

**HERITAGE COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
July 10, 2014**

The Heritage Commission held its regular monthly meeting in the City Council Chambers, City Hall Annex, 37 Green Street, Concord, New Hampshire, on Thursday, July 10, 2014, at 4:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order and Seating of Alternates:

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

Present at the meeting were Chair Phil Donovan, and Members Carol Brooks, Marilyn Fraser, Richard Jaques, Fred Richards, Bryant Tolles, and John Regan. City Planner Nancy Larson and Administrative Specialist Patricia Murray were also present.

2. Approval of Minutes of the June 5, 2014 meeting:

The Commission considered the minutes of the June 5, 2014 Heritage Commission Meeting.

Mr. Jaques moved to approve the June 5, 2014 minutes as written. Ms. Fraser seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

3. New Business

- a. Application by Concordia Lutheran Church, for property located at 211-215 North Main Street, requesting a Certificate of Approval in the Historic (HI) District, for the removal of clapboards on all elevations of the annex barn building (213 North Main Street) and the placement of new vinyl siding on said building. The new siding will be barn red in color and windows will be encased in white vinyl. (Continued from May 1, 2014)**

The Chair opened the public hearing. Mr. Richards informed the Commission that Concordia Lutheran Church did not get the cost estimates back from contractors and they want to be able to prepare and present a full presentation.

The Chair informed the Commission that Concordia Lutheran Church requested a continuance until the August 7, 2014 Heritage Commission Meeting which will be held at 4:30pm in City Council Chambers, 37 Green St, Concord, NH.

- b. Update on CLG – Carriage House Study.**

Ms. Larson reported that she and Mr. Henninger met with the State who are working with the consultant, Mae Williams, going through the nuts and bolts of the study and asking her to add more detail, to build up some of the areas of information and to incorporate some other points if they feel it's necessary. Beyond that, Ms. Larson isn't sure what the next date is when we should expect the revised report once the DHR is satisfied. She stated that DHR is very pleased with the report. Chair Donovan asked if any members had a chance to go over the report. Mr. Richards stated that he met with Ms. Williams about a month ago and gave her some old research notes he had on a couple of properties including his own. He stated that Souther's Market was in his neighborhood and was originally built as a livery store. His house, which was originally built as a commercial livery, was built by the same builder. Ms. Brooks noted that many of the houses had a carriage garage which was not big enough for anything beyond a carriage; horses were left at the stable.

- c. Report by Member Richards in regards to NH Division of Historical Resources study of demolition review.

Chair Donovan asked that this item be moved to the “Regular Business” section of the agenda.

Mr. Richards stated that all things being equal we have a pretty good demolition review ordinance and the measures that could be taken may be met with strong opposition from many parties. Chair Donovan stated that the purpose of the report was to develop a list of what some other communities/municipalities are doing in way of demolition review and seeing if there are any procedures that could be incorporated into Concord’s Demolition Review process. Mr. Richards stated he could provide that information.

4. Regular business

- a. Demolition Review – Committee Report

Mr. Richards reported that there is an application by Don & Sonia Dibuono for a barn on 151 Oak Hill Road. He stated that it is a very handsome building; a big white farm house with out-buildings attached to it. He stated the property has been through ins and outs in terms of ownership and it had a couple of illegal apartments and when the City caught up with them it caused financial problems for the owner, who has been trying to sell the property off and on for the last eight years. The parcel used to be approximately 45 acres. It is now down to about 3 acres with the rest of it sub-divided. The owner of the back lot recently bought the farmhouse and barn property out of fear of it reverting back to apartments. Unfortunately, the barn is in tough shape and the owner wants to take it down because he thinks it’s a liability. According to Mr. Johnson, via memo to Mr. Richards, Chairman of the Demolition Committee, when he was in the barn five years ago it had a poor foundation with rot on the sills and floor plates and in overall rough shape structurally. The committee still needs to go out and tour the barn and, if warranted, recommend a public hearing. Mr. Richards needs to submit the Demolition Review Permit Tracking form to Zoning stating that the committee determines the property significant by July 11, 2014.

- b. Heritage Sign Program

Ms. Brooks reported that the application by Binnie Media was approved. The sign is the first custom sign in the program. The sign committee met and evaluated and initially approved with conditions. All conditions were met and final approval was granted. Copies have been sent to the Planning Division, Binnie, the sign maker and Liz Hengen. Binnie is hoping to have the sign in place for their September open house. She also stated another application has been received, which is under examination by the committee, and will report its status at the next meeting. Chair Donovan commended Ms. Brooks on her idea to invite Binnie to apply to the Heritage Sign Program.

Aside: Chair Donovan stated that the Rumford School recently transferred owners and the new owner has plans to convert it to an arts center.

- c. Update on Demolition Permit funding

Chair Donovan summarized the Demolition Permit funding item for Ms. Larson. The Commission is looking for ways to be more effective in the demolition review process. They

would like to document the buildings that have been demolished but it is usually more money than what is available in their budget. Ms. Larson suggested requiring the applicant to supply the photographs. Chair Donovan explained that in addition to the photographs they would like to document the building, in essence create a mini-inventory, on some buildings. They would like a pool of money which would allow them to accomplish the documentation when the need arises. Ms. Larson stated that in Merrimack they had one planner who was charged with completing a historical summary and deed research of the buildings slated for demolition. He would then complete a checklist with the information gathered. She stated this was a luxury to have a staff person able to do this work. Chair Donovan stated that Mr. Richards has been doing this on an ad hoc basis for the simpler buildings. The Commission would like to be able to fully document some buildings and also, at times, hire a consultant. Ms. Larson asked if the Commission had ever approached City Council with a budget request. Chair Donovan stated they had not to date. Ms. Brooks stated that they had discussed user fees and had discussed that the fee be a percentage based on the property assessment and proposed demo area. Chair Donovan stated that the Commission does not know how to accomplish this or if they can accomplish this. Ms. Larson stated she will look into it. Chair Donovan stated this arose as the demolition review process became a little less effective over the years for various reasons. The reasoning is if they can't save the building they may as well be able to document it completely, which takes money. Also, when looking for alternatives to demolition if a plan to save the building develops then it would take some money to undertake.

5. Informational Items

- a. Status of the Gasholder building roof repairs.

Chair Donovan noticed that repairs have stopped within the last few weeks. He stated the roof still has a hole in it and that he received calls from a few people including the Concord Monitor, asking about the status. Chair Donovan does not know the status and inquired if other commission members knew anything. Mr. Regan stated that the construction crew needed to gain access from the adjacent property and that permission from the property owner was being sought. He also stated that funding has been worked out and plans to repair the roof should be underway once access is gained. Ms. Fraser stated that she wondered the same thing as Chair Donovan since she saw a lack of activity recently also. Mr. Regan suggested asking Deb Hale, Liberty Utilities, who came before the Commission last October, for an official update. Ms. Fraser and Ms. Brooks expressed the need to contact Ms. Hale for an update. After some discussion about the most effective form of communication to Ms. Hale, the Commission decided Chair Donovan will call Ms. Hale.

6. Any other business to come before the Commission

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Ms. Brooks moved to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Tolles seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Chair Donovan adjourned the meeting at 5:10 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Larson
City Planner