

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HERITAGE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 13, 2017 4:00 PM Trustee's Room, Library

Members Present:

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

Staff Present:

Tara Kessler, Planner

Members Not Present:

1) Call to Order/Roll Call -

Chair Carey called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM with the roll call.

2) Approval of Minutes – July 12, 2017

Ms. Zerba made a motion to adopt the minutes of July 12, 2017 as submitted. Ms. D'Egidio seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

3) Historic Preservation Workshop Series 2017 and 2018

a. Workshop Planning & Logistics

Chair Carey reported the first workshop is tomorrow, September 14. Currently there are 53 people signed up to attend. Chair Carey displayed the poster created by Ms. Kessler that was displayed in town. Ms. Kessler outlined the outreach/marketing efforts utilized. Committee members agreed they would like to have an evaluation form/signup sheet available for the workshop. Ms. Kessler will print out the Heritage Commission brochure to have available as well. Chair Carey advised that information will be available regarding the Plaque Program. Chair Carey and Anita Carroll-Weldon will provide opening remarks. The workshop is anticipated to last two hours. Committee members discussed food for the workshop. Discussion ensued regarding the story map created by Chair Carey and Ms. Kessler that will be projected at the workshop. A link to the story map is on the City website. Chair Carey will mention the renovation of the Courthouse as the next Commission event will be held there. Cheshire TV will be recording the event.

b. Historic Building Recognition Program –

Chair Carey advised there will not be a plaque presentation at the workshop; this will take place at the March event. Ms. Zerba explained she was unable to reach Jim Putnam as he has been out of town.

4) Comments on West Street Hydro Study Plan-

Ms. Kessler provided the background information on the project and explained the reason for this request. Discussions on this topic began around 2012 after the dam was deemed deficient by the Dam Bureau. Ms. Kessler noted there were other local historical groups that were concerned about the removal of the dam. Around this time, a group known as West Street Hydro came forward with a proposal to maintain the dam as a hydroelectric facility. West Street Hydro has been exploring the feasibility of this project and pursuing licensing from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission since this time. The letter from West Street Hydro requests the Heritage Commission provide comments or questions on the proposed project. Ms. Kessler noted that there will be an updated informational presentation at Council on October 19, 2017, in addition to a meeting with the Conservation Commission in November. Discussion ensued with Commission members agreeing that more information was needed before they write a letter either way. Ms. Kessler outlined the Commission's choices at this point.

1. Write a letter asking for more information.
2. Ask them to come and make a presentation to the Commission.
3. Not respond at all.
4. Respond now if the Commission felt comfortable doing so.

Ms. Zerba made a motion for the Heritage Commission to submit a letter to West Street Hydro noting the Commission would like more information either by mail or in person. Permission was also granted to Chair Carey to sign the letter on behalf of the Commission. Councilor O'Connor seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Questions raised by the Commission members:

1. What are the visual/auditory impacts on the surrounding area?
2. What will the hydroelectric plant look like?
3. Are there impacts on the adjacent park/trails if the water level is raised?

5) Subcommittee Reports –

- a. Demolition Review Committee – Nothing at this time.
- b. Community Outreach Committee – Discussed under agenda item 3.a.
- c. Research Committee – Discussed under agenda item 3.a.

6) Staff Updates – None at this time.

7) New or Other Business – Nothing at this time.

8) Next Meeting- November 8, 2017 at 4:00 PM

9) Adjourn – There being no further Commission business Chair Carey adjourned the meeting at 4:51 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Mary Lou Sheats-Hall, Minute-taker
September 14, 2017