

HERITAGE COMMISSION MINUTES

DRAFT

May 3, 2007

The Heritage Commission held its regular monthly meeting in the City Council Chambers at 37 Green Street, Concord NH on Thursday, May 3, 2007.

1. Call to Order:

Vice Chairperson Shurtleff called the meeting to order at 4:35 PM.

Present at the meeting were Vice Chairperson Steve Shurtleff, Robert Johnson, Carol Durgy Brooks, William McGonagle, Marilyn Fraser and James McConaha. City Planner Douglas Woodward and Administrative Specialist Denise Taschereau were also present.

Absent from the meeting were Chairperson Phil Donovan, Dr. Douglas Black, Frederick Richards, Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, and member-in-training Colin Curley.

2. Minutes of April 5, 2007:

The commission considered the minutes of April 5, 2007. Mr. McGonagle made a motion to accept the minutes. Ms. Fraser seconded the motion. Vice Chairperson Shurtleff asked if there was any discussion regarding the minutes. There was no discussion. The motion to accept the minutes passed unanimously.

3. New Business:

3a. Section 106 consultation regarding Verizon Wireless cell tower in Hopkinton between the Diamond Hill Farm and I-89:

There was some discussion between commission members why this item had been referred to the Heritage Commission. No one could recall when a similar item had been presented to the commission in the past.

Mr. McConaha stated the section 106 is a federal review requirement which includes public involvement. The opinion of the public is taken into consideration for final approval. He also stated that the application and approval process has improved, that is perhaps why the commission has been presented with this request.

Mr. McGonagle asked if the commission could be provided with before and after photos of the view from Diamond Hill Farm.

Mr. Woodward stated that the letter came from Verizon addressed to Chairperson Donovan. The cell tower would be located on the town line and it would be close to or on Diamond Hill.

Mr. McConaha suggested that the Heritage Commission write a letter to the FCC requesting to be a consulting party in these types of requests.

Mr. McGonagle stated that the Planning Board would probably also request before and after photos.

Ms. Fraser asked who owned the land.

Mr. Woodward responded that he did not know who owned the land.

Ms. Fraser stated that the owners of the land will receive compensation if the cell tower is installed.

Mr. Woodward was concerned about the view and wanted to know what void in coverage they are trying to fill.

3b. CLG Grant application deadline June 1, 2007:

Mr. McConaha stated that this was discussed at last month's meeting. These are Certified Local Government Grants and can be used for preservation projects and survey work. There are 3 categories of grants. Some require a match of funds and some do not. The grants are not for a lot of money, but there are usually not a lot of applicants either.

Mr. McGonagle asked what types of projects can be submitted.

Mr. McConaha responded that the grant could be used for preservation planning, ordinance development, training and inventory of historic district.

Mr. Woodward stated that the Community Development Grants Specialist Janice Hill was researching the grants. The grant has been used in the past to post the historic homes of Concord on the website. It was discovered that the descriptions were not matching the pictures. More work needs to be done to correct this issue.

3c. Review of the Commission's Master Plan priorities:

No discussion.

3d. Bridges House at 20 Mountain Road:

Mr. Woodward stated that this item will have a public hearing at the Planning Board meeting on May 16, 2007. It is proposed to make renovations and an addition to the building. This effort is being led by Mrs. Lynch and other former first ladies. It is felt that the property could be used more with these improvements. It is proposed to connect the house with the barn. The changes will make the space more livable and provide more space for events and meetings. Security improvements will also be addressed.

Mr. McGonagle stated his concern with traffic issues in the area.

Vice Chairperson Shurtleff asked if the state needed Planning Board approval.

Mr. Woodward responded that they did not.

Mr. McConaha stated that since the building is state property it is under state government control. The project will be paid for with private funds.

Ms. Brooks asked if any portion of the building will be demolished

Mr. Woodward responded that he was not sure if any demolition would be involved.

Mr. McGonagle stated that the commission should be involved if there is any demolition. He suggested that the Heritage Commission be invited to attend the public hearing.

Mr. Woodward stated that it should be the second item on the agenda for that night.

Ms. Brooks suggested that the commission view the plans of the current condition of the site and the proposed renovations and addition.

Vice Chairperson Shurtleff asked if the status of being on the National Register can impact what can be done.

Mr. McConaha responded that it does not unless there is federal money involved or federal permits.

Vice Chairperson Shurtleff stated that an e-mail would be sent to all commission members.

Ms. Fraser asked if the commission could go on a site walk of the property.

Mr. Woodward stated that it could be arranged. He will coordinate and also invite the members of the Planning Board to attend.

Vice Chairperson Shurtleff asked if the Planning Board will issue an opinion on this matter.

Mr. Woodward responded that the Planning Board will make a recommendation and requests. It will also give a report of staff comments.

3e. Street Name Manuscript by Bernard Ash:

Mr. McConaha asked if Mr. Ash is waiting for a response from the commission.

Mr. Woodward responded that Mr. Ash has picked up the manuscript and that he believes he spoke to Mr. Donovan.

Mr. McConaha suggested that the commission write Mr. Ash a letter thanking him for his interest and suggest that more research be done.

Mr. McGonagle stated that the letter should state that the commission is not offering an endorsement or approval of the manuscript.

Vice Chairperson Shurtleff made a motion to draft a letter and remove the item from the agenda. Ms. Brooks seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3f. Commission Procedural Rules Amendment regarding pre-application meetings:

Mr. Johnson stated that he had a discussion with City Attorney Paul Cavanaugh regarding to what extend the commission can have with the applicant without public awareness. This is a gray area in the law. The commission is allowed to gather information. This can be done without a public hearing. A notice of the discussion must be posted. It is posted as an informational meeting with the applicant present. The commission does not have to listen to the public at this type of meeting, as it is not the purpose. Minutes of the informational meeting must be taken. It would ultimately be left up to the chairperson to decide if public comments would be taken.

Ms. Brooks stated that the commission could be open to criticism if the commission held a special meeting. The informational meeting should be part of the regular meeting. There should be a standard statement on the agenda that the commission reserves the right to hold a recessed meeting at a later date.

Mr. Woodward stated that the Planning Board does hold pre-application meetings, but that Planning Board fall under a different statue and the discussion at these meetings are not binding.

Vice Chairperson Shurtleff stated that a pre-application meeting would be helpful for both the commission and the applicant in certain situations. He suggested that this be added to the standard operating procedure or rules.

Mr. McConaha stated that it would need to be added as a new section in the procedural rules of the commission.

Mr. Johnson responded that he will draft the new section for the commission's consideration.

4a. Montreal - Boston Bike Race:

Vice Chairperson Shurtleff stated that he attended a meeting on the race. The Penacook Historical Society will be coordinating an event at the race.

4b. Electronic Message Center Signs:

Mr. Woodward stated that the cases are still in the New Hampshire Supreme Court and Federal Court.

4c. Demolition Review - Committee Report:

No report given.

4d. Master Plan - Subcommittee Report:

No report given.

4e. Heritage Sign Program Report:

Ms. Brooks stated that she has spoken to Russ Alberman and the price of materials used to build the signs has gone up. There are no sign applications pending at this time. There will be future discussions regarding a new sign contract.

4f. Sewalls Falls Bridge - Committee Report:

No report given.

4g. Architectural Surveys on the Website:

Mr. Woodward stated that this is the work the Liz Hengen completed on paper. The documents were scanned and downloaded to the regional planning board website. The description information is not matching the photographs. Work need to be done on this to correct.

5. Dates, conferences, correspondence:

No discussion.

6. Other Business:

Mr. McGonagle stated that the Planning Board recommended to City Council that the name of Stump Dump Road be changed to Intervale Road.

Ms. Brooks made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. McGonagle seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:05 PM.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST:

Denise Taschereau
Administrative Specialist II
Community Development Department
City of Concord