

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, July 22, 2015

4:30 PM

2nd Floor Committee Room

Members Present:

Hanspeter Weber, Chair
James Duffy, Councilor
Dan Bartlett, Vice-Chair
Joslin Kimball Frank
Anita Carroll-Weldon

Staff Present:

Rhett Lamb, Planning Director

Others Present:

Members Not Present:

David Bergeron, Alternate
Jan Brehm

1) Call to Order and Roll Call -

Chair Weber called the meeting to order at 4:35 PM. Roll call was conducted

2) Minutes of Previous Meeting - April 15, 2015

Ms. Kimball Frank made a motion to adopt the minutes of April 15, 2015 as submitted. Councilor Duffy seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

3) City Council Referral - Communication from Councilor Sheryl Redfern

Chair Weber acknowledged receipt of Councilor Redfern's letter dated May 14, 2015. Mr. Lamb addressed the letter which was also presented to City Council. Mr. Lamb noted the letter points out that this process has gone on for a while, and asks for the timing of the final product. For the record Mr. Lamb reported the issue is currently in staff's hands (preparing the draft to present to the Sub-committee). Mr. Lamb discussed the Sub-committee's activities thus far including the public forum held in early May 2015. He noted the presentation of a series of options for the resources that were present in the District, including landscaping, structural aspects of homes, all the exterior types of resources and values that would become part of a Historic District. Since that time the Sub-committee has met twice and agreed on an approach; to have some limited regulation oriented around substantial changes to a property, instead of the minor changes that seemed to be less of a concern. Mr. Lamb noted his earlier report to the subcommittee of having the draft ready for September with the intent of bringing it to the HDC on September 16, 2015. It would then be up to the HDC whether or not the draft should move onto City Council.

Councilor Duffy addressed the 4th paragraph of the letter noting the letter asks for a date certain to be set for the ordinance to be voted on before the end of summer. Councilor Duffy acknowledged the Mr. Lamb has addressed this. Councilor Duffy referred to the next sentence in the same paragraph, noting he doesn't think this is possible, and asked for clarification. Mr. Lamb suggested there would be a question of how that would be applied with this being addressed to City Council. He continued the reason the ordinance is being proposed in the first

place is because the area under consideration is the oldest and most historic part of the City of Keene.

Ms. Kimball Frank reported that Mr. Redfern was downstairs earlier and she inadvertently may have turned him away. Mr. Lamb noted he would reach out to both Councilor and Mr. Redfern.

Ms. Carroll-Weldon disagreed with the first paragraph of the letter (an outline of the proposed ordinance) noting the presentation consisted of the work the Sub-committee had done so far.

Mr. Lamb reminded Chair Weber that because this is a City Council referral to the Commission any conclusion reached today will be made available to City Council so they are aware of the information. Mr. Lamb noted it is important for the Commission to let City Council know whether they agree with Mr. Lamb's proposed timeline which would be reported out through a memorandum. Mr. Lamb outlined the work to be done.

- Amend the Zoning Ordinance with a map change outlining the area.
- Amend Chapter 18 which provides the outline for the authority, and provides the foundation for the ordinance itself.
- The third piece is the HDC Regulations which are adopted through the HDC.

Mr. Lamb indicated all three pieces could not be ready for September; adding the three pieces should go forward together as one change in order for people to evaluate them.

After discussion Commission members agreed the September date does not provide enough time for the Sub-committee to look over the materials before presenting them to the HDC. Commission members agreed on October instead of September which would allow the Sub-committee two months to review with consideration and submission to the HDC at their October 21, 2015 meeting.

Councilor Duffy made a motion that the HDC accept the communication from Councilor Sheryl Redfern regarding the proposed expansion of the Historic District as informational. Ms. Kimball Frank seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

4) Public Hearings

- a) **COA-2015-05 – 86 Winter Street – Hampshire House** – Applicant Linda Mangones on behalf of owner, Cheshire Housing Trust, proposes to replace the front roof. The existing roof is slate and the request is to replace the slate with composite slate which matches the existing slate. Tax Map Parcel # 001-01-004.

Chair Weber read the notice and asked for staff's recommendation on completeness. Mr. Lamb recommended the application be accepted as complete.

Mr. Bartlett moved to accept application COA-2015-05 as complete. Councilor Duffy seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Linda Mangones, of 168 Castle Street introduced Barry Johnson and David Leet. Ms. Mangones noted that Cheshire Housing Trust has done everything it can to maintain the appearance of this building; spending at least a half a million dollars thus far. She explained the funding and the reserve requirements of NH Housing Finance Authority (\$20,000). Ms. Mangones reported the reserve currently has \$37,000; as this is emergent work, the NH Housing Finance Authority may

allow the reserve to go below the required \$20,000. She also reported Cheshire Housing Trust has eight buildings with slate roofs. Ms. Mangones referred to Page 18 in the packet, noting the building roof (gambrel) on the north side (facing Winter Street) will cost \$20,000 to replace with composite slate; real slate would be much more expensive.

Ms. Mangones clarified for Ms. Kimball Frank they would not be replacing the slate on all four of the roofs, just this one in need of repair.

Barry Johnson (roofing contractor) explained the previous owners put tar down (under the slate) on all of the slate in this section of roof. Noting that slate cracks, Mr. Johnson referred to Page 19 explaining that slate has to be able to move, and the difficulty in trying to repair slate that has been tarred down. He continued that the water damage now requires all the slate be removed and a new plywood base sheet be installed. His reasons for recommending the composite slate are: 1) the composite slate lessens the load on the building 2) composite slate does not break, and 3) maintenance costs (\$350-500 minimum to do slate repairs). Mr. Johnson noted the expense of bringing in a lift to do this work because of the trees (OSHA requirement). Mr. Johnson agreed with Ms. Kimball Frank the composite will not last as long as real slate; it will last 50 years. Mr. Johnson indicated he is proposing two color blends, black and gray (samples provided).

Mr. Johnson reiterated for Ms. Carroll-Weldon they will not be replacing the other roofs; they require only minor slate repairs currently. He reported on the repair work done in 2001. To Ms. Kimball Frank, Mr. Johnson replied the intent is to keep the rest of the building original slate; noting repairs to the other side have been very minimal. He also agreed with Chair Weber that unless there are more leaks there is no reason to replace the other roofs. Discussion ensued regarding the sheen on real slate; Mr. Johnson explained this product also will have that appearance explaining it is actually the shadow of the edging that does that. He also confirmed the composite slate will be the same size as the original slate (4-inch on the dormers).

Chair Weber addressed the costs. Mr. Johnson reported an \$11,000 difference; explaining this is not just the material but the labor costs also. He also noted there is no waste with this product and there is lots of waste with real slate.

In response to Mr. Bartlett, Mr. Johnson noted this product has almost the same slip resistance as slate, David Leet noted they will be adding snow guards.

David Leet, of 15 Windsurfer Lane, Spofford was present representing EcoStar (composite slate company). He noted EcoStar has been in existence in the United States for 35 years and has made the majestic slate for 22 years. Mr. Leet provided examples of buildings where the composite slate has been installed such as the Brattleboro Retreat, and Amherst College. He also explained the production process:

- Injection molded from profiles of real slate.
- Composed of 80% recycled car bumper scrap, baby diaper trimmings (sticky plastics), and virgin polymers.
- No fillers are added (making it flexible during freeze/frost cycles (thermal expansion)).
- Product weighs about 275 pounds per square versus 500 pounds per square for slate.
- They have 20 different molds.
- Has less sheen as it weathers.

Mr. Leet displayed a weathered tile removed after 10 years from a home in Iowa.

In response to Ms. Carroll-Weldon, Mr. Johnson noted the slate on the dormers would be replaced, and that copper flashings would be installed. Mr. Johnson also clarified for Ms. Kimball Frank the additional \$3,800 would cover the cost of doing the dormers in real slate.

Ms. Kimball Frank asked Ms. Mangones if she had looked into preservation grants. Ms. Mangones replied in the negative; noting the cost of doing an LCHIP application would be greater than the cost of the work to be done. Ms. Mangones also noted the focus of Cheshire Housing Trust is providing affordable housing to low-income people. In addition, Cheshire Housing Trust has never received any historic preservation funds.

Chair Weber asked for staff comments.

Mr. Lamb indicated the presentation addressed the relevant section of the HDC Regulations that can be found on Page 13 of the Staff Report. The applicant was asked to provide an estimate for the slate, and the experience of the contractor. Mr. Lamb indicated the applicant had complied with these requests. Mr. Lamb also agreed the applicant would have done the work in real slate had it not been for the prior repair attempt that tarred down the slate. Mr. Lamb suggested the Commission has been provided a set of circumstances that warrant approval of the application. Referring to the motion on Page 14, Mr. Lamb noted the two conditions A and B. He suggested A no longer makes sense, and B has also been addressed. He suggested adding the condition for the applicant to provide samples of the proposed composite slate materials selected to match the existing slate. Discussion ensued regarding the factory pre-blends. A sample is to be submitted to staff.

Chair Weber read into the record a note from Sally Reinhart, of 24 School Street. Ms. Reinhart is an abutter who is in favor of the composite roof.

Chair Weber closed the public hearing.

Councilor Duffy motioned for the Historic District Commission to Approve COA-2015-15 for 86 Winter Street, Keene, Cheshire County, NH, application dated June 22, 2015, and received June 23, 2015, by Linda Mangones, Executive Director of the Cheshire Housing Trust with the following condition:

1. Prior to signature submitted of color samples of the proposed composite slate materials selected to match the existing slate.

Mr. Bartlett seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mr. Lamb thanked Mr. Johnson and Mr. Leet for helping to educate the HDC about slate.

5) Request for Section 106 Review – Verizon Wireless – Invitation to Comment on Historic Properties Affected by Proposed 40 foot (overall height) Utility Structure, Non-Tower Collocation KEENE_NH_SC_02 – Small Cell Build (EnSite #25178) 196 Main Street, Keene. Submitted by ERM.

Chris Swiniarski, Attorney for Verizon Wireless, noted he understands the review under Section 106 is not necessarily a public hearing. Attorney Swiniarski introduced Sean Mahoney, who brought a live sample of proposed antenna. Attorney Swiniarski noted the applicant is trying to fill in what is called a gap in capacity of coverage (existing networks can no longer service customer demand). The proposed antenna will provide more bandwidth for the users. Attorney Swiniarski indicated the applicant is implementing these small antennae all over the country.

They are 2-foot canisters that blend in over the existing utility poles. Addressing the location, Attorney Swiniarski noted this is a pole close to 196 Main Street and the proposed antenna will be somewhat wedged in with the reinforcement pole (center height at 32.5 feet), making it less obvious (Pages 10 and 11). The added coverage will be roughly in the range of ¼ mile (densification of coverage). The canister itself weighs about 22 pounds, with maybe 70 pounds of equipment; no reinforcements are required, and a structural analysis will be completed.

Commenting on the Section 106 process, Mr. Lamb suggested the Commission has seen this a couple of times, noting Section 106 does require an FCC license for the applicant to install this antenna. He did note this is not a regulated activity under the HDC rules; it is in the right-of-way, not on private property. The Section 106 provides for the HDC providing a recommendation to the regulating body. This application was also subject to the City's Telecommunications Ordinance, and in this case is not a permanent activity other than an electrical permit. Mr. Lamb also noted this is exactly what we had asked the telecommunications companies to do back in 2002 (smaller installations that blended in). Mr. Lamb suggested the Commission's recommendation should be that this is the type of application we are looking for the telecommunications companies to pursue in the future. Attorney Swiniarski noted this will be the first type of this installation in Keene; it is fairly new and is being deployed all over the country. Attorney Swiniarski made note of the red tape involved in this process.

In response to Ms. Carroll-Weldon, Mr. Lamb indicated he did not know if this would open the way for more units by other carriers on the same pole. He also explained the purpose of the reinforcement poles. Attorney Swiniarski reiterated that a structural analysis would be completed. To Mr. Bartlett, Attorney Swiniarski replied yes, eventually there will be more of them, but when we start we do it in the areas with the highest demand.

Councilor Duffy motioned for the Historic District Commission to endorse VZW's plans to install a 40-foot utility structure, non-tower collocation small cell device, at 196 Main Street. Mr. Bartlett seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

6) Staff Reports and/or Other Business- Nothing at this time.

7) Next Meeting- August 19, 2015

8) Adjournment – Chair Weber adjourned the meeting at 5:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Mary Lou Sheats-Hall, Minute-taker
July 26, 2015