

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**HERITAGE COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, June 8, 2022**

**4:30 PM**

**Council Chambers,  
City Hall**

**Members Present:**

Cauley Powell, Chair  
Susan DeGidio, Vice Chair  
Councilor Gladys Johnsen  
Rose Carey  
Marilyn Huston  
Louise Zerba, Alternate

**Staff Present:**

Evan Clements, Planner  
Will Schoefmann, GIS Technician

**Members Not Present:**

Brian Lee

**1) Call to Order**

Chair Powell called the meeting to order at 4:37 PM.

Ms. DeGidio was present via Zoom.

**2) Minutes of Previous Meeting – April 13, 2022**

Ms. Huston mentioned an instance where Ms. Zerba's name was spelled incorrectly as Zebra instead of Zerba. She made a motion to accept the minutes of April 13, 2022 with that correction. Chair Powell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**3) 2022 Grant**

Chair Powell reminded everyone that they decided to submit the 2022 CLG grant for the Recovering Black History Project in partnership with the Historical Society, Black Heritage Trail of NH, and the folks in Peterborough. She went on to state that the best way to have a competitive grant was to do a cash match and noted that they have the money in the budget but need to vote to approve the use of funds. She explained that they submitted a \$6,000 cash match for the \$16,000 grant, and will do \$5,000 of in-kind. Chair Powell stated the total of \$27,000 would cover the academic consultant and the students who would be working with her to do interpretation. Their volunteer time would be collecting data and building up a database, and she mentioned that they have a generous time frame in which to complete those tasks. Chair Powell

noted that part of the project would include a kick off training with folks from the Historical Society on procedure and format for data collection.

Mr. Schoefmann showed the schedule and stated June is when they'll know if they are awarded or not.

Ms. Carey asked about the substance of what they'd be trying to collect and put together. Chair Powell stated the goal in the research phase is population data and identifying individuals and families and linking them to specific geographical locations. She added that the consultant will try to understand how neighborhoods developed and how people and communities shifted over time, as part of a larger effort in general to recognize that black communities and people of color have been a part of the narrative for a long time. Chair Powell stated the end of the project will include a large scale presentation event and the work will go towards developing education materials, as well as the development of a walking tour.

Chair Powell stated the Historic District has been working on the project for over a year now and are doing the entire Cheshire County; however, the commission would only be focusing on the area of Keene for the project.

Mr. Schoefmann stated commission members will be pulling source material as best they can and handing it over to consultants to contextualize it and piece together what the movement looks like, based on their expertise.

Councilor Johnsen mentioned that there are people at Keene State College that can help with the project and suggested a letter go out in coordination with the Mayor to invite others to come in with their ideas, etc. Chair Powell stated she likes the idea of getting more community involvement.

Chair Powell made a motion that the Heritage Commission expend \$6,000 cash match as part of funding from their cumulative budget for the 2022 CLG grant Recovering Black History Project. The motion was seconded by Councilor Johnsen and passed unanimously.

**4) Evan Clements**

Mr. Clements stated he will be taking over as staff liaison for the Historic District Commission (HDC) and is taking on one of their longer term projects. This project will include outreach among property owners in the district to make them aware that they own property there and that there are certain steps required before doing work on historic district properties. He went on to state that part of the outreach will be some form of trifold mailer, possibly initially to remind all owners of their responsibilities and provide general information about the district. He showed everyone a draft he has been working on. Additionally, he stated the goal is that any time a property in the district changes ownership a welcome letter will be generated and sent to the new owner. This would include benefits of ownership in the district, protected investment, tourism,

worker recruitment, economic investment, architectural significance, a link to the HDC's FAQ page, etc.

Mr. Clements stated he left a panel blank on the trifold for the Heritage Commission and would appreciate their help adding details on the heritage of Keene. He stated the commission and HDC work hand in hand in many ways and would appreciate general feedback, whether that be information on the Heritage Commission and/or historic background on the city.

Mr. Schoefmann stated it will be the Commission's pamphlet because the HDC is in need of funding to pay for the mailers since they have a very low budget. Mr. Clements added that, for the initial mailer, they will need funds; however, the HDC is working on a budget for the maintenance mailing for new owners. He stated they do not have an estimate on cost yet.

Ms. Carey asked about the possibility of working with realtors to get the information out and help with cost. Mr. Schoefmann stated they could make the information available to realtors and Mr. Clements stated they will also put it on a website and on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall. Mr. Schoefmann stated they would need to look at an outreach strategy and noted that he will do an estimate of owners in the district times the average postage.

Ms. Carey asked about the boundaries of the district and they tested out the QR code on the draft trifold.

Ms. Huston stated for several years the commission has been trying to define themselves differently from the HDC because most people don't know there is a difference. She added that that would be her one caution and expressed that she feels they need to talk more with the HDC so they can continue to define themselves and also help one another out. She suggested the wording on the trifold include what the HC is and what they do. Councilor Johnsen stated Councilor Greenwald has been in agreement with having a distinction between the two commissions and he is also a realtor, and suggested he might be a good person to talk with. Mr. Clements stated he understands their concerns but isn't sure the trifold is the best document to make the aforementioned distinction. He explained that the trifold will focus on the historic district and the Heritage Commission's purview is the entire City. He went on to state that it wouldn't be inappropriate to speak about the HC and what heritage means, but attempting to separate themselves from the HDC in the trifold would be difficult.

Mr. Schoefmann stated the HC could be an angel donor. Ms. Huston agreed that might be the best way to go about it because putting their information in the pamphlet will link them with the HDC.

Chair Powell stated it seems a lot of people know the rules of ownership in the district and wondered if this document's purpose would be to hold them accountable, and if the City could use receiving the document as confirmation of knowledge of the rules. Mr. Clements stated the document will not be anything legal, it is more of a neighborly, gentle reminder and a welcome.

Ms. Carey asked if there's anything in property deeds that indicates they are in a historic district. Mr. Clements stated there is not because the overlay zone can change.

Chair Powell wondered if they could create a working group between the two commissions and discuss the extent with which the HC would want to be involved. She suggested they table the discussion until they have a budget number for the mailings. Mr. Clements agreed that doing a joint meeting would be a great idea. General consensus was to hold the meeting towards the end of summer. Ms. Huston agreed and stated she would like to obtain Ms. Zerba's input before talking to the HDC. General consensus was to talk amongst themselves in July and then meet with the HDC afterwards.

#### 5) **Neighborhood Heritage Project Update**

Mr. Schoefmann stated he has been working with their consultant and the working group and showed the group recent website updates. He reminded everyone that the website is a public application for collecting the history of the Italian Neighborhood for their ongoing CLG project. He pointed out the new addition of a pop up which he stated is general guidance on the project. He then went through the updated site making note of the opacity added to the area outside of the Italian Neighborhood, a color change to the "start a story" button, and the addition of guidance on the side bar that talks about how to go about adding a story point. Mr. Schoefmann pointed out the base map options, which include a basic topographic map, aerial imagery, street map, historic maps, and historic Sanborn maps. The Sanborn maps were included because they demonstrate developments over time periods. Mr. Schoefmann explained that these base maps are different ways for people to visualize the neighborhood.

Chair Powell submitted a test point and Mr. Schoefmann stated it shows limited information because they need to be able to approve on the backend, to make sure submissions are appropriate before displaying fully. He reiterated that the goal of this tool is to collect contact information so they can follow up on submissions. In other words, this is a way for them to source information as the site acts as a glorified plain form. The next step will be to make sure they have photos, videos, etc. and they will then create a story map. He showed an example of the Russell Park story map, explaining that it is essentially a website that allows you to integrate different materials and media. He stated he is hopeful to have a YouTube video for this as well.

Chair Powell and Mr. Schoefmann mentioned that there are 3 different types of story maps they can choose from and there was general consensus that they can wait to make that decision. They also mentioned that the working group has created a landing page website for the commission outside of the City website and hope to show a draft of that at the next meeting.

There was some concern over the timeline for the grant and short discussion regarding that. Chair Powell expressed concern on how they will go about their outreach efforts and noted that the grant requires they have that done by the end of July. Mr. Schoefmann suggested they could

look into obtaining an extension if needed and stated he will work with Ms. Brunner to get some preliminary points added. They will then need to obtain the information that will be integrated into the story map.

Ms. Huston wondered if they could present their final project to the Italian Club at some point and there was general agreement. Ms. Carey suggested inviting some of the Italian Club members to a meeting. Chair Powell suggested going to them instead, so the commission is doing the leg work.

Mr. Schoefmann stated initial outreach will include social media and email with a bit of information on the project and the hyperlink to the application. Chair Powell suggested they link the website in that initial outreach as well. Mr. Schoefmann stated the application has sufficient information so they could go with that until the website is completed.

Ms. Carey wondered if they would put any of this information on the trifold if they choose to participate in that. Chair Powell stated it is outside of the historic district so it could be an example of what the commission does. Mr. Clements mentioned if they wanted to see a flyer or mailer more specific to their Italian neighborhood project he is available for that as well.

Chair Powell suggested everyone think about the best methods to reach the community and come prepared to discuss that at the next meeting in July. Mr. Schoefmann stated he will create a QR code for the application. Chair Powell suggested someone go to an Italian Club meeting with a laptop and sit with them and show them the application and maybe get some stories that way.

- 6) **Next Meeting – July 13, 2022**
- 7) **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Powell adjourned the meeting at 5:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Nicole Cullinane, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,  
Will Schoefmann, Community Development Staff