



Heritage Commission

Wednesday, June 12, 2024, 4:30 PM

2nd Floor Conference Room, City Hall
3 Washington St, Keene, NH 03431

AGENDA

- I. **Call to Order** – Roll Call
- II. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**
April 10, 2024 – Regular Meeting
- III. **Mayor Kahn** – Discussion on reducing required membership
- IV. **2022 CLG** – Recovering Black History in Keene Project
 - a. Project Hours
- V. **69 Washington Street, Keene UU Church** – Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places
- VI. **Staff Updates**
- VII. **New Business**
- VIII. **Next Meeting** – July 10, 2024
- IX. **Adjourn**

1 City of Keene
2 New Hampshire

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5 HERITAGE COMMISSION
6 MEETING MINUTES
7

Wednesday, April 10, 2024

4:30 PM

Council Chamber,
City Hall

Members Present:

Cauley Powell, Chair
Molly Ellis, Vice Chair
Julie Emineth
Marilyn Huston
Louise Zerba, Alternate

Staff Present:

Evan Clements, Planner
Will Schoefmann, GIS Technician

Members Not Present:

Susan DeGidio
Rose Carey, Alternate

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10 **1) Call to Order – Roll Call**

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12 Chair Cauley Powell called the meeting to order at 4:33 PM and roll call ensued. Vice Chair
13 Molly Ellis arrived at 4:40 PM.

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15 **2) Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

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17 **a. February 14, 2024 – Regular Meeting**

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19 On line 82, it was written that Chair Powell made a statement but it should state that Ms.
20 Carey made the statement. Louise Zerba moved to adopt the February 14 minutes as
21 amended which was promptly seconded by Julie Emineth. The motion passed
22 unanimously.

23
24 **b. March 13, 2024 – Joint Meeting**

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26 On lines 60-61, the minutes read that Chair Powell made a statement but it was Sophia
27 Cunha-Vasconcelos who made the statement. Ms. Zerba moved to adopt the March 13
28 minutes as amended which was promptly seconded by Marilyn Hutson. The motion
29 carried unanimously.

30
31 **3) 2022 CLG – Recovering Black History in Keene Project**
32

33 Mr. Clements stated that the Historical Society would be hosting an event on Friday, April 12 to
34 showcase the project that had been put together. Jenna Carroll reached out to see if someone
35 from the HC would want to introduce the project, to which they decided they would not. The
36 consultant, Dr. Kabria Baumgartner, agreed to stay on the project until August in order to collect
37 the information that the HC gathered.

38
39 Ms. Huston described some of her research techniques and findings that she would give to Ms.
40 Carroll. Chair Powell stated that they should also look into the physical documents that are not
41 online. They would meet with Bill Dow at the Clerk's Office for those records.

42
43 Chair Powell hoped to arrange a presentation of the project for the HC in order to facilitate a
44 discussion about how they would incorporate the ongoing research and what they could do to
45 meet the grant requirements in terms of public sharing. She stated that there would be a final
46 report submitted to the HC and then, typically, with past grants, a presentation of the findings.

47

48 **4) 2021 CLG – Italian Neighborhood Project**

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50 Mr. Schoefmann presented the website he had been working on for the Italian Neighborhood
51 Project. He had been working on placing videos into the different sub-sections they had setup,
52 such as interviews they had done with the Italian Society. He described the different headers
53 such as Families and Culture, Education and Faith, Agriculture/ Food and Industry, Nature and
54 Recreation, Then and Now, and Crowdsourced Data Collection. Mr. Schoefmann stated he was
55 working on the third section, which was close to completion. He went on to show one of the
56 interviews with John DiBernardo. He explained that there was a lot of great information from the
57 interviews but that it was a challenge to connect the information to an address on the map shown
58 on the website. Mr. Schoefmann would send the website to the committee so they could see what
59 he had done so far. He went through the headers and gave a brief presentation on each section.

60

61 **5) Staff Updates**

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63 Mr. Clements stated he hadn't heard further discussion on merging the HC and HDC but would
64 inform the HC if there were any updates.

65

66 Mr. Schoefmann reported that the downtown project was still on track and believed they would
67 break ground in 2026. The Pedestrian Path Advisory Committee had been working on suggested
68 regulations for use of the downtown bike lanes. He stated that there were three different stages of
69 project and focus areas. On May 1 at the Keene Recreation Center, from 3:30 PM to 4:30 PM
70 and 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM, the consultants would go over some of the design concepts for Central
71 Square. Discussion ensued on the different bike lanes in Keene.

72

73 **6) New Business**

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75 None presented.

76

77 **7) Next Meeting – May 8, 2024**

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79 The next meeting would be held on May 8, 2024 at 4:30 PM.

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81 **8) Adjourn**

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83 There being no further business, Chair Powell adjourned the meeting at 5:30 PM.

84

85

86 Respectfully submitted by,
87 Melissa Danneker, Minute Taker

88

89 Reviewed and edited by,
90 Evan J. Clements, AICP
91 Planner



Northeastern University
College of Social Sciences and Humanities
Department of History

TO: Keene Heritage Commission
FROM: Dr. Kabria Baumgartner
DATE: May 7, 2024
RE: Update on the Recovering Black History in Nineteenth-Century Keene Project

Brief Update

The Northeastern University research team presented our work on April 12, 2024, as part of the Lunch & Learn series held at the Historical Society of Cheshire County. We received wonderful feedback; in fact, a few attendees shared with us some of the sources they had come across in their own personal research. We have been following some of those leads.

Three students who worked on the project have moved onto other opportunities. One Public History graduate student, Grace Rooney, will continue working about ten hours per week through August 16, 2024. Grace and I look forward to visiting Keene on May 9, 2024 and exploring some of the unprocessed materials at City Hall.

In addition to the work that we will do there, we are still exploring a few digital and analog collections at Massachusetts area archives. I have been searching through digitized materials from the Tewksbury Almshouse Intake Records [collection](#). After a careful review of the collection, the following digitized records contain New Hampshire connections:

1. Fanny Mero (Exeter, NH) – <https://tewksburyalms.omeka.net/items/show/43731>
2. Edward Palmer (Portsmouth, NH) – <https://tewksburyalms.omeka.net/items/show/30038>
3. Ann Wells (Hillsdale, NH) – <https://tewksburyalms.omeka.net/items/show/33541>
4. William Marcus (Exeter, NH) – <https://tewksburyalms.omeka.net/items/show/33941>
5. Rosa Foss (Concord, NH) – <https://tewksburyalms.omeka.net/items/show/21029>
6. William Stringer (Ipswich, NH) – <https://tewksburyalms.omeka.net/items/show/22995>
7. James Bush (Grafton, NH) – <https://tewksburyalms.omeka.net/items/show/3769>
8. George Shepard (Lynn, NH) – <https://tewksburyalms.omeka.net/items/show/34924>

This last record for George Shepard, born in Lynn, New Hampshire in the 1780s or 1790s, is fascinating. I've transcribed the record below:

Transcription:

Shepard, George (col. 82 fr. Bos. Feb. 7th 1868.

B. Lynn N.H. md. uf. d. farmer. left L. when 21 to Keene N.H. (all around N.H. since last 7 or 8 yrs. in Newport N.H. went fr. N. to Mo. ago and went to Albany, there till 1 wk. ago & direct to Bos. via West^{ern} R.R. son Wm. in Bos. sailor. sib. in Woodstock VT. no other rels.

In no other Inst. Feeble.

Shepard apparently traveled “all around New Hampshire” including to Keene. He mentions a sibling in Woodstock, Vermont, which borders New Hampshire. In our research and report, we have talked about how porous state borders were; African Americans often crossed borders – into Vermont and Massachusetts – and capturing those geographical patterns could be illuminating.

It has been worthwhile to think about the few African American residents who were born, raised, and died in Keene alongside African Americans who were just passing through town like George Shepard. How does the broader research project on the Monadnock region capture the experiences of people like Shepard? In other words, how does George Shepard fit into the broader story of African Americans in nineteenth-century Keene and the Monadnock region, especially since no other record has been found yet that mentions him?

Much of our focus is on writing our report and organizing the Google folder with primary source documents. Our next update in June will discuss what we came across during our May visit to Keene. If you have any questions, you can contact me, if need be, at k.baumgartner@northeastern.edu.

Sincerely,



Kabria Baumgartner, Ph.D.

Dean's Associate Professor of History and Africana Studies
Northeastern University
Boston, MA 02115



Northeastern University
College of Social Sciences and Humanities
Department of History

TO: Keene Heritage Commission
FROM: Dr. Kabria Baumgartner
DATE: June 5, 2024
RE: Update on the Recovering Black History in Nineteenth-Century Keene Project

Brief Update

The Northeastern University research team visited Keene on May 9, 2024. Bill Dow met and provided us with some unprocessed materials to explore at City Hall including the Town Records, 1753-1806 as well as the Upper Ashuelot Proprietary Records, 1734. We reviewed most of this material during our visit, and we can say with some certainty that we came across no material directly about African Americans in Keene.

What these records contain are discussions about early city governance, the role of religious leaders, schools, labor, smallpox, and the American Revolution. Specifically, Northeastern researcher Grace Rooney noted that the first half of the Upper Ashuelot Proprietary Records were meeting notes from a group of men who settled the area in the early years, beginning in the 1730s. The next and largest part of these records are land deeds that include sketches and dimensions of land and to whom the land was allocated. We also found multiple references to Abel Blake in both collections that we reviewed. Blake had a neighbor named William who has been identified as a person of color. A person named William Hayward is mentioned in these records. Could this be the William identified as a person of color? We'll do more research. We also found Samuel Dinsmoor's name mentioned many times and he was listed on the 1820 U.S. federal census as having a Black person in his home.

Below is a photo from page 89 in the Town Records, 1753-1806 about the American Revolution, which may be of interest to the Keene Historical Commission as well as the Historical Society of Cheshire County in the run-up to the United States semiquincentennial in 2026. All pertinent photos that we took will be uploaded to the Google folder.

In addition to our visits to Keene, we are exploring a select few archival collections at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, MA and Phillips Library in Rowley, MA. Much of our focus remains on writing our report as well as compiling and organizing the Google folder with primary source documents.

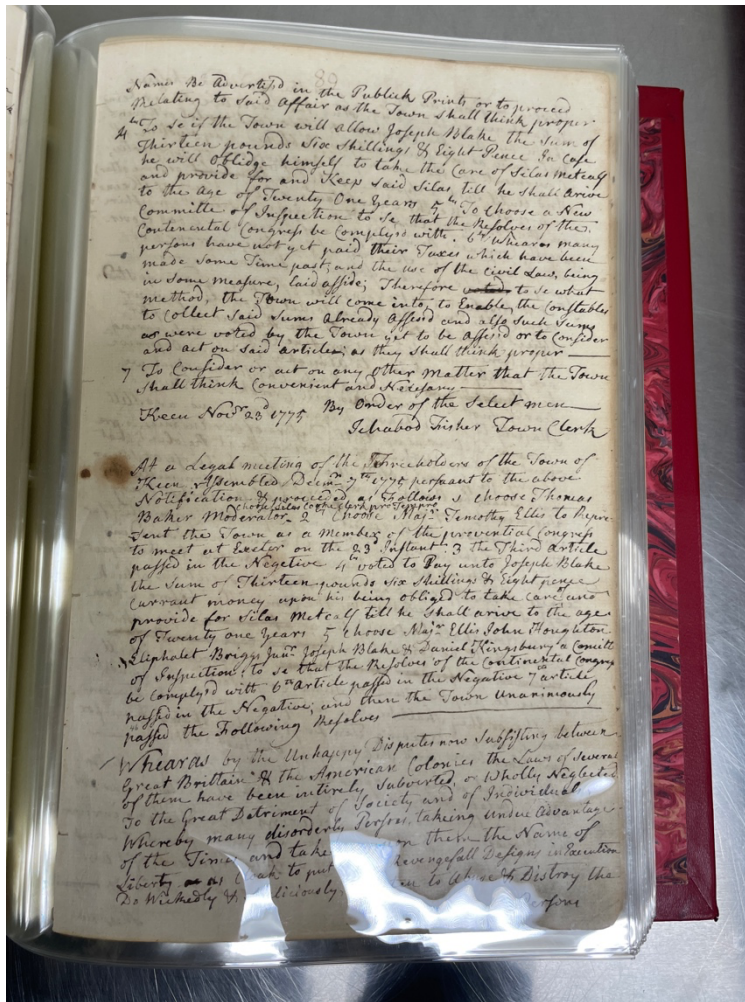


Figure 1. Handwritten summary of town meeting on December 7, 1775 from Town Records, 1753-1806 [p. 89], City of Keene.

If you have any questions, you can contact me at k.baumgartner@northeastern.edu. The research team will visit Keene on June 6, 2024 to finish searching records at City Hall and possibly look through some directories.

Sincerely,

Kabria Baumgartner

Kabria Baumgartner, Ph.D.

Dean's Associate Professor of History and Africana Studies

Northeastern University

Boston, MA 02115

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State of New Hampshire
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

172 Pembroke Road Concord, New Hampshire 03301
Phone: 603-271-3483 Fax: 603-271-3433
TDD Access: Relay NH 1-800-735-2964
nhdhr.dncr.nh.gov



May 21, 2024

CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES
KEENE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
69 WASHINGTON ST
KEENE NH 03431

Dear Chairperson:

We are pleased to inform you that the Keene Unitarian Universalist Church located at 69 Washington Street in Keene, New Hampshire will soon be considered by the New Hampshire State Historical Resources Council (Council) for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The Council will meet next on July 29, 2024 at 11 AM. You are being notified because you are listed as the owner of record.

The National Register is the official federal listing of significant heritage resources (buildings, structures, sites, districts, and objects) worthy of preservation, but it does not impose any restriction or limitation on the use of private or non-federal property unless federal funds or programs are involved. If the property is listed in the National Register, certain Federal investment tax credits for rehabilitation and other provisions may apply.

Although there are no known coal resources in New Hampshire, we are required by federal regulations to notify you that if the property contains coal resources and is listed on the National Register, certain provisions of the Surface Mining and Control Act of 1977 make it less likely that surface mining of the coal will be permitted by the state or federal government.

Owners of private properties nominated to the National Register of Historic Places must be given an opportunity to concur in or object to listing in accord with the National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1980 and federal regulation 36 CFR Part 60. (These provisions apply to fee simple ownership only.)

Any owner or partial owner of private property who chooses to object to listing is required to submit to the State Historic Preservation Officer a notarized statement certifying that the party is the sole or partial owner of private property, as appropriate, and objects to the listing. For a single privately owned property with one owner, the property will not be listed if the owner objects. In nominations with multiple ownership of a single property, the property will not be listed if a majority of the owners object. In the case of a district nomination, the district will not be listed if a majority of the owners objects to listing. Each owner or partial owner of private property has one vote regardless of what part of the property that party owns.

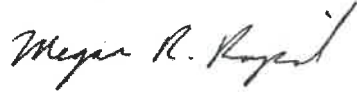
If the property cannot be listed because the owner or a majority of owners object prior to the submission of a nomination by the state, the State Historic Preservation Officer shall submit the nomination to the Keeper of the National Register for a determination of the eligibility of the property for inclusion in the National Register. If the property is then determined eligible for listing, although not formally listed, federal agencies will be required to allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment before the agency may fund, license, or assist a project which will affect the property.

If you choose to object to the listing of your private property, the notarized objection must be submitted to the State Historic Preservation Officer, Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Division of Historical Resources, 172 Pembroke Road, Concord, N.H. 03301 by 4pm on July 26, 2024.

If you wish to comment on whether the property should be nominated to the National Register, please send your comments to the Division of Historical Resources, 172 Pembroke Road, Concord, N.H. 03301. Comments must be received by July 26, 2024.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to contact me at 603-271-6435 or megan.r.rupnik@dncr.nh.gov.

Sincerely,



Megan R. Rupnik
National Register & State Survey Coordinator

Encl

cc: Keene Historic District Commission
Keene Heritage Commission
Keene City Council
Cheshire County Administration
E. Clark

From: [Cauley Powell](#)
To: [Evan Clements](#)
Subject: On Unitarian Church
Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 1:24:56 PM

FINAL SENT TO ROSIE ON July 15th, 2019.

For Urban Barn Tour
Venue architectural history

The Keene Congregational Society (now the Keene Unitarian Universalist Church) opened their new location at 69 Washington Street on January 24, 1895. It was three years after discussions began regarding the sale of their old church building, which was located on the corner of Church and Main Streets. The new building was designed by architect Edwin James Lewis, Jr., based out of Dorchester, MA, who built thirty-five Unitarian churches over the course of his very successful career. A Unitarian leader himself, Lewis chose to pursue a traditional gothic design, as was popular in that era. The Church had to be longer than it was wide in order to accommodate the plot of land purchased, the Dorr property (Dorr being a prior owner, the property belonged to the Bridgeman family at the time of purchase) at 75 Washington Street, on which stood a home intended to be the parsonage.

Congregant priorities for the new building were a seating capacity of five hundred, side aisles for pews, and maintaining a reasonable distance from other lots. The new building's design would also include a parish hall. Lewis was able to honor their wishes with his design, the final building of which measured out at 43' wide by 97' long. The exterior was of an old English style with walls of rectangular, rough cut stone. The interior contained dormer windows in the steep gable roof and low windows along the tall side walls. The building's most prominent exterior feature is a stone bell tower, in which hangs a Revere Company bell.

The Tiffany "Truth" window, a memorial to the founding members of the church, was installed in the parish in 1900. The window was donated by Miss Mary B. Dinsmoor, who developed a concept with Helen Dinsmoor and Caroline Handerson Faulkner, which, once approved, was designed and built by Tiffany & Co., NY. The founders window was practical in that it was meant, in part, to help curtail the amount of light coming in (shades were also installed on the dormer windows), but it's message and figure of Truth resonated with the sermons and messages of the church.

Electrification began in 1918. In 1942 a rec room was added in the undercroft. A desire for an expanded religious education wing led to the building of an addition. This was championed by Edward "Ted" Kingsbury and completed in 1960. The addition was carried out by architectural firm A. R. James & A. M. Doyle.

James J. Smart's *The Keene Unitarian Universalist: The Building and its People* offers a

sweeping look at the 1894 construction of the Keene Unitarian Church, as well as its 1959-60 renovation and everything both in between and after. A thoughtful social examination with meticulous historical detail, the book is both an exhaustive history of a building and a testament to what was, at the time of his writing, one hundred years of faith and community in a single location. Now, of course, it's one hundred and twenty-five years. For a more thorough look at the history of the building and the people who created it, Mr. Smart's book should be a first stop.

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM

NHDHR INVENTORY #

Name, Location, Ownership

1. Historic name Keene Unitarian Church
 2. District or area _____
 3. Street and number 69 Washington Street
 4. City or town Keene
 5. County Cheshire
 6. Current owner Keene U U Church

Function or Use

7. Current use(s) Church and Religious
education
 8. Historic use(s) Church and Religious
education

Architectural Information

9. Style Gothic Revival
 10. Architect/builder Edward J. Lewis, Jr
 11. Source "Keene UU Church", Smart, pg.157
 12. Construction date 1894
 13. Source "Keene UU Church", Smart, pg176
 14. Alterations, with dates New Religious
Education wing. 1959 ^{*60} pg.173
Modified 1980 pg.183
 15. Moved? no yes date: _____

Exterior Features

16. Foundation Granite
 17. Cladding Granite, some stucco and stick
 18. Roof material Slate
 19. Chimney material Granite
 20. Type of roof Gable
 21. Chimney location 2 Interior
 22. Number of stories one
 23. Entry location multiple
 24. Windows stained and leaded

Replacement? no yes date: _____

Site Features

25. Setting Mixed use area. Corner lot,
Washington and Taylor Streets
 26. Outbuildings none

35. Photo #1 _____ 36. Date _____
 37. Roll # _____ Frame # _____ Direction: _____
 38. Negative stored at: _____

27. Landscape features Lawn, one or two mature
trees
 28. Acreage .91 acre
 29. Tax map/parcel # _____
 30. UTM reference _____
 31. USGS quadrangle and scale _____

Form prepared by

32. Name George Kingsbury
 33. Organization Keene Heritage Commission
 34. Date of survey April, 2003

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY FORM**NHDHR INVENTORY #****41. Historical Background and Role in the Town or City's Development:****42. Applicable NHDHR Historic Contexts:****43. Architectural Description and Comparative Evaluation:****44. National or State Register Criteria Statement of Significance:****45. Period of Significance:****46. Statement of Integrity:****47. Boundary Discussion:****48. Bibliography and/or References:**

The Church architect, Edwin L. Lewis, Jr , Boston, a well known church architect of over thirty Unitarian churches

The Church was built by The Roxbury Granite Co. of Keene with granite from their quarry in Roxbury. The contract was for \$19,487.00

The RELigious Education wing was built with a flat roof and Kaiwall walls, designed by Arthur Doyle, Keene architect. Due primarily to high cost of heating, the north wall was changed to wood siding and the flat roof was replaced by a gable roof. The new roof is 'off center' to accomodate thermal panels. These modifications were made in 1980.

The pg. references are from the book, "Keene U U Church " by James Smart, published by Phoenix Publishing, West Kennebunk, Maine in 1996. (Keene Unitarian Universalist Church, the Building and Its People)

Surveyor's Evaluation:

NR listed: individual _____
within district _____

NR eligible: individual _____
within district _____
not eligible _____
more info needed _____

NR Criteria: A _____
B _____
C _____
D _____
E _____

Integrity: yes _____
no _____