

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HERITAGE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 11, 2016

4:00 PM Trustee's Room, Library

Members Present:

Louise Zerba, Chair
Katherine Snow
Ardis Osborn, Alternate
Susan D'Egidio
Marilyn Gemmell
Rose Carey, Vice-Chair
Robert O'Connor, Councilor (Late)

Staff Present:

Tara Kessler, Planner

Members Not Present:

Kevin Dremel
John Bemis

1) Call to Order/Roll Call -

Chair Zerba called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. Roll call was conducted. Chair Zerba asked Ms. Osborne to sit in for Mr. Dremel. Chair Zerba also welcomed Marilyn Gemmell as a permanent new member to the Commission.

2) Approval of Minutes – March 9, 2016

Ms. Snow made a motion to adopt the minutes of March 9, 2016 with the following changes/corrections: under approval of minutes correct the date to 2016 not 20165. Ms. Gemmell seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

3) Notices / Communication

a. Section 106 Project Review - 99 Wyman Road & 0 Wyman Rd

Jim Phippard, of Brickstone Land Use Consultants, addressed the Commission regarding his client's application to the NH Division of Historical Resources (DHR) with respect to the Hillside Village residential continuing care facility project. Materials provided included copies of the DHR Individual Inventory (59 pages), which was recently completed by Lynn Monroe and shared as part of the meeting packet, a site plan, and an existing conditions plan.

Mr. Phippard said this is a big project and will go on for a while. He noted that the Commission needs to be part of the community involvement. Mr. Phippard advised that community involvement is a requirement of the Section 106 of the Federal National Preservation Act, which the project is currently subject. Mr. Phippard said that Ms. Monroe's inventory is the start of the documentation for the historic setting and buildings present onsite. Ms. Monroe's recommendation was that the property should not be found eligible for the National Historic Register. This inventory and recommendation was submitted to the DHR, who held an eligibility

meeting in March. At this meeting, the DHR disagreed with Ms. Monroe's recommendation and found the property eligible for listing on both the State and Federal Historic Registers. Mr. Phippard noted that the property owner has chosen not to register the property.

In order to proceed with this project, Mr. Phippard noted that DHR is proposing to have an adverse effect on this historic resource, as the client needs to remove the buildings from the property. He continued, stating that they will need to go through the Section 106 review process in order to do this. Addressing the first part of the process (documentation), Mr. Phippard indicated that the archeological report is not yet complete, and they are unsure of what the results will be. Mr. Phippard agreed to forward a copy of the report to Ms. Kessler. Continuing, Mr. Phippard said they will have to work with the local boards (e.g. Planning and Zoning Board of Adjustment) and follow the normal permitting process. Mr. Phippard reported that Zoning Board approval was granted to move forward with the project and he added that they are currently working on the site plan, which will be reviewed by the Planning Board. Noting these steps in the process, Mr. Phippard added that the federal agencies will be looking to see how the public has been made aware of what they are proposing. He also noted the minutes of this meeting would become part of the record to show that he has consulted with public bodies with an interest in this project and that they are documenting what they believe the adverse impacts will be.

Mr. Phippard reported that he will be starting a series of meetings with the DHR in Concord and has made Ms. Kessler aware of this. These are public meetings and Commission members/staff are welcome to attend.

Mr. Phippard discussed the Commission's role under Section 106. Mr. Phippard stated that his reason for attending the meeting is to add to Commission's awareness of the project. He reviewed an existing conditions plan of the site and advised that a site visit could be arranged if the Commission so wished. Mr. Phippard noted that the site contains 49 acres on both sides of Wyman Road and currently has a residence, small shed, old corncrib, a large 3-story barn, an old sugar shack, and a restored barn. Addressing the agricultural history of the site, Mr. Phippard noted that the most successful crop was potatoes. Mr. Phippard encouraged the Commission to have a site visit and he noted that he is hoping to gain the Commission's support to allow the proposed adverse impacts. He also pointed out that the eligibility determination for the Historic Register was based on more than the buildings, it also considered the setting.

In response to Ms. D'Egidio, Mr. Phippard noted that there are no conservation easements on the property. Mr. Phippard explained that the trigger for Section 106 Review for this project is the wetlands permit that will be required for the proposed construction. Mr. Phippard explained that wetlands are governed by state and federal regulations and it is the federal regulations that trigger the Section 106 process. Mr. Phippard discussed the City of Keene's Demolition Review Permit process for historic buildings. Ms. Kessler stated that she would send the Commission members the link to the Citizens Guide to Section 106. Ms. Kessler also reported that DHR has a shorter summary of Section 106 on their website, which she will share with the Commission.

Mr. Phippard explained that before selecting this site, he and his client conducted an extensive site search that involved over 200 properties. He also noted that conceptual site layouts were developed for four of the potential properties. Mr. Phippard displayed a preliminary version of the site plan for the continuing care retirement community. He reviewed the plan with the

Commission and answered questions as they arose. He explained that they propose to build the structure up instead of out to minimize the impact on steep slopes and wetlands. Mr. Phippard also noted that this is a ~50 million dollar project. Mr. Phippard verified for Ms. Gemmell that the intent is to remove all the existing buildings on the property.

Returning to the topic of Section 106 Review, Mr. Phippard explained that mitigation would come after acceptance of the proposed impact. Mr. Phippard provided examples of mitigation from other projects. Mr. Phippard verified for Ms. Snow and others that the developer would be responsible for funding any mitigation.

Mr. Phippard addressed the disassembly and reassembly of the buildings on the site elsewhere. He noted that the large barn is in too bad of a condition to save. Mr. Phippard reported that Re-Timber, LLC is preparing a proposal on the cost of removing the barn and other structures. Mr. Phippard noted that he has advised Re-Timber, LLC (Nick Jennings and Greg Stone) that he wants to have good documentation so that the location of the buildings/materials can be tracked in the future.

Ms. Kessler asked the Commission whether or not they want to conduct site visit, and if they want to designate someone to attend the Concord meetings. Ms. Kessler did volunteer to attend these meetings. Commission members agreed they would like to have a site visit. Ms. Kessler will work with Commission members to schedule a date for this site visit.

Mr. Phippard noted that while it is still early in the process, he wanted to get the Commission involved. He noted that it would probably be six months before any decisions are made. In response to Chair Zerba, Mr. Phippard clarified that Re-Timber will be hired to disassemble all of the buildings. He also indicated that many of the building components could be salvaged. This work will probably start in May of 2017. Ms. D'Egidio asked about the wildlife. Mr. Phippard reported the National Heritage Committee got a hit on the Common Nighthawks; however, they found that there are no active nesting areas on the property.

Concluding his presentation, Mr. Phippard advised that there is no formal action for the Commission to take at this point. He noted that he would keep the Commission updated. Chair Zerba thanked Mr. Phippard for his presentation.

4) Report of the Demolition Review Committee –

Ms. D'Egidio reported that she received an email yesterday regarding a recently submitted demolition permit for a structure at 44 Probate Street. She noted that it is a garage, and that she will go by there this week.

5) Report of the Community Outreach Commission –

a. Friends of Open Space April Event Recap – Chair Zerba commended Ms. Carey and thanked staff for their work preparing a display for this event.

b. Sunday Social Update- Ms. Carey reported that she does not have an update at this time, as she still needs to meet with Mr. Dremel.

c. Notice to Owners of Buildings 100 years or older- This item was tabled until the next meeting.

6) Report of the Research Commission –

a. Development of a Historic Resource List– This item was tabled until the next meeting

b. HDC Ordinance Subcommittee Update – No new information is available on this topic since the last meeting.

7) Staff Updates-

a. Certified Local Government Grant – Ms. Kessler noted previous discussions and that she had submitted a Letter of Intent. She received word back from NHDHR encouraging the Commission to look back to a citywide inventory that was completed in 1998. Ms. Kessler also reported they did not think Education and Outreach would be a competitive grant. Ms. Kessler reported she was advised that spending time trying to write a full grant was probably not wise as the project wasn't competitive.

8) New or Other Business –

a. Heritage Commission Action Plan – Ms. Kessler noted that she spoke with Ms. Carey about the idea of forming an action plan for the Commission, which would outline goals and potential implementation strategies. She suggested that the Commission discuss this topic at a future meeting. She reviewed the types of activities the Commission is either currently undertaken, has completed in the past year, or has proposed pursuing in the future. From this list of activities, she has identified four categories of strategies: encouragement and education, evaluation, enforcement, and engineering. Activities such as the Sunday Concert Series, the letter to owners of 100-year properties, the website and promotion of preservation resources could fall under encouragement and education. The historic property inventories and research conducted by the Commission or its partners could fall under evaluation. The creation of new historic districts and the work of the Demolition Review Subcommittee could fall under enforcement. Lastly, the efforts to preserve historic structures, such as the Stone Arch Bridge and Sumner Knight Chapel, could fall under engineering. The Commission agreed to discuss the development of this plan further at the next meeting. Members felt it would be a good idea to have a strategic plan in place to guide future efforts and programs of the Commission.

Ms. Carey reported that she has nothing planned for another display at City Hall and that she welcomes any input from other Commission members. Ms. Osborne suggested using information in the Individual Inventory Form provided by Mr. Phippard. Ms. Carey will contact Mr. Phippard to make sure this is permissible.

Chair Zerba reported that the Stonewall Farm website mentions the corncrib, which was preserved as a result of previous mitigation, but it does not identify the origins of the structure or how it came to the Farm. Ms. D'Egidio agreed to contact them and provide them the pertinent information.

b. Ms. Snow asked if the Commission should resume meeting every month in light of Mr. Phippard's presentation today. Discussion ensued with Commission members agreeing to meet in June. When asked, Ms. Kessler indicated she would prefer the every other month schedule. She advised that the Commission sub-committees could meet on a more frequent schedule. With respect to the DHR meetings in Concord for the Wyman Road Section 106 project, Ms. Kessler indicated she would keep the Commission advised as new information is obtained.

c. Ms. Snow reported that the residence at 44 West Surry Road is in the process of being sold. She noted that there is a Rufus Porter mural in the house. After discussion, Ms. D'Egidio agreed to contact the Realtor, Connie Joyce, to see about photographing the mural. Councilor O'Connor will obtain a camera from the Planning Department when arrangements have been made.

9) **Adjournment** – There being no further Commission business, Chair Zerba adjourned the meeting at 5:22 PM.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, June 8, 2016 at 4:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by,
Mary Lou Sheats-Hall, Minute-taker
May 13, 2016

Reviewed and edited by,
Tara Kessler, Planner
May 27, 2016