



Heritage Commission

Wednesday, May 14, 2025, 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 9, 2025
- III. **Discussion** – Projects and Goalsetting for 2025
- IV. **Staff Updates**
- V. **New Business**
- VI. **Next Meeting** – June 11, 2025
- VII. **Adjourn**

City of Keene
New Hampshire

HERITAGE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 9, 2025

4:30 PM

2nd Floor Conference Room,
City Hall

Members Present:

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

Staff Present:

Evan Clements, Planner
Megan Fortson, Planner
Asah Cramer, Audio/Video Technician

Mayor Jay Kahn

Members Not Present:

Louise Zerba

1) Call to Order – Roll Call

Chair Ellis called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM. Roll call was conducted.

2) Approval of Previous Meeting minutes

A) February 12, 2025 – Regular Meeting

B) March 19, 2025 – Joint Historic District and Heritage Commission Meeting

Ms. Emineth made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of February 12, 2025. Ms. Cauley seconded the motion.

Ms. Huston arrived at 4:33 PM.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Ms. Powell made a motion to approve the March 19, 2025 minutes. Ms. Huston seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

3) Discussion – Projects and Goalsetting for 2025

30 Mr. Clements stated that at the last meeting, the HC talked about doing some kind of video
31 content, so he asked Asah Cramer to come today. He continued that she can talk with them
32 about doing longform and shortform video content and what that would be like.

33
34 Asah Cramer, Audio/Video Technician, introduced herself. She stated that she understands that
35 the HC is interested in doing some video content to promote what the HC is trying to celebrate.
36 Through discussions with Mr. Clements and Ms. Fortson, she gets the sense that the HC knows
37 about the resources at the library through Fact TV. Fact TV loans cameras and audio equipment
38 and trains people how to use them, if people create content Fact TV can play on their channel.
39 They have a large viewership. They also train people in editing. She highly recommends relying
40 on those resources.

41
42 Ms. Cramer continued that her background is in longform public access/network TV. People
43 nowadays have short attention spans, and short form/social media videos tend to do well. Videos
44 3 to 15 seconds long can be powerful to engage people and get them interested in ideas, so they
45 are then more likely to look at the longer, more in-depth content. She is curious to hear about the
46 HC's ideas.

47
48 Ms. Carey stated that she has gone twice to check out the equipment and resources at Fact TV.
49 She spoke of how the equipment includes an iPhone, hand-held video recorder with a
50 microphone, and earphones to wear while recording, which necessitates having two people. The
51 equipment is available to the HC at any time, and Fact TV said they would do the editing,
52 provided the HC stays within a scope and can create a 15-minute segment. She was thinking of
53 doing a 15-minute video of her own house just as an example for the HC, to see how easy or not
54 the process is. Ms. Cramer stated that she thinks that is a great idea. She continued that iPhone
55 quality has surpassed that of many digital cameras.

56
57 Chair Ellis asked if there are legal restrictions in terms of representing the City and the content
58 the HC would create. She asked if they would need it reviewed by the City Attorney. Ms.
59 Powell asked if they would need to have the content approved to have the HC's name on this to
60 air on the local TV station. Ms. Cramer replied that she does not know, off the top of her head.
61 Mr. Clements replied that generally speaking, there are allowances for not-for-profit content shot
62 only from the public right-of-way, and you can use about 15 seconds of copyrighted audio, such
63 as music in the background, without having a license for it. He continued that for events and
64 filming indoors, people who would be easily identifiable in footage would need to sign waivers.
65 It is good practice to engage with property owners to make sure they are comfortable with the
66 exterior of their property being filmed, regardless of legality. For specifics beyond that, they
67 would need to research the requirements.

68
69 Ms. Powell asked if the municipality counts as a non-profit. Mr. Clements replied that he thinks
70 so, but they would want to know for sure before getting started with this. Ms. Cramer stated that
71 the parameters are softer for video that is educational, which is what this sounds like. She

72 continued that regarding background music, there are free music resource libraries, which she
73 can help the HC with.

74

75 Ms. Powell stated that it might be beneficial to make a teaser up to 15 seconds long that
76 correlates with longer-form content. She asked if Fact TV will have the exclusive rights to the
77 content. Ms. Carey replied no, the HC can use it anywhere.

78

79 Chair Ellis asked if Fact TV really said they would edit the footage the HC gives them. Ms.
80 Carey replied yes. Discussion ensued about how that is tremendously helpful. Ms. Carey shared
81 her thoughts for the video content, showing and talking about the history of various local houses,
82 buildings, and locations, and using a GoPro to film areas that are inaccessible to people in
83 wheelchairs. She continued that the idea is to create a snapshot of what Keene looks like in
84 2025. Discussion ensued. Ms. Cramer stated that these are great ideas, and she agrees with
85 using short teasers to direct people to the longer content.

86

87 Ms. Huston asked what Ms. Cramer sees as stumbling blocks to this plan. Ms. Cramer replied
88 that time is hard, but it sounds like the HC has done their homework on this. She continued that
89 Fact TV's willingness to edit is great and saves a huge chunk of time. It sounds like the HC
90 members have ideas around the history and stories to tell at each location. She continued that
91 they might occasionally run into people who do not want their homes filmed, but that is just part
92 of it. Discussion continued.

93

94 Chair Ellis asked if there are ideas Ms. Cramer sees get a lot of engagement on social media that
95 she thinks would work well for the HC. Ms. Cramer replied that people like to see people's
96 faces. She continued that it works to have someone who is telling a story, and someone who
97 seems genuine and authentic. People respond better to content that has a human story, instead of
98 just the exteriors of buildings. Discussion ensued about how to include people and their stories,
99 and all the interesting history in downtown Keene, and about people that HC members know
100 who might be able to help with this project.

101

102 Ms. Powell stated that figuring out the stories is important, because the buildings themselves are
103 not the history. She continued that using archival imagery would be great, as people love "then
104 and now" photos. It is important for the HC to think about and understand what specifically they
105 are trying to communicate. She suggests starting with a spreadsheet or list of what they want to
106 pursue and what the story is for each. Stories are first, and the legalities can be worked out
107 behind the scenes. She likes Ms. Carey's idea of making a test case video. Again, they will need
108 to know if there are restrictions on what they say, as members of a commission representing the
109 City, and whether or to what degree the content needs to be scripted and approved.

110

111 Discussion continued about ideas for video content, and HC members agreed that using humor
112 and levity when possible will make the videos more engaging. Ms. Emineth spoke about how to
113 show people who think that history is just old and irrelevant that people in the past went through
114 the same things people today go through, and to find and show that human connection. Ms.

115 Powell suggested they create, in advance of the downtown infrastructure project, a series of short
116 videos of people talking about the changes downtown has experienced over the years and their
117 thoughts on the changes and what it was like to live through them.

118
119 Mr. Clements stated that it sounds like homework for next time is coming up with some concrete
120 ideas. He continued that he loves the downtown one, which is probably the one with the most
121 chronological time constraint, so they might need to decide if that is something they want to push
122 towards.

123

124 **4) Historic Trail Marker – Keene Glass**

125

126 Mr. Clements stated that guest Steve Seraichick is here to share a great project he is working on.

127

128 Mr. Seraichick introduced himself and gave a brief background about his family's history in
129 Keene. He stated that his house is next door to Stonewall Farm. He was the past president of the
130 Yankee Bottle Club. They collect and revere bottles manufactured in the 1700s and 1800s.
131 Bottles were made right here in Keene, on Marlboro St. While walking his dog on the rail trail,
132 he saw that there are historical markers on the stretch between Water St. and Eastern Ave., and
133 what they are missing is a mention of Keene Glassworks. In 1830, Keene Glassworks employed
134 one out of every six workers in Keene. There were two glass factories in Keene. One was near
135 the Rec Center, and there is a sign saying it made window glass. About the same time, a glass
136 factory was built on Marlboro St. to make glass bottles. He cannot believe the historical markers
137 do not mention glass manufacturing. Bottle collecting is either the fifth or sixth most collectible
138 of the top ten antiques, and collectors and novices who are interested in bottles highly revere the
139 bottles manufactured in Keene. They are highly collectible and are not being made anymore.

140

141 Mr. Seraichick continued that he wanted to know what to do (to get a historical marker to include
142 glass manufacturing), so he contacted Councilor Bobby Williams. Councilor Williams contacted
143 people in Concord and told him (Mr. Seraichick) about how to apply for a historical sign for a
144 road in NH. It is a complicated and lengthy process and a committee has to approve of your
145 nomination. He got in touch with Amy Dixon, who oversees the historical markers in the state,
146 and she told him the historical markers he is referring to were put up by the City of Keene, not
147 the State. She told him to contact the municipality. Thus, he contacted someone, perhaps Mr.
148 Clements, and spoke for a few minutes to the Historic District Commission. They told him to go
149 to the Heritage Commission. Here he is today. Someone suggested he talk with the Bicycle
150 Pedestrian Path Advisory Committee (BPPAC), too, which he did. They were very interested in
151 his idea of having a sign to recognize the glass industry in Keene.

152

153 Mr. Seraichick continued that Alan Rumrill (former Director of the Cheshire County Historical
154 Society) is in the Yankee Bottle Club, too, knows what he (Mr. Seraichick) is up to, and is
155 willing to put together a script for the sign. If he heard right, he thinks a City Council member
156 was there (at the BPPAC meeting) and said that if Mr. Seraichick comes up with the sign script,

157 the Council will take it from there. Thus, Mr. Rumrill is working on it. They hope to have the
158 sign.

159
160 HC members asked for more information about the location of the former glass bottle factory.
161 Mr. Seraichick replied with more details and the history of the factory and the history of the
162 railroads. He showed and spoke about two glass bottles he brought with him today, stating that
163 they are each about \$1,000 right now at auction. Discussion ensued.

164
165 Chair Ellis stated that it sounds like Mr. Seraichick has the HC's support. She asked what he
166 needs from them. Mr. Seraichick replied just their blessings. Chair Ellis asked if he needs
167 something like a letter of support. Mr. Seraichick replied that when Mr. Rumrill drafts wordage
168 for the sign, he will share it with the HC. Chair Ellis replied that that sounds great.

169
170 Ms. Powell stated that maybe Ms. Cramer is already imagining social media coverage, but
171 maybe if this comes to fruition and the HC supports it, there could be an interview with Mr.
172 Seraichick or other members of the Yankee Bottle Club, at the sign, for the HC's video series.
173 Mr. Seraichick replied that the Yankee Bottle Club just met with Fact TV and someone from
174 Fact TV filmed each member presenting a bottle and talking about their history with bottle
175 collecting. He shared more information.

176
177 Mr. Clements stated that when Mr. Seraichick is ready with a full proposal to bring to City
178 Council, the HC can figure out a way to support his petition, such as a letter or a motion. Ms.
179 Powell stated that they could potentially offer monetary support, if there is a hangup on that from
180 City Council. Mr. Clements stated that a HC member coming and speaking might be good.
181 Discussion continued and the HC thanked Mr. Seraichick for coming today.

182
183 **5) Discussion with Mayor Kahn – United States Semiquincentennial Celebration in**
184 **2026**

185
186 Mayor Kahn stated that he has been asked a number of times by folks about a 2026 July 4th
187 celebration. He continued that he hopes they can work together to do something, and he does not
188 think it will be as complicated as it sounds. He thinks naming a 20-person commission, maybe
189 in Concord, is a necessity, because the State capital ought to do a centerpiece for the state. Here
190 in Keene, he thinks they can do something significant. His first phone call was to the Historical
191 Society to see what they might be doing, and they are indeed planning something, which they are
192 keeping under wraps for now. Their next newsletter will have an article about what they are
193 anticipating, which include some activities down Main St., highlighting historic places like the
194 Wyman Tavern. They will do activities next year as well. They are a great partner.

195
196 The Mayor continued the HC would be a great partner, too, if they accept. He saw in the last
197 meeting minutes that once they do Italian American neighborhood documentation they were
198 looking to move on to other kinds of documentation. He does not know what other kinds of
199 activities the HC would like to sponsor, but he would like to have the HC as a partner with the

200 Historical Society and perhaps others. He was on the phone today with the Keene Sentinel,
201 which has a great repository of history for the city, and they will be thinking about what they
202 could contribute to this. He is also inquiring with the Ken Burns Enterprises and the Colonial
203 Theater. Another suggestion is a reading of the Declaration of Independence, by a dozen or so
204 students or other community representatives.

205

206 Ms. Huston suggested having all the churches in town ring their bells at once at 4:00 PM. Brief
207 discussion ensued about how the church bells could be part of the HC's video series. Ms. Powell
208 stated that it sounds like the HC has to do some brainstorming.

209

210 Ms. Powell asked what a partnership would look like – is the Historical Society doing their own
211 thing? The Mayor replied that they talked about a partnership, bringing different folks together,
212 so they do not have duplication. Discussion continued about ideas and possible participants,
213 such as the SAR and DAR, too. The Mayor agreed with Ms. Powell that it would be good for
214 the HC to have a brainstorming session for their next meeting. Ms. Powell stated that she thinks
215 it makes a lot of sense for them to work with the City on acknowledging the anniversary.
216 Discussion ensued about the upcoming anniversary of Paul Revere's ride, and the American
217 Revolution. Ms. Powell stated that maybe there could be a piece about people in Keene's
218 personal family history related to the Revolution.

219

220 Ms. Powell left at 5:24 PM.

221

222 **6) Staff Updates**

223

224 Mr. Clements gave an update on the City's progress with updating the Comprehensive Master
225 Plan, encouraging folks to get information from and engage with keenemasterplan.com. He
226 continued that June 3 is a Future Summit at which the draft plan will be unveiled, and he
227 encourages people to attend and spread the word about it. Ms. Fortson stated that they are
228 trying to have childcare available at the Future Summit for people who need it, with activities
229 for kids and adults. She continued that they will also have a table at Earthfest on April 26,
230 from 12:00 to 4:00 PM at Railroad Square. City staff will be there representing the Community
231 Development Department, largely the Master Plan. The Energy and Climate Committee and
232 BPPAC will also have tables.

233

234 **7) New Business**

235

236 Chair Ellis asked if there was any new business. (No).

237

238 **8) Next Meeting – May 14, 2025**

239

240 Chair Ellis stated that they are definitely meeting next month. She continued that they have a lot
241 to do.

242

243 **9) Adjournment**

244

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

246

247 Respectfully submitted by,

248 Britta Reida, Minute Taker

249

250 Reviewed and edited by,

251 Evan J. Clements, AICP

252 Planner