

HERITAGE COMMISSION

Draft Minutes

April 1, 2010

The Heritage Commission held its regular monthly meeting in the City Council Chambers at 37 Green Street, Concord, New Hampshire, on Thursday, April 1, 2010, at 4:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order and Seating of Alternates:

Chairperson Donovan called the meeting to order at 4:37 p.m.

Present at the meeting were Chairperson Donovan and members James McConaha, Dr. Bryant Tolles, Steve Shurtleff, Carol Durgy Brooks, and Marilyn Fraser. City Planner Douglas Woodward and Administrative Specialist Donna Muir were also present. Absent from the meeting were Vice Chairperson Frederick Richards and Committee Members Robert V. Johnson, II and Elizabeth Durfee Hengen.

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

2. Minutes of the March 4, 2010 meeting:

The Commission considered the minutes of the March 4, 2010, Heritage Commission meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Fraser to accept the minutes as presented, and Mr. Shurtleff seconded the motion. Chairperson Donovan asked if there was any discussion regarding the minutes. The motion accepting the minutes of the March 4, 2010, meeting passed unanimously.

3. New Business:

Heritage Commission Guest:

Chairperson Donovan introduced Sean Fitzgerald, a Boy Scout from Troop 88. Sean is a student at Bishop Brady High School and attended the Heritage Commission meeting as part of a civics merit badge requirement.

New Agenda Item:

Chairperson Donovan asked that an item be added to the agenda, under New Business, regarding replacement windows at the state prison farm house. It was agreed to add this item to the agenda.

Street Name Change (East Street to Canal Street):

The City Council forwarded a letter from Councilor Shurtleff to the Heritage Commission, asking for the Commission's recommendation to change the name of East Street in Penacook to Canal Street. Mr. Shurtleff provided a brief history of the street name changes throughout the years. He stated that the Penacook Village Association is in favor of the name change. Mr. Shurtleff was able to contact only one owner of the three homes on East Street, and this owner was okay with the street name change. Dr. Tolles asked whether the

change is publically popular, with Mr. Shurtleff responding in the affirmative. Mr. McConaha questioned why the street name change was affecting only East Street and not Tanner Street. Mr. Shurtleff stated that the name of Tanner Street relates to the tannery and other manufacturing which was prevalent in Penacook. Tanner Street was renamed as part of the review of street names when the City adopted the 911 emergency call system. Dr. Tolles asked whether there were any plans to mark the site of the tannery and other mills. Mr. Shurtleff stated that a marker would be nice and that the Penacook Historical Society has stones from the tannery to build a wall. Mr. McConaha made a motion to offer the Heritage Commission's recommendation in support of changing East Street to Canal Street. He stated that he felt that names are very important and useful in linking communities to the area and its history. Ms. Fraser seconded the motion. Chairperson Donovan asked if there was any discussion regarding the motion. The motion recommending support of changing East Street to Canal Street passed unanimously.

Certified Local Government Grant Consultant:

Chairperson Donovan stated that he, Dr. Tolles, and Mr. Woodward reviewed the applications for the Certified Local Government Grant consultant. Applications were received from Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, John Milner Associates, Inc., and Lisa Mausolf. Chairperson Donovan stated that Mr. Johnson spoke with him and wanted to be sure that everything concerning the selection process was handled transparently, as one of the applicants, Ms. Hengen, is a member of the Heritage Commission. All three of the applicants were qualified in the committee's eyes, and their recommendation to the Commission was to award the contract to Ms. Hengen. Chairperson Donovan asked that Dr. Tolles speak to the committee's decision. Dr. Tolles said that, in his opinion, he was immediately drawn to Ms. Hengen's application based on her extensive background in New Hampshire and in Concord in particular, as well as her professionalism. As for Lisa Mausolf, he felt that her established career was less extensive by comparison and that she had not specified how she would carry out the tasks. Dr. Tolles was impressed with the Milner application and has previous knowledge about the company from when he was in Pennsylvania. Dr. Tolles felt that Milner would be a good choice, but his primary choice was to go with Ms. Hengen, as she is very knowledgeable about Concord and is doing surveys on some of the schools now, for the Concord School District. Chairperson Donovan thanked Dr. Tolles for his recap of the committee's work and asked if the Commission had any questions or comments. Ms. Fraser stated that Ms. Hengen has her finger on the pulse of Concord, and she didn't think there was any question of impropriety in selecting Ms. Hengen as the consultant for this project. Chairperson Donovan said that all three applicants have done work in the Concord area. Mr. Shurtleff made a motion to accept Ms. Hengen as the consultant on the Certified Local Government Grant. Dr. Tolles seconded the motion. Chairperson Donovan asked if there was any discussion regarding the motion. The motion accepting Ms. Hengen as the consultant on the Certified Local Government Grant passed unanimously.

Mr. Woodward stated that Governor and Council have yet to approve the Certified Local Government Grant, but he feels that it would be appropriate to let Ms. Hengen know that she has been chosen as the consultant for the grant.

Concord 2020 Public Forums:

Chairperson Donovan stated that two public forums were held with respect to Concord 2020's collaboration with the City of Concord to review elements of the City's regulatory framework. Mr. Shurtleff and Mr. Woodward attended the March 23 forum, with Mr. Shurtleff and Mr. Henninger, Assistant City Planner, attending the March 27 forum. Mr. Johnson was unable to attend as originally planned. Mr. Woodward

provided copies of the compilations of the two public forums to the Commission members. The information has also been placed on Concord 2020's website. A joint meeting will be held with all the boards and commissions to review the results of the forums, at which Mr. Woodward thinks is important for the Heritage Commission to be present. He suggested that the Commission members review and digest the packet of materials to be prepared for the meeting on Tuesday, April 13, 2010, at 7:00 p.m., at City Council Chambers. Mr. McConaha agreed to attend the meeting on behalf of the Commission.

Replacement Windows at State Prison Farmhouse:

Chairperson Donovan received an email from Nadine Peterson at the NH Division of Historic Resources (NHDHR) forwarding a request from Kate Malone at the NH Department of Administrative Services, who wants to replace windows at the farmhouse across the street from the state prison. This is the second proposal that the NHDHR has received. The first proposal was rejected by the NHDHR. This second proposal was okayed by the NHDHR to be sent to the Heritage Commission for their comments. Chairperson Donovan stated that Ms. Hengen knows about this proposal as she was contacted by the NHDHR. The barn on the property was part of the Agricultural Survey compiled by Ms. Hengen and Mr. Hawk last year, however; Ms. Hengen said that the farmhouse would need to be surveyed. Ms. Brooks stated that the proposal was insufficient and incomplete. Mr. McConaha stated that he doesn't know if the building is historically significant. Mr. Shurtleff stated he was surprised that the Commission is part of the approval process. Chairperson Donovan stated that the NHDHR often makes referrals to the local level. He stated that he will request additional information regarding the proposal. Dr. Tolles asked if he would also ask for photo documentation. Mr. Shurtleff suggested that there may be information in the Library's Concord Room regarding the farmhouse.

4. Old Business:

William Upton's request to commemorate James L. Langley:

Dr. Black provided Chairperson Donovan with information from William Upton regarding the proposed inscription for a new plaque to commemorate James L. Langley, to be erected at Langley Parkway. Chairperson Donovan provided copies of William Upton's write-up to the Commission, suggesting that they review the information and be prepared to discuss the proposed plaque at the next Commission meeting.

Concord School District Consolidation Plan:

Chairperson Donovan said that Mr. McConaha would provide an overview of the newest decisions involving the Concord School District's Consolidation Plan with respect to the Conant School, Kimball School, and the former Morrill School building. Mr. McConaha stated that there were two important developments since the previous Heritage Commission meeting.

The first is that the surveys on the Kimball and Conant Schools and the former Morrill School building have been completed, and the buildings are eligible for listing in the National Register. The importance of the buildings includes what they contributed to the history of education in Concord and that the buildings retain their historic integrity. Copies of the determination of eligibility packets for each building were provided to Commission members. Ms. Hengen, who prepared the surveys for the three buildings, still needs to complete the surveys for the homes which are scheduled to be demolished around the Kimball and Morrill Schools.

The second development is that the NH Department of Education approved the waivers for both Kimball School and Conant School. The letter from the NH Department of Education to the Superintendent of Schools approving the waivers stated that each of the waivers were subject to two requirements. For the Conant School project, a stop sign and stop bar shall be installed on South Street and that the Concord School District shall work with the NH Department of Cultural Resources and the Concord Heritage Commission to develop a plan to honor the historical significance of the Conant School and its location. Regarding the Kimball School and the former Morrill School building, a restriction has been required to limit to right turns only the exiting traffic from the proposed driveway onto Pleasant Street, and that the Concord School District shall work with the NH Department of Cultural Resources and the Concord Heritage Commission to develop a plan to honor the historical significance of the Kimball School and former Morrill School building and their location.

Mr. McConaha stated that he and Chairperson Donovan were more optimistic after their meeting with the NH Department of Education than perhaps they should have been. Mr. McConaha said that the value of mitigation is much less than what will be lost. He thinks that the Heritage Commission should try anything to save these buildings, but he is at a loss as to what to do. Chairperson Donovan stated that he was deeply disappointed and disagrees with the last sentence in the second paragraph, which reads "This waiver of the requirements for the size of the site is in the best interest of education and tax payer resources."

Chairperson Donovan stated that the houses are currently being inventoried, and that his concern is for the future of the entire block and whether the Concord School District has plans to purchase and demolish the balance of the block in the future, which would change the character of the whole neighborhood. Ms. Hengen and NHDHR met with the Concord School District to discuss the history of the school buildings. Chairperson Donovan spoke with Nadine Peterson at the NHDHR to see if there is any way for NHDHR to put pressure on the NH Department of Education. Ms. Peterson stated that NHDHR can not be advocates for specific projects; however, she is interested in the mitigation requirement. Mr. McConaha suggested that the Heritage Commission notify the NHDHR and the NH Department of Education that the mitigation requirement is inadequate and that the Commission would expect more opportunity to talk with those involved. Ms. Fraser feels that this decision diminishes the role of the Heritage Commission. Mr. McConaha stated that while the Commission has no statutory leverage, they do have the ability to get everything out in the public's eye. He is hopeful that the Concord Monitor might be interested in doing a story, as it is important that the community hear from the Heritage Commission. Ms. Fraser stated that the Commission needs to have their views out in the community.

Chairperson Donovan agrees with Mr. McConaha and stated that the reason the Heritage Commission was not involved before was the Concord School District was talking of refurbishing the buildings and not tearing them down. He stated that the Heritage Commission support one of the waiver requirements, which is to reuse the architectural components of the buildings. Chairperson Donovan said that he would invite the Concord School District Superintendent and Facilities Director, as well as the School Board Chair, to meet with the Heritage Commission and discuss plans for the waiver requirements. Mr. Shurtleff thought it would be a good step to take. Ms. Fraser thought that the Heritage Commission would be remiss if the Commission didn't do as much as they could in this instance. Mr. McConaha would like to draft a letter outlining the feelings of the Heritage Commission to present at the meeting.

Mr. Shurtleff asked whether the Concord School District would have to apply for a demolition review permit. Mr. Woodward stated that the Concord School District has to obey the building codes and life safety codes of the City, and the demolition review process is part of the building code.

5. Miscellany:

Mr. McConaha stated that he noticed that the new Math & Science building at St. Paul's School is very close to Dunbarton Road. Mr. Woodward said that St. Paul's School planned to build around and incorporate the old building, but now were going to build surrounding the old building and then remove the old building once the new building is completed. Their plans also included the redesign of Dunbarton Road. Mr. Shurtleff questioned whether a building had to be visible to the public and that Dunbarton Road was now a private road. Mr. Woodward stated that Dunbarton Road is a private road with rights of passage for the City of Concord's emergency vehicles as well as bicycle and pedestrian use. Mr. Woodward offered to bring the plans for the Heritage Commission to view at their next meeting.

There being no further business or discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Fraser and seconded by Mr. Shurtleff to adjourn the meeting. The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST:

Donna Muir
Administrative Specialist
Planning Division