

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HERITAGE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, June 12, 2024

4:30 PM

**Council Chamber,
City Hall**

Members Present:

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

Staff Present:

Evan Clements, Planner

Members Not Present:

All Present

Mayor Jay Kahn

1) Call to Order – Roll Call

Chair Cauley Powell called the meeting to order at 4:32 PM and roll call ensued.

2) Approval of April 10, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Molly Ellis moved to adopt the April 10, 2024 meeting minutes which was duly seconded by Julie Emineth. The motion passed unanimously.

3) Mayor Kahn – Discussion on Reducing Required Membership

Mayor Jay Kahn joined the meeting at 4:45 PM.

Mayor Kahn stated that they'd done well filling vacancies in the HC since January but he was still having trouble recruiting to fill the existing vacancies. The HC had trouble with making quorum at times. At the time of the meeting, the HC needed to fill seven primary member seats, three of which were vacant, and up to five alternates, with three of those spots vacant. At present, they needed a four-person quorum but changing to five regular member seats would only require a three-person quorum. The Mayor suggested they reduce their membership to five primary members to solve the issue of not making quorum.

They also discussed meeting every other month rather than every month. The HC decided that they would meet every other month and could meet on an off-month if necessary. They would decide each month if they would meet the following month and cancel ahead of time rather than change their schedule to bi-monthly. They would discuss reducing membership seats in the future if necessary.

4) 2022 CLG – Recovering Black History in Keene Project

Vice Chair Ellis stated that she went to the City Hall to help with research. They had found some useful information from a book that had Selectman’s Records. Chair Powell stated that the packet she received from Kabria Baumgartner was very informative. She hoped that over the rest of the summer, they would be able to assist in finding any other physical records that aren’t digitized.

Chair Powell stated that she and Mr. Clements emailed Jenna Carroll from the Historical Society about ranking the different documents she had hoped to find in order for the HC to prioritize pulling documents with the most valuable information first. They would be able to let Bill Dow know which records they wanted to view prior to their arrival to provide Mr. Dow time to locate them and bring them to City Hall for viewing.

Marilyn Hutson reported that she was researching numbers she hoped to connect to individuals. She would follow up with the Keene Recreation Department for additional information she was seeking.

Ms. Carroll and her research assistant would be meeting to research documents at City Hall on June 26 and 27 as well as July 10 and 11. Members of the HC were welcome to join. Chair Powell stated that anyone who planned to attend should report it to Mr. Clements so he could create an agenda for.

Chair Powell discussed the rankings for the various documents and which they should focus their efforts on.

Chair Powell asked the members to submit their volunteer hours to Mr. Clements for reporting purposes. Mr. Clements was confident they would meet the grant requirements.

5) 469 Washington Street, Keene UU Church – Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places

The HC was notified that 469 Washington Street, Keene UU Church, was nominated for the National Registry.

Chair Powell asked what they could do to support it to which Mr. Clements stated the public comment period was open and they could write a letter of support to the Commission.

Ms. Emineth moved to write a letter of support for the 69 Washington Street property to be included on the National Registry of Historic Places. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Ellis and passed unanimously.

The deadline for the public comment period was July 25, 2024. Rose Carey would write and send a draft to Chair Powell for editing, who would send it to Mr. Clements. Mr. Clements would send it to the Commission for consideration.

6) Staff Updates

Mr. Clements spoke about the Master Plan update and how they had been very focused on community input. They did a think tank the previous week over a two-day period and about 70 people attended. He thought it was a great exercise to distill core values and hear about things that are important to the residents of the community. He encouraged the members to attend future visioning sessions and to bring friends and family within the community to participate.

Mr. Clements stated that they would have the results of the community survey soon. He invited members to go to keenemasterplan.com to view the results of the survey and more.

7) New Business

Ms. Hutson asked if the Italian Neighborhood Project website was on the City's webpage. Chair Powell stated Will hadn't completed the website at the time of the meeting but hoped to have both projects finished by the end of the year.

8) Next Meeting – July 10, 2024

With the new bi-monthly meeting schedule, the next meeting would be held on August 14, 2024 at 4:30 PM.

9) Adjourn

There being no further business, Chair Powell adjourned the meeting at 5:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Melissa Danneker, Minute Taker

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