

HERITAGE COMMISSION

Draft Minutes

November 5, 2009

The Heritage Commission held its regular monthly meeting in the City Council Chambers at 37 Green Street, Concord, New Hampshire, on Thursday, November 5, 2009, at 4:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order and Seating of Alternates:

Chairperson Donovan called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

Present at the meeting were Chairperson Philip Donovan, Marilyn Fraser, Vice Chairperson Frederick Richards, Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, Bryant Tolles, and Dr. Black. City Planner Douglas Woodward and Administrative Specialist Donna Muir were also present. Robert V. Johnson, II joined the meeting at 4:55 p.m.

Absent from the meeting were Committee Members James McConaha, Carol Durgy Brooks, and Gerry Blanchette.

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

2. Minutes of the October 1, 2009 meeting:

The Commission considered the minutes of the October 1, 2009, Heritage Commission meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Fraser to accept the minutes as presented, and Vice Chairperson Richards seconded the motion. Chairperson Donovan asked if there was any discussion regarding the minutes. The motion accepting the minutes of the October 1, 2009, meeting passed unanimously.

3. New Business:

Review of a Tax Relief Application pursuant to RSA 79-E, submitted by Sanel Realty Company, Inc., on behalf of Duprey Acquisitions, LLC, for redevelopment of land at 45a-49 South Main Street.

Matthew Walsh, the City's Assistant for Special Projects, and the applicant, Steve Duprey, were present.

Mr. Walsh provided an overview of the new portion of RSA 79-E, the Community Tax Relief Incentive Program, and explained how the changes apply to the Sanel Block property. Mr. Duprey spoke briefly about the Sanel project and then asked Ms. Hengen to share the information she gathered while completing the survey forms for the buildings which are to be replaced as part of the project. Mr. Duprey hired Ms. Hengen to review the cultural, historical, and architectural significance of the four structures located at what is known as the Sanel Block.

Ms. Hengen stated that she was recusing herself as a member of the Heritage Commission for the duration of the discussion and voting associated with the Sanel project. She stated that she had reviewed four buildings – two on South Main Street and two on Theatre Street. In the mid to late 1920s, she stated that the Sanel Block was used for automobile sales, and in the 1940s the Salvation Army occupied one of the buildings.

Chairperson Donovan stated that the Heritage Commission received a demolition application in the spring of 2009. The Demolition Committee toured the buildings and found no historic or architectural significance, and the Committee signed off on the demolition application.

Ms. Hengen stated that there are some historic architectural design features left on the buildings, but not enough to be significant. Up and down Main Street, there are other buildings with auto business history that were better examples.

Mr. Walsh stated that the Heritage Commission needed to submit a recommendation to City Council as to whether the buildings have historic, cultural, or architectural significance. This item would be on the Council's December agenda.

Vice Chairperson Richards made a motion to recommend that the City Council approve the RSA 79-E application, as the Heritage Commission, as required by RSA 79-E, found that none of the existing structures located at the so-called Sanel Block to be demolished in order to accommodate redevelopment of the premises possess any historical, cultural, or architectural significance. Ms. Fraser seconded the motion. Chairperson Donovan asked if there was any further discussion. Ms. Fraser thought that it would be appropriate to have this information available to the City Council and the public prior to the December City Council meeting. Ms. Hengen stated that she would provide copies of the surveys to the Concord Library. Mr. Walsh stated that the information is required to go to the City Council. Chairperson Donovan asked whether there was adequate documentation on the buildings. Ms. Hengen stated that the State does have the documentation. Chairperson Donovan stated that with the change in the law, he believes that this is a good, well-documented request. The motion to recommend approval by the City Council passed unanimously. [Ms. Hengen did not vote on this issue as she had recused herself for the purpose of this discussion.]

[Ms. Hengen rejoined the Heritage Commission as a voting member.]

Intern Colin Curry:

Ms. Hengen stated that Colin Curry, a student who had previously attended numerous Heritage Commission meetings, completed an internship with her this past summer.

Lavery House at Dartmouth Hitchcock Clinic on Pleasant Street:

Dr. Black asked whether the Heritage Commission would be receiving an application for the Lavery House demolition. Mr. Woodward stated that no one had applied to demolish the house. Ms. Hengen stated that the house provides a nice view along this entry into Concord, as it is not all asphalt, and feels that the Commission should be proactive in looking into the plans for this

house. Ms. Fraser said that the Commission should look into it and perhaps additional information could be obtained from the facilities person at Dartmouth Hitchcock Clinic. Mr. Woodward stated that the house is under a life estate, providing the owner with a lifelong residence. The Commission was not sure whether the owner was still alive. Ms. Hengen asked Dr. Black whether he knew if the Dartmouth Hitchcock Clinics were all separate entities or were governed by one Board of Directors. Dr. Black wasn't sure. Vice Chairperson Richards thought that the entire Dartmouth Hitchcock property was under a sale / leaseback agreement, with the Clinic being a tenant. Ms. Hengen suggested that Vice Chairperson Richards check on that issue, and she would try to obtain information on the Board of Directors.

4. Old Business:

Isaac Hill Monument:

Chairperson Donovan stated that the City's Development Team met regarding the Isaac Hill Monument. While the Heritage Commission recommended that the monument should be placed on the bump-out on North Main Street, the Development Team decided it should be placed in Eagle Square.

Mr. Johnson stated that he sent out an email to Heritage Commission members, but had not received any responses. Ms. Hengen stated that she commented and felt that the bump-out on North Main Street was the best location. Chairperson Donovan stated that he also feels that the bump-out is the best place, and that the Commission has one shot to get the monument where the Commission feels it is most appropriate. Ms. Fraser stated that if the monument can't go where it should from a historical perspective, it should be left where it is. Mr. Johnson stated that it was important that the Commission persist in talks with the City Manager and the City Engineer. Mr. Woodward questioned whether the monument issues was taken up at the Development Team or the Department Head meeting, as although he was on vacation, he usually is apprised as to the agenda of both of those meetings. Mr. Woodward suggested that the Commission attend the next available Development Team meeting to discuss the placement of the monument. He will speak with the person responsible for setting the agenda for the Development Team meeting and let the Commission members know the date.

The Commission discussed where on the bump-out the monument would be more appropriate and which direction the wording should face, either toward the building or toward the street. There was also discussion regarding whether the monument would be able to be placed up against the building. It was decided that the first choice of the Commission would be to have the monument on the bump-out, and its second choice would be to have the monument against the building.

Ms. Hengen asked whether there were any responses received from the article in the Concord Insider regarding how the monument found its way to the parking lot of the Goodwill Store on Loudon Road. Mr. Woodward stated that he didn't believe so, but that he still had the letter from Mr. McConaha.

Chairperson Donovan stated that the Commission would hopefully finalize the issue of where to place the monument at the meeting with the City's Development Team.

Certified Local Government Grant:

There has been no official word as to whether the Heritage Commission received the Certified Local Government Grant. Mr. Woodward thinks that the recipients will be notified in December.

Concord School District:

Chairperson Donovan stated that he and Mr. McConaha met and drafted letter to go out to the Concord School Board. The letter will hopefully get the Heritage Commission on record supporting careful consideration of existing elementary school buildings.

There being no further business or discussion. A motion was made by Mr. Johnson and seconded by Vice Chairperson Richards to adjourn the meeting. The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST:

Donna Muir
Administrative Specialist
Planning Division