

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HERITAGE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 13, 2023

4:30 PM

**2nd Floor Conference Room,
City Hall**

Members Present:

Cauley Powell, Chair
Molly Ellis, Vice Chair
Marilyn Huston
Louise Zerba, Alternate
Rose Carey, Alternate

Staff Present:

Evan Clements, Planner
Will Schoefmann, GIS Technician

Members Not Present:

Erin Benik
Brian Lee
Julie Emineth
Susan DeGidio, Alternate

1) Call to Order – Roll Call

Chair Powell called the meeting to order at 4:38 PM and called roll.

2) Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – August 9, 2023

Revisions: First, the minutes should show that Rose Carey made the motion to approve the minutes. Second, line 122, change “ne” to “be.”

A motion by Ms. Carey to approve the August 9, 2023 minutes as amended was duly seconded by Ms. Zerba. The motion carried unanimously.

3) 2021 CLG – Italian Neighborhood Heritage Project

The Board heard this agenda item after the next agenda item.

Mr. Schoefmann said he communicated with Brandee from the NH Division of Historic Resources (DHR) and submitted a reimbursement request for the GIS consultant. The State is waiting to see some proof of concept for what the Commission has been working on. Mr. Schoefmann told the State that in October, they should receive a more formalized version of what he was about to show the Commission. He told the State that some aspects would be

updated over time to incorporate more of the materials and research collected. Ms. Carey would be helping Mr. Schoefmann to complete some of this work.

Next, Mr. Schoefmann displayed the project's story map website and walked the Commission through it. The main "buckets," or components, that the story map included were: families and culture, education and faith, industry, agriculture, and food, recreation and nature, crowdsourced data collection, and thank yous. The Commission agreed that the website looked really good and thanked Mr. Schoefmann for his hard work on it. The hover captions were ideal, and Mr. Schoefmann said he would try to convert the remaining handwritten materials into captions. There are still some more images to add. He showed the Commission one of the video clips included. Mr. Schoefmann and Ms. Carey would continue working together to best determine the most effective way to display the "then and now" photos. There were some challenges with the number of photos allowed for upload, which Mr. Schoefmann was looking for a way to alter. He showed how a user could navigate the map features of the site. He also noted that Mr. Lee had edited the video clips to be published to the City's YouTube channel; the videos would remain unlisted until the story map website is published. Once the site is up and ready, Mr. Schoefmann suggested cross-linking with the City's website to have a greater reach.

Mr. Schoefmann did not think he needed any additional support from the Commission to wrap this up. The Commission agreed that they should still create a teaser video, which Mr. Lee might be able to work on. The Commission agreed that Mr. Schoefmann's work was excellent and very engaging. Mr. Schoefmann felt some pressure to do right by all the residents who gave their time, stories, and materials for this project. Mr. Schoefmann will distribute the site link to the Commission when it is ready to go live. The Commission could review the site further at the October meeting. The Commission was ready and willing if Mr. Schoefmann needed more help to wrap this up.

Chair Powell wondered if there was pressure from DHR. Mr. Schoefmann did not think so. He explained to DHR that the hired consultant's job was essentially done. The consultant created this story map platform that Mr. Schoefmann had been able to work on.

4) 2022 CLG – Recovering Black History in Keene Project

Chair Powell felt that the training with Jenna Carroll of the Cheshire County Historical Society was very informative. The Chair said she was not left with any questions, and she was excited to review the materials Ms. Carroll provided. Mr. Clements would get the link to the Google form, the YouTube video, and the presentation from Ms. Carroll and share them with the Commission. Ms. Huston asked if the list of names was people who had been identified in Keene so far and Chair Powell said yes. Chair Powell thought the Commission was getting acclimated to this project. It would be good for the Commissioners to familiarize themselves with the list of names. A meeting with the project consultant would help to assign tasks and ensure the Commission is not doing redundant work.

Mr. Clements mentioned that he spoke with Kabria about staying involved with her process. She has four graduate students working on this and they meet twice per month. Mr. Clements would sit in on one of those monthly meetings so he can provide regular updates on their work to the Commission.

5) **NH Preservation Alliance – Membership Renewal**

Mr. Clements received a letter from the NH Preservation Alliance in August, reminding the Commission that its membership expires in November. The 12-month organizational membership is \$60 and includes a physical copy of their newsletter.

A motion by Chair Powell to renew the Commissions NH Preservation Alliance membership seconded by Ms. Carey, passed unanimously.

6) **Staff Updates**

Included in the meeting packet was a letter sent to most of the City's boards and commissions. The NH Department of Transportation (DOT) started preliminary design work at Rt-101 and Swanzey Factory Road, and they are exploring a few alternatives. The letter included a map showing the various potential layouts. A few of the proposals are very close to the Stone Arch Bridge. Mr. Schoefmann learned the morning of this meeting that the City Engineer, Don Lussier, had already provided feedback to the State on the City's preferences. If any Commissioners have feedback or questions, they should send those notes to Mr. Schoefmann and Mr. Clements, who would share those details with the City Engineer. Mr. Clements said he and Mr. Schoefmann would keep an eye on the project as it moves forward.

Mr. Schoefmann explained that the preferred design the City submitted to the State was the blue area on the included map, which is an expanded corridor shifted eastward, as opposed to crossing the Brook anywhere near the bridge. The City's preference was for DOT to *not* build a bridge that they would hand over to the City to maintain. The City Engineer recommended that the State stay away from the Stone Arch Bridge, which Mr. Schoefmann thought aligned with what most of the City's public bodies would favor. Commission discussion ensued while looking at the provided map.

Chair Powell thought the Commission's interest had always been to protect the Stone Arch Bridge, which did not sound like it would be at stake. With all the work underway on the bike path in that general area, this was welcome news. Mr. Schoefmann had a feeling that the State was still working through all its design options. Mr. Schoefmann and Mr. Clements would keep the Commission aware of any further details.

7) **New Business**

None was presented.

- 8) **Next Meeting – October 11, 2023 at 4:30 PM**
- 9) **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Powell adjourned the meeting at 5:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Katie Kibler, Minute Taker
September 19, 2023

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