hold onto structures that would incur cost if the City does not need them. There is a long-term plan for the airport and there would be a new hangar in the footprint of where the existing terminal building is located. The airport has little land left to develop for aviation uses.

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g. old Penacook library

Mr. Walsh stated the City of Concord has a partnership with the Boys & Girls Club to build a new Penacook Branch Library on Dolphin Street next to Rolfe Park. The building is under construction and nearly completed. Mr. Walsh anticipates the library opening in September 2024. When staff went to City Council in 2022 to discuss this project they also asked about divesting 3 Merrimack St, Penacook. When making plans to divest 3 Merrimack St, Penacook there is a process to ensure the property is taxable. There is another property down the street that would be sold with 3 Merrimack St, Penacook for parking. The approved resolution states that the City Manager shall require a deed restriction on the real estate located at 3 Merrimack St, Penacook to ensure the existing building on the property shall be preserved in perpetuity until such time as the building suffers a causality rendering it infeasible to repair or rebuild. They are not yet ready to hire a broker to list the property.

Ms. Barton noted the Heritage Commission could help provide the history of the property for the property listing.

Ms. Durgy Brooks suggested a deed restriction to protect the façade. Ms. Durgy Brooks asked if this property is listed on the national registry.

Mr. Walsh stated he did not believe so.

Ms. Durgy Brooks asked if it is an option to have the property listed on the national registry before being listed for sale.

Mr. Walsh stated City Council controls the City real estate and if the Heritage Commission wanted to have it listed on the national registry before it is put on the market they would need to go to City Council with that request.

Ms. Follansbee from the Penacook Public Library stated some of the needs of the building may create difficulty for a builder. They need to replace all the windows. There is an issue with the heating and cooling, as well as the entry ramp. Ms. Follansbee can see there being a need for guidance for new owner(s). Ms. Follansbee stated the first sale could be great. However, down the road where are the checks and balances to make sure the second and third owners don't do something different. Ms. Follansbee suggested the City not to wait long to sell. Ms. Follansbee would like to see the City sell to an owner that will maintain the historical integrity.

Mr. Walsh stated he does not know what a buyer would do to the property. They could do ground floor commercial and second floor residential.

Councilor Kretovic left at 5:59 p.m.

Chair Jaques asked Mr. Walsh about researching the items listed above.

Mr. Walsh will discuss with the City Manager.

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5. Demolition Review Committee – update, if any

There was nothing new to report to the Commission.

6. Heritage Sign Review Committee – update, if any

Ms. Durgy Brooks stated there were no new submissions. Ms. Durgy Brooks stated the City website needs to accurately depict and locate the Heritage Sign Program.

Chair Jaques will get with AnneMarie Skinner.

7. Planning Board

Mr. Walsh had nothing new to report to the Commission.

8. City Council

There was nothing new to report to the Commission.

9. Other Business

Ms. Barton asked about the proposed zoning ordinance change for the building heights in the downtown district.

Mr. Walsh referred the group to page six of the pending ordinance, noting that the proposed ordinance creates two conditional use permits – one for dome obstruction and a second to allow a maximum height increase to 90 feet (from the current 80-foot maximum) in the Central Performance District. Language also addresses demolition of existing structures.

Ms. Barton asked if the ordinance protects historical resources downtown?

Mr. Walsh stated it provides a reasonable path forward on addressing applications that contemplate demolition.

Ms. Barton asked about the Planning Board.

Mr. Walsh stated the Planning Board will be the decider of the process for the conditional use permit for the potential blockage of the dome or the building height above 80 feet.

Adjournment

Dr. Tolles, Jr. moved, seconded by Ms. Durgy Brooks, to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 p.m. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Tremblay

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Administrative Specialist II