



Historic District Commission

AGENDA

Wednesday, October 18, 2023

4:30 PM City Hall, 2nd Floor Council Chambers

- 1. Call to Order and Roll Call**
- 2. Minutes of July 19, 2023**
- 3. 2024 Meeting Schedule**
- 4. Staff Updates**
 - a) Administrative Approvals
 - b) CLG Grant Update
 - c) NH 101 Improvement Project
- 5. New Business**
- 6. Upcoming Dates of Interest:**
 - a) Next HDC Meeting: November 15, 2023 – 4:30 pm, TBD
 - b) HDC Site Visit: November 15, 2023 – 3:30 pm (To be confirmed)
- 7. Adjourn**

1 City of Keene
2 New Hampshire

3
4
5 HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
6 MEETING MINUTES
7

Wednesday, July 19, 2023

4:30 PM

Council Chambers,
City Hall

Members Present:

Sophia Cunha-Vasconcelos, Vice Chair
Councilor Catherine Workman
Hope Benik
Gregg Kleiner
Anthony Ferrantello

Staff Present:

Evan Clements, Planner

Members Not Present:

Russ Fleming, Chair
Andrew Weglinski
Hans Porschitz
Sam Temple
David Bergeron, Alternate
Peter Poanessa, Alternate

8 **1) Call to Order and Roll Call**
9

10 Vice Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos called the meeting to order at 4:33 PM. Mr. Clements called the
11 roll.
12

13 **2) Minutes of April 19, 2023**
14

15 Mr. Ferrantello made a motion to adopt the minutes of the April 19, 2023 meeting. Mr. Kleiner
16 seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
17

18 Vice Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos recused herself from the Public Hearing on COA-2023-03
19 because her property abuts the subject property. Councilor Workman made a motion to serve as
20 Chair Pro Tem for the Public Hearing. Mr. Ferrantello seconded the motion. The motion passed
21 unanimously. Chair Pro Tem Workman presided over the Public Hearing.
22

23 **3) Public Hearing**
24

25 **A) COA-2023-03 – 18 Summer St – Addition - Applicants and owners Michael**
26 **& Jennifer Zoll propose to construct an ~220 sf addition to the existing ~2,272 sf house on**
27 **the property at 18 Summer St (TMP #568-024-000). A waiver is requested from Section**

28 **21.6.3.C.1 of the Land Development Code regarding the requirement that historic rooflines**
29 **shall not be altered. The property is 0.18 ac and is ranked as a Contributing Resource in**
30 **the Downtown Transition District.**

31

32 Chair Pro Tem Workman read the above summary into the record and asked Mr. Clements if the
33 application was complete. Mr. Clements responded that the applicant requested an exemption
34 from submitting a site plan and product specification sheets. Staff concluded that a site plan and
35 product specification sheets have no bearing on the merits of the application and recommended
36 the Commission grant the exemption and accept the application as complete.

37

38 Mr. Kleiner made a motion to accept the application as complete with the requested exemption.
39 Mr. Ferrantello seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

40

41 Chair Pro Tem Workman opened the Public Hearing and invited the applicants forward.
42 Applicants Jennifer Zoll and Michael Zoll introduced themselves.

43

44 Mr. Zoll explained that they want to put a small addition on the house to create a main bedroom
45 suite. There is no closet or bathroom for the bedroom currently. They are currently sharing a
46 bathroom with their teenage children, which is not ideal. They see the addition as somewhat
47 necessary in these modern times. Otherwise, they want to restore the historic house.

48

49 Ms. Zoll stated that their intention is to bring the house back to its original luster. It is in great
50 disrepair. Given the house's proximity to downtown, it is a shame. They want to modernize the
51 house respectfully to function better for modern living. In addition, they believe the project will
52 better incorporate a prior flat roof addition to the house, so it looks like it belongs on the house.

53

54 Chair Pro Tem Workman expressed appreciation to the Zolls for bringing the house back and
55 invited comments or questions from Commission members.

56

57 Pointing to Elevation #3 in the application, Mr. Ferrantello noted concern that the "vee" created
58 by the various rooflines would trap water. Ms. Zoll indicated the vee does, in fact, collect water,
59 and it has been an issue for over 100 years. Pointing to Figure #3 in the application, Mr.
60 Ferrantello asked whether adding a dormer instead would provide better balance to the house.
61 Ms. Zoll responded that they discussed the idea with their designer, who told them that, due to
62 the current structure, having a consistent roof pitch would not be possible, so the design is a bit
63 of a compromise.

64

65 Chair Pro Tem Workman asked Mr. Clements to give a staff report. Mr. Clements reported that
66 the 18 Summer Street property is located on the south side of Summer Street between the Court
67 Street and Middle Street intersections. The house is a gable-front style Greek Revival built in
68 1865 and is known as the Taft House. The architect and builder of the house was Henry
69 Chapman and features a front gable roof, clapboard siding, and brick chimney. James S. Taft
70 owned the home from 1865 to 1872. Taft is best known for pottery that he made with his uncle

71 out of an old clothespin factory on Main Street. The J.S. Taft & Co. produced Hampshire
72 Pottery, now highly prized by collectors.

73
74 The request is to add an ensuite bathroom and closet to a converted bedroom located at the rear
75 of the house to create a master bedroom. The proposed ~220 sf addition will create a “bump out”
76 on the second floor of the house. There is an existing addition on the first floor that the proposed
77 addition will sit on top of and fill in the architectural gap that was left by the older addition. The
78 project also includes adding a pitch to the existing flat roof above the entry way.

79
80 Section 21.6.3.C.1 of the Land Development Code (LDC) provides that the original or historic
81 roofline may not be altered, and raising or lowering the existing roofline may only be allowed for
82 the purpose of restoring the roof to its original profile. The applicant submitted a waiver request
83 for the requirement on grounds the flat roof has contributed to water leaks and ice dams and is
84 not a historic feature throughout the neighborhood.

85
86 The waiver criteria for the Commission to consider are:

- 87
- 88 (1) Strict application of these regulations would result in a particular and exceptional
89 difficulty or undue hardship upon the owner of the affected property;
 - 90
91 (2) An alternative design or materials meets the design objectives stated in the Historic
92 District Regulations of this LDC equally well or better than would strict compliance with
93 these regulations; and
 - 94
95 (3) The waiver may be granted without substantial detriment to the intent of the Historic
96 District Regulations and the public good.

97
98 Section 21.8.1(A) of the LDC prohibits additions from radically changing, obscuring, damaging,
99 or destroying character-defining features. According to the applicant, the new addition will blend
100 with the existing ground floor addition, fill in the gap, and allow the structure to appear more
101 complete. The Commission must determine if the project meets the standard.

102
103 Section 21.8.1(B) of the LDC requires additions to be designed to be compatible with, rather
104 than imitative of the design of the historic building, so that they are clearly identified as new
105 construction. According to the applicant, the proposed addition will be compatible with the
106 historic design of the home by keeping with the same form and materials as the existing
107 house but will also add a sense of completeness by smoothing and filling out the
108 nonfunctional odd gap that the entryway addition left. The Commission must determine if the
109 project meets the standard.

110
111 Section 21.8.1(C) of the LDC requires additions to be compatible in size and scale with the main
112 building. According to the applicant, the size and scale of the proposed addition will fit in with

113 the form of the existing house and is compatible with the historic style of the building. The
114 project appears to meet the standard.

115
116 Section 21.8.1(E) of the LDC requires additions to be located at the rear or on an inconspicuous
117 side of the building whenever possible. The project appears to meet the standard, as the proposed
118 addition is on the rear and side of the existing house.

119
120 Section 21.8.1(F) of the LDC requires additions to take into account the historic relationships of
121 existing buildings and site features on the site. According to the applicant, the proposed addition
122 is historically consistent with the house and site features and will not expand the building
123 footprint. The project appears to meet the standard.

124
125 Section 21.8.1(G) of the LDC requires materials used for siding on additions to be compatible
126 with existing materials on the building and common in the Historic District, such as brick, stone,
127 terra cotta, wood, metal and cement clapboard. According to the applicant, the proposed addition
128 will have cedar wood siding to match the existing house. The project appears to meet the
129 standard.

130
131 Section 21.8.1(I) of the LDC requires additions to reflect the context of surrounding historic
132 buildings or structures and not detract from the overall character of the Historic District.
133 According to the applicant, the proposed addition seeks to be compatible with the design of the
134 historic houses near the existing house. The Commission must determine if the project meets the
135 standard.

136
137 Mr. Clements recommended no conditions for the project.

138
139 There being no public comment, Chair Pro Tem Workman closed the public hearing and opened
140 deliberations.

141
142 Ms. Benik asked for more information about why the rooflines cannot be parallel. Ms. Zoll
143 explained that a steep pitch would decrease the usable space, and adding a dormer would be
144 difficult, according to the designer.

145
146 Mr. Ferrantello asked whether the applicant considered putting in a flat portion in order to
147 change the pitch of the rest of the roof without losing usable space. Ms. Zoll responded that they
148 considered doing so but felt it would affect the integrity of the house. She also said that they
149 discussed several dormer designs, but they all looked too modern for the house. The best solution
150 was to just try to blend the addition in as much as possible.

151
152 Chair Pro Tem Workman expressed her opinion that the project meets standards (A), (B), and (I)
153 of Section 21.8.1 of the LDC. Mr. Ferrantello agreed. Ms. Benik said the applicant deeply
154 considered the best path to maintain the historic house. Mr. Kleiner agreed.

155

156 Mr. Kleiner made a motion to approve the waiver request from Section 21.6.3.C.1 of the Land
157 Development Code to allow for the alteration of an existing flat roof to be pitched where the
158 requirement that historic rooflines shall not be altered is normally required. Mr. Ferrantello
159 seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

160

161 Mr. Ferrantello made a motion to approve COA-2023-03 to allow for the construction of a ~220
162 sf addition and alteration of an existing flat roof to a pitched roof on the property located at 18
163 Summer Street, as presented in the plan set titled “Master Bedroom Remodel & New Master
164 Bathroom Addition” prepared by Larkin Designs & Consulting LLC, dated 5/31/23, at a scale of
165 1/4” = 1’ and in the application and supporting materials dated 6/16/23 and 6/30/23 with no
166 conditions. Mr. Kleiner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

167

168 Chair Pro Tem Workman stated that this approval completes the application.

169

170 Mr. Zoll thanked Mr. Clements for his assistance with the application process. Ms. Zoll said it is
171 a privilege to care for the historic house, and she is very excited.

172

173 **4) Staff Updates**

174

175 Vice Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos returned to chairing the meeting. She asked Mr. Clements for a
176 staff update.

177

178 Mr. Clements reported that the \$250 expenditure to mail information about the Historic District
179 and the Commission to Historic District addresses was approved, and the funds are available. He
180 reported he is working with the new Communications Director to re-design the information to
181 match the City’s new branding efforts. He will draft a cover letter for the mailing, in consultation
182 with the Chair and Vice Chair or the full Commission, per its preference. Commission members
183 agreed Mr. Clements need only consult with the Chair and Vice Chair.

184

185 He further reported that he expects to hear very soon from the New Hampshire Division of
186 Historical Resources about whether the City received the Certified Local Government (CLG)
187 grant it applied for. He will email the Commission members with the result and next steps.

188

189 **5) New Business**

190

191 Councilor Workman noted that the Commission received a presentation about the Downtown
192 Infrastructure Project several months ago. She asked whether, once the City Council votes on a
193 preliminary design, the Commission would have any input on the final design. Mr. Clements
194 responded that the Public Works Department expressed interest in getting feedback from the
195 Commission, as well as the Heritage Commission, on some of the finer details. He is not sure
196 when that might happen, but he will advocate for it with the Public Works Department.

197

198

199 **6) Upcoming Dates of Interest**

200

201 **A) Next HDC Meeting: August 16, 2023 – 4:30 PM (to be determined)**

202 **B) HDC Site Visit: August 16, 2023 – 3:30 PM (to be confirmed)**

203

204 Mr. Clements reported that there are no applications for the next meeting yet. Although the
205 deadline is Friday, he indicated the Commission could consider applications filed somewhat
206 late. He said he would keep Commission members posted.

207

208 **7) Adjourn**

209

210 There being no further business, Vice Chair Cunha-Vasconcelos adjourned the meeting at 5:07
211 PM.

212

213 Respectfully submitted by,
214 Wendy Chen, Minute Taker

215

216 Reviewed and edited by,
217 Evan J. Clements, AICP - Planner



HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

2024 Meeting Schedule

All meetings are on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 4:30 PM

January 17, 2024

February 21, 2024

March 20, 2024

April 17, 2024

May 15, 2024

June 19, 2024

July 17, 2024

August 21, 2024

September 18, 2024

October 16, 2024

November 20, 2024

December 18, 2024

January 15, 2025

Meeting dates & times are subject to change

September 05, 2023

Evan Clements
Staff Liaison
Heritage Commission
3 Washington Street
Keene, NH 03431

RE: REQUEST FOR COMMENT – KEENE 41590; ROUTE 101 IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT, KEENE, NH

Dear Mr. Evan Clements:

Comprehensive Environmental Inc. (CEI) is currently assisting the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) with proposed roadway improvements in Keene, NH. The Route 101 project begins east of Optical Avenue and continues approximately one mile to Branch Road (see attached location map).

The goal of the project is to provide better pedestrians and bicycle facilities, improve the Route 101 roadway structure, improve the condition of the bridge over the Branch River, and improve the safety at the intersection of Swanzey Factory Road. Route 101 upgrades may require rehabilitation/widening or replacing the existing bridge over the Branch River. According to 1933 as-built plans, the roadway base includes a 20-foot wide reinforced concrete pavement. Much of the corridor parallels, or is in the proximity of, the Branch River, and the Otter and Minnewawa Brooks.

The corridor serves as one of the gateways into the City of Keene, and the abutting properties reflect the diverse zoning along Route 101, which includes the City's industrial, commerce, high density, and rural zones. One of the primary design considerations is to improve the intersection sight distance deficiencies at the intersection of Swanzey Factory Road and Route 101. The design development will include an alternative evaluation of improving the intersection's safety and may include relocating the intersection. Swanzey Factory Road is also dedicated as a "Bicycle Street" in the City's complete streets guidelines and this project may be a means to improving bicycle operations in the area. Various alternatives for the corridor will be evaluated and will undergo a thorough review and analysis of their impact to traffic flow, right-of-way, and environmental resources.

The purpose of this letter is to solicit your initial input on the aforementioned proposed project. For your information, a Public Informational Meeting will be scheduled in the future, and you will be notified of the date, time and location. Responses are welcome prior to and/or following the Public Informational Meeting. Additional project information will be provided at the Meeting.

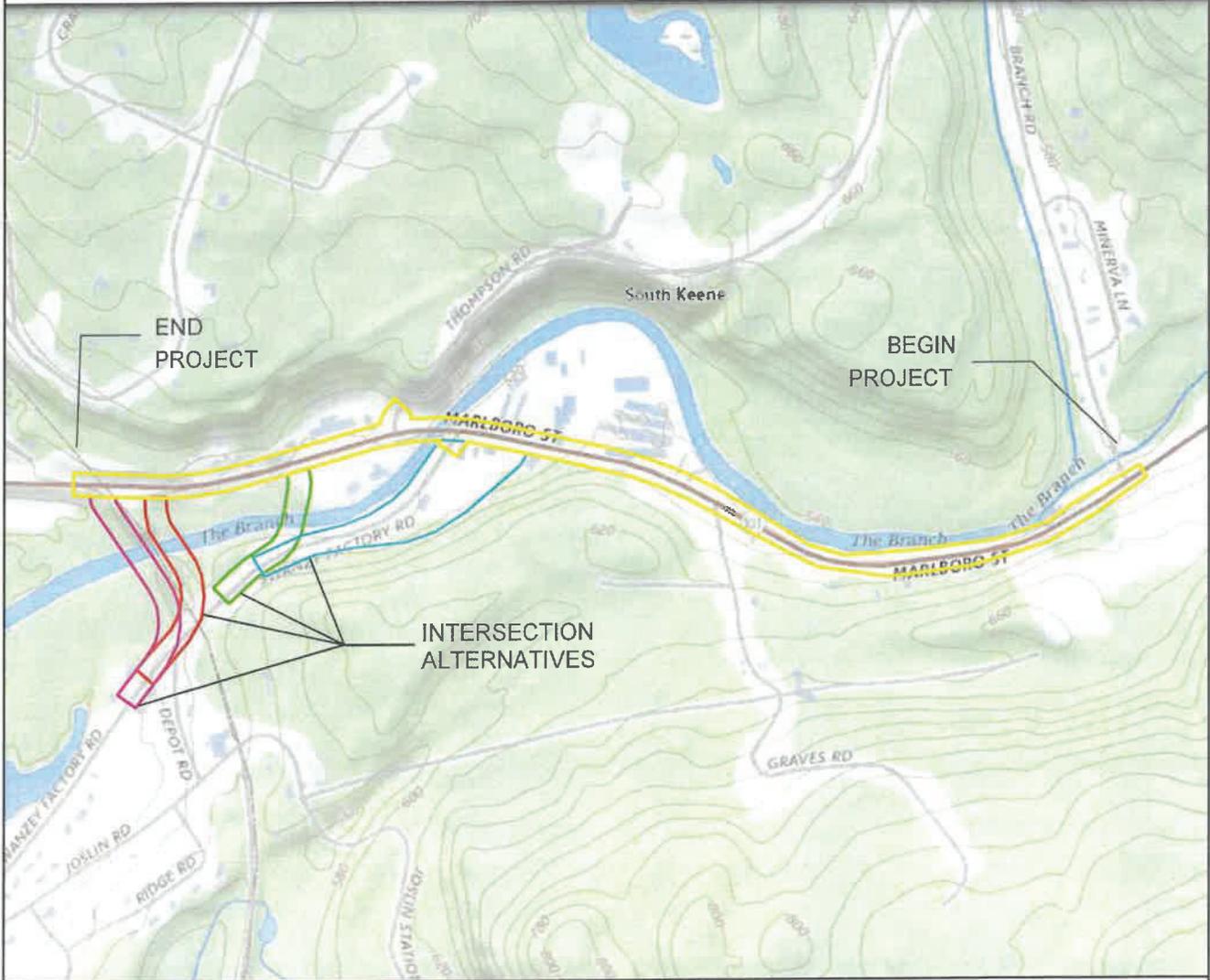
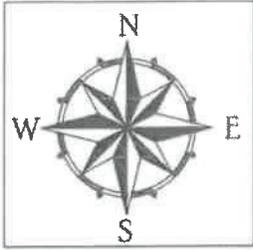
We would greatly appreciate your responding to this request and providing any comments related to the proposed rehabilitation project. We ask that you clearly identify your comments relative to each portion of the project. Please contact me if you have questions or require additional information at 603-424-8444 ext. 305.

Sincerely,
COMPREHENSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL INC

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matthew Lundsted". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Matthew Lundsted, P.E.
Principal, Project Manager

Enclosure



750 0 750 1500

SCALE 1" = 750'

GENERAL NOTES

1. Locus map based on USGS 7.5x7.5 Grid US Topo Map of Keene, NH from the USGS map webstore: <http://www.store.usgs.gov>
2. Map scale is relative to printed size

Figure 1
 USGS Locus Map
 NHDOT PROJECT NO. 41590
 ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS
 & BRIDGE REHABILITATION,
 ROUTE 101, KEENE, NH



**COMPREHENSIVE
 ENVIRONMENTAL
 INCORPORATED**

21 Depot Street
 Merrimack, NH 03054