

**HERITAGE COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
February 5, 2015**

The Heritage Commission held its regular monthly meeting in the City Council Chambers, City Hall Annex, 37 Green Street, Concord, New Hampshire, on Thursday, February 5, 2015, at 4:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order and Seating of Alternates:

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Present at the meeting were Chair Phil Donovan, and Members Carol Brooks, Richard Jaques, Richard Woodfin, Robert Johnson and Councilor Shurtleff. City Planner Nancy Larson and Administrative Specialist Patricia Murray were also present.

Chair Donovan welcomed Mr. Woodfin, Planning Board Representative, to the Commission.

2. Approval of Minutes of the January 8, 2015 meeting:

The Commission considered the minutes of the January 8, 2015 Heritage Commission Meeting.

Ms. Brooks moved to approve the January 8, 2015 minutes as written. Mr. Jaques seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

3. New Business

a. Christine Perron, NHDOT Project; proposed parking lot expansion on Stickney Avenue

Christine Perron, Jill Edelmann and Don Lyford, NHDOT, were present. Mr. Lyford distributed handouts which showed existing conditions and proposed plans. He stated parking is increasing in demand by about 6% per year. Currently parking is routinely over capacity. A CMAC project was applied for and granted to create additional parking by removing some of the buildings. Projected growth estimates that 248 spaces in addition to the existing 340 spaces would be needed over a ten year period. The proposed layout would provide 266 spaces. Three buildings would be removed.

Chair Donovan asked what was currently in the buildings. Mr. Lyford replied that they are pretty much vacant; one is used to house bus terminal maintenance vehicles; and others are leased by several agencies for storage.

Ms. Edelmann, the cultural resources manager, NHDOT, stated that as part of the I93 expansion, the Stickney Ave highway garage complex was identified as potentially historic. A district area form was done and it was determined that this area as a district is historic. The reasons for the historic classification are 1) associations with transportation and the 1926 and 1948 garages that went in and 2) the I-shaped building for its architecture. The other buildings, although part of the complex and district, were not called out for any significant architecture. Due to the historic district, this project would have an adverse effect under Section 106.

Ms. Perron stated that Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires that alternatives to minimize impacts are sought. She stated they have looked at a variety of

alternatives that included tacking on more parking at the bus terminal's main lot which was determined not feasible. She stated the purpose of the project is to meet the 10 year parking demand. Other alternatives that were considered included removing between 4 buildings and 1 building as ways to minimize impacts while still achieving the 10 year parking goal. The plan presented today is the one that meets the needs of the project while minimizing to the extent possible the impact to the historic district. The 10 year goal can be met by removing 3 buildings. Ms. Perron stated they have been meeting with the Division of Historic Resources and their greatest concern is to minimize the impact to the complex. She stated the impacts are all at the northern end of the complex. There are three ancillary buildings that have no individual historic value. The main building will not be touched which is the most significant building in the complex.

Chair Donovan asked if there was a long term plan for the site. Mr. Lyford stated it is part of the I93-89 project. He said the real need for this area is to add an additional lane in each direction on I93 and reshape exits 13 and 14. He said in order to do that and not affect Ft. Eddy Road is to push towards the bus station. He said all impacts they initially looked at impacted the bus station.

Chair Donovan stated his concern is that these buildings are contributing to the historic site and if they are lost then in ten years when more buildings are removed pretty soon it's not a historic site anymore.

Ms. Edelmann stated today's mission is public outreach and finding out the Commission's concerns and mitigation ideas. She stated section 106 requires mitigation for the loss of resource when there is an impact. She stated some ideas were collecting pictures now to be put in a photobook, something that would benefit departments and the city; something creative. She read a quote about the Stickney Ave complex; "It was the most modern and convenient motor vehicle building in the State". Ms. Brooks asked what the State's view of the future use of the historic buildings specifically the H-shaped building. Mr. Lyford stated it could get impacted when exits 13 and 14 are rebuilt. Ms. Brooks stated if the state doesn't have an intention to use it could they consider the old transportation hub as the new bus station. Mr. Lyford stated the building physically get hit with all the alternatives he has seen. Future plans for I93 wear discussed.

Mr. Johnson asked if they planned to come back to the Commission at another occasion because he was uncomfortable not having had time to review the materials. More discussion regarding future plans for I93 ensued.

Chair Donovan invited Ms. Perron, Ms. Edelmann and Mr. Lyford to return to the March 5, 2015 meeting of the Heritage Commission to further discuss mitigation ideas for the proposed parking lot expansion on Stickney Avenue. Mr. Lyford offered to open the buildings up for the Demolition Committee members to inspect.

b. Annual Election of Officers

The Chair turned the meeting over to Ms. Larson to proceed with the nominations for the Chair of the Heritage Commission. Ms. Larson opened the floor to receive nominations for Chair. Ms. Brooks nominated Phil Donovan for another term as Chair, and Mr. Jaques seconded the nomination. As there were no further nominations, Ms. Larson closed the nominations and the Heritage Commission members voted unanimously for Mr. Donovan to continue to serve as Chair of the Heritage Commission. Ms. Larson then turned the meeting back over to Mr. Donovan.

The Chair opened the floor to receive nominations for Vice Chair. Mr. Johnson nominated Fred Richards for another term as Vice Chair and Mr. Jaques seconded the nomination. As there were no further nominations, the Chair closed the nominations and the Heritage Commission members voted unanimously for Mr. Richards to continue to serve as Vice Chair of the Heritage Commission.

c. NH Preservation Alliance request for assistance at the Historic Preservation Conference

Chair Donovan reported that Maggie Stier, NH Preservation Alliance, has requested that the Heritage Commission help with the Historic Preservation Conference scheduled for April 17. The Commission agreed to help out. Chair Donovan will give details as they come in.

d. Discussion on changes to the Demolition Review Ordinance (Article 26-9)

Chair Donovan summarized this item into three parts. 1) In 2007, there was discussion with the Demolition Review Committee about the details of the process. Craig Walker Zoning Administrator, made some adjusted changes to the ordinance. The changes mostly referred to the way that things are timed out. There are 49 days to complete the process and certain things have to happen within those 49 days. What the process doesn't account for is timeline from the application submittal. The draft changes to the ordinance ties the timeline to the date the application is accepted. 2) The question that was raised while working on the Blake Street property, of the committee make-up. The ordinance states the committee is comprised of three full members and two alternates who are appointed by the chair of the Heritage Commission. The question that came up was should a change be made to involve more Commission members. 3) To find a way to develop a pot of money that could be used to document buildings that are being demolished. Mr. Richards has been volunteering his time and effort to document demolitions but there is no place to put the information. The money could be used for that purpose and also used if a professional were to be hired to document a specific building. One suggestion was to attach a fee to the demolition application permit. This would allow for a small cash flow to be developed.

Chair Donovan stated he spoke to Craig Walker about the three items mentioned and all three are possible. The draft ordinance can be revised and submitted to City Council for approval. The initiation of a permit fee would have to go through staff review process and City Council as well. He stated that now is a great opportunity to make any changes to the process. He also stated he spoke to Mr. Walker about how a fee could be developed. The leading proposal is to attach some number to the square footage of a building. A discussion about fees and documentation ensued.

Chair Donovan stated the first step is to get a copy of the draft ordinance to the members. The Commission discussed the make-up of the Demolition Review Committee and the benefits and drawbacks of including the entire Commission. Councilor Shurtleff mentioned the possibility of maintaining the Demolition Review Committee but allowing the Commission to meet as a whole on a motion so that each Commission member can take part in a hearing. Mr. Jaques stated that he was uncomfortable with being a part of the hearing but not being able to vote. Ms. Brooks stated there needs to be clarity as to how the hearing works with all Commission members present but only the Demolition Review Committee members being allowed to vote. She stated a party of the whole gives a legal basis to be present and ask questions but she feels that an announcement should be made to the audience that only members of the Demolition Review Committee will vote. Chair Donovan stated he is in favor of more Commission members being appointed to the Committee but realizes the challenge would be in getting members together. He suggested leaving the Committee make-up as is but have the Committee bring its recommendations to the Heritage Commission

for final sign off. He stated the strict guidelines for time may hinder that being possible. Discussion ensued about expanding the timeframe. Discussion ensued about all members being present at the last Demolition Review Committee hearing. Staff will forward the draft ordinance to Commission members.

e. Status of Doyen Park statue/monument.

Councilor Byron Champlin was present to speak to this item referred to Heritage Commission by City Council. He gave a history of General Charles Doyen for whom Doyen Park was created. The park is located on North Main Street at the intersection of North Main and Court Street today. When the courthouse expanded the City gave that property to the courthouse and is now being used as a parking lot. In the 1970's the City received funds from the county to create a new park to replace Doyen Park. The City after being approached by the Rotary Club, created a new Doyen park which is essentially at the north end of the Vegas Block at the intersection of Bridge Street and North Main. Councilor Champlin stated the only monument at the park is a replica of the state of NH with the Rotary emblem. He stated there is a monument to General Doyen which is located at the edge of the parking lot at Court Street behind the municipal courthouse. It is a five foot tall piece of granite three and a half feet wide with a brass plaque with General Doyen's name, date of birth, and date of death. He stated it seems appropriate to put the monument in Doyen Park and asks the Heritage Commission to determine the appropriateness of moving the monument.

Chair Donovan asked if Doyen Park will be impacted by the Main Street work. Councilor Champlin state it may be tangentially impacted and stated that there is no better time to do something because of the Main Street work. Chair Donovan asked if there were any plans to improve the park. Councilor Champlin stated he would like to see improvements to make the space more park-like. He stated that is probably out of the scope of this Commission but any recommendations would be significant.

Ms. Brooks inquired about the huge tree that used to be at the end of that building and wondered if it was downed because it intruded with the brick work at Vegas Block. She asked if there is a possibility during construction to grade that area so it is more level stating that it is a great opportunity for an entryway park for visitors coming into the city. Councilor Champlin agrees but suggested taking that up with city staff. Ms. Larson stated it could be something she and Heather Shank speak to Ed Roberge about.

Councilor Shurtleff stated he would look into having the Marine Corps adopt that spot. Discussion ensued about a better location for the park. Councilor Champlin stated it makes sense to marry the monument to the park.

The Commission discussed the history of moving monuments. Chair Donovan stated he believes the City has no intentions to move the park. The Commission will take a look at the monument and conduct some research to see if moving the monument is feasible.

4. Regular business

a. Demolition Review – Committee Report

No update.

b. Heritage Sign Program

Ms. Brooks gave a summary of the Program's interest in participating in the Concord 250. The program will be less than the full sign program's process and will be available on June 7, the day of the opening of the time capsule. The concept is to have a tent or place for the Commission to have residents come with photos of their building; commercial or residential. If a picture is not available then the address could be searched on google street view to get a rough sense of the apparent year built. This process does not involve any research and the Commission member volunteers; Ms. Brooks, Mr. Richards and Dr. Tolles, along with Ms. Elizabeth Hengen would assist the building owners with the estimation of the circa date. If the owner has proof of year built the actual date can be printed on the sign without the "circa" symbol. There will be a sign template available and people would pay for their sign with the circa date on it. The cost of the sign which is still being estimated will be \$50 or less. The sign will be acrylic and once made would be available for pick up or mailing and will include instructions for hanging. The Concord 250 logo will also be on the sign along with the Heritage Commission name. Ms. Brooks presented a picture of the sign shape which is the same as the full Sign Program. There would need to be a minimum of 25 signs ordered to make this program feasible. Discussion regarding color scheme ensued. Once the Heritage Commission approves the concept the final sample sign will be sent to Concord 250 for approval.

Ms. Brooks moved to approve submitting the Concord 250 Sign Program as presented. Councilor Shurtleff seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

c. Update on Demolition Permit funding

No update.

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

Continued to March 5, 2105

5. Informational Items

a. Status of the Gasholder building roof repairs.

Chair Donovan stated he has left several messages on the number he has to reach Mike Licata with no reply. He will continue to try to contact Mr. Licata.

6. Any other business to come before the Commission

- Mr. Johnson wrote a letter requesting a tour of the Binney Building.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Jaques seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Donovan adjourned the meeting at 6:42 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Larson
City Planner