

HERITAGE COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
June 12, 2025

The Heritage Commission held its regular monthly meeting in Council Chambers at 37 Green St, on Thursday, June 12, 2025.

Members: Althea Barton, Carol Durgy Brooks, Michael Dunn, Chair Richard Jaques, Councilor Jennifer Kretovic, and Vice-Chair Jim Spain

Absent: Dr. Bryant Tolles, Jr.

Staff: AnneMarie Skinner, City Planner
Krista Tremblay, Administrative Technician III

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jaques at 4:32 p.m.

2. Minutes – Approve meeting minutes of May 1, 2025.

Member Durgy Brooks moved, seconded by Vice-Chair Spain, to accept the minutes from May 1, 2025, with a minor change. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

3. New Business

a. Demolition ordinance amendment

Chair Jaques stated that he spoke at City Council regarding the ordinance amendment. Chair Jaques noted City Council liked everything except paragraph (d), which explains the signage and posting of the signage. City Council referred it back to Heritage Commission to discuss. Chair Jaques stated one of the things mentioned is that the notice shall be posted on the site, and if the sign is not posted continuously as required that the clock for the 60-day delay period shall stop running and not resume until the notice is posted continuously as required. Chair Jaques noted that to him “shall” or “will” does not matter. Chair Jaques stated both are used in formal documents and does not feel the word makes a difference. Chair Jaques noted that he looked at Portsmouth, Manchester, and Nashua ordinances for demolition delays, and found no provisions for such. Chair Jaques stated from the state RSA you cannot have an indefinite delay time. If there is an initial 60-day delay and if for some reason the sign is removed who is at fault and what is the punishment. Chair Jaques state he does not know how to word it so that people realize that all they have to do is allow the posting to be put up on the property.

Vice-Chair Spain stated the posting on Shawmut was posted and the sign holder was chained to a tree. Vice-Chair Spain noted if that holder is used again and chained, no one will be able to take it.

Member Brooks stated that a property that is landlocked the sign cannot be seen from a public road. If there is a public road, the sign could be placed in the right-of-way.

Ms. Skinner stated you cannot put signs in the right-of-way.

Member Barton noted the paragraph was slightly different in the current ordinance. At the meeting where they had discussed all of the changes, it was discussed keeping it in. It was kept

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in, but it was toned down so it said: “the planning division shall post a sign with the permission of the property owner.” Member Barton would like to see it remain as it is now. It is not that Council came up with this or this is new.

Member Barton asked if the current provision is doable for staff. Member Barton noted that it is something that staff can manage, and planning staff will find a secure location for the sign.

Chair Jaques asked if staff looks at the property lines to make sure the sign is on the property.

Ms. Skinner stated staff does make sure it is on the owner’s property.

Member Barton feels confident that planning staff can manage this and follow the requirement. Member Barton stated she did do some research and did find a few other demolition ordinances that have this same sign posting requirement. Member Barton watched the Council meeting. Member Barton stated there were several councilors and members of the audience who spoke to have a posting so the people can see it in the neighborhood. Member Barton does not see a reason to make the ordinance weaker. Member Barton understands the concern about the state law about demolition delay not being indefinite. Member Barton stated this is not saying it is indefinite. Member Barton noted the sign only needs to be up for 5 days before the hearing.

Member Brooks noted when a demolition permit application is submitted, the instructions should note the 60-day delay period and public hearing requirement

Ms. Skinner noted that not all demolition permits require a public hearing. Ms. Skinner noted the code administrator has to look at each demolition permit to see if the building that is being demolished meets the requirements to trigger demolition review.

Member Brooks stated the determination to decide whether or not a hearing will be held is up to the Demolition Review Committee.

Ms. Skinner noted based on the new ordinance it is not. The hearing is automatic.

Member Barton asked if it only applies to buildings that are more than 50 years old.

Ms. Skinner answered yes, and explained the process for a demolition permit.

Member Barton asked if the resulting instructions could add information about the notice of the public hearing and the sign for five days.

Ms. Skinner stated she would work with the code administrator to add language about the public hearing and sign posting requirements for building more than 50 years old.

Member Barton stated she is comfortable with the paragraph as it is, but she understands the

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issue with the last sentence.

Chair Jaques has an issue with the last sentence. Chair Jaques does not understand how you can stop the 60-day delay. Chair Jaques noted what happens if the period stops running and the person tears the building down regardless.

Vice-Chair Spain does not feel there is any recourse.

Member Brooks noted at best there is a framework for making note at the public hearing that the applicant has not cooperated with the sign-posting requirement and feels the last sentence needs to be removed.

Chair Jaques stated he has an issue with “the period shall stop running” because according to everything else it doesn’t, and the most they can do is impose the 60-day delay.

Councilor Kretovic asked what if they say if the sign is posted continuously as required.

Vice-Chair Spain stated he likes that idea.

Chair Jaques asked if anyone would like to change the word “shall” to “will.”

Ms. Skinner noted it’s the responsibility of the planning division to do the posting, and the planning division lives in a world of “shall” and sees no issue with “shall.”

Councilor Kretovic made motion to keep the word “shall” and to revise the last sentence to say “the sign shall be posted continuously as required.” Vice-Chair Spain seconded. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Old/Continuing Business

a. Property Recognition

Chair Jaques asked when Jim Milliken will be available.

Councilor Kretovic stated she will contact him to see if he can come to the August meeting.

b. Airport Terminal

Member Dunn stated he went to the airport and terminal building is on hold.

c. Monuments and Granite Markers

Vice-Chair Spain has nothing new to report on this agenda item.

Councilor Kretovic asked if this is pegged on the GIS where these granite markers are located.

Vice-Chair Spain has a list and pictures. There is a collection that was established in the 1800s of

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granite markers in front of every garrison. There is an article with the locations.

d. CSX Tower

Vice-Chair Spain had nothing new to report other than people are living in the tower and it has become a crime area. He will not be visiting the site again.

e. Old Penacook Library deed restriction discussion

There was nothing to discuss on this agenda item.

5. Demolition Review Committee

Vice-Chair Spain stated the last property was at 71 Shawmut St, and the demolition was approved because the building was deteriorated.

6. Heritage Sign Review Committee update

Member Brooks stated May 7th was the last meeting. A sign application was presented and approved for 16 Auburn St. There was a workshop on May 13th at the library. The next workshop is September 9th.

7. Planning Board

There was nothing to discuss on this agenda item.

8. City Council

There was nothing to discuss on this agenda item.

9. Other Business

Adjournment

Member Brooks moved, seconded by Vice-Chair Spain, to adjourn the meeting at 5:31 p.m. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Tremblay

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Administrative Technician III