

Historic District Commission

Minutes

April 11, 2023

APPROVED: June 13, 2023

AGENDA: ELECTION OF OFFICERS
2023 MEETING SCHEDULE

ATTENDING: Richard LaFlamme (Chair) via Zoom, Shaun Lagueux (Select Board Representative), Dorcas Gordon, Kyle Sandler (Vice Chair) and Steve Favorite

OTHER: Joanne Bailey (Land Use Manager) and Donna Sullivan (Land Use Administrative Assistant)

Mr. LaFlamme called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM with a quorum present in the room.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. LaFlamme asked for nominations for Chair and Vice Chair. Ms. Gordon motioned nomination of Mr. LaFlamme for Chair and Mr. Sandler for Vice Chair. Mr. Lagueux seconded. Mr. LaFlamme asked if there were any other nominations, and hearing none called for the vote. The motion carried by roll call vote 5-0-0.

2023 MEETING SCHEDULE

Mr. LaFlamme stated that the next meeting would be Tuesday, May 9, 2023. Ms. Gordon stated that the remaining required meetings were set for August 8, 2023, and October 10, 2023 and unless cases came up which might add meetings, these dates were fine. Others agreed.

MINUTES APPROVAL:

The minutes of the October 25, 2022 meeting were reviewed. Ms. Gordon motioned to accept the minutes as presented. Mr. Favorite seconded. The motion carried 3-0-2.

COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS:

Ms. Gordon reported that she attended a National Alliance for Preservation Districts training that was hosted by the City of Lebanon for Historic District Commission members. She stated that she found it to be an awesome event.

Ms. Gordon went on to describe information she learned and was happy to report that Bristol was way ahead of other municipalities with its fully established Historic District with guidelines and the offering of tax incentives through the adoption of RSA 79E regulations that offer property owners tax credits for property improvement projects in the downtown area. She also added that Bristol was a Certified Local Government which allowed for grant opportunities for Preservation Planning.

She stated that what she came away with was a focus and desire to educate the community about the Historic District and 79E as an economic development tool. She made some suggestions for the

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COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS: continued

Commission to consider for educating the public that included the possibility of holding a workshop to let property owners in the Downtown Commercial & Historic Districts know about the Community Revitalization program. Another fun type of informational way to educate the public would be for a scavenger hunt using the Historical District Brochure that could be a good partnership opportunity to include the School District History teachers and students.

She stated that the Commission could also use possible matching grant funding to update its District Guidelines and maybe look to the future to address things like solar panels and charging stations with a goal to balance economic development with historic preservation.

She shared that another important item she learned at the event was about the change to Land Use RSAs that will require the Land Use Boards including the Historic District Commission to list reasons for approval or denial of applications that come before them for review.

Mr. Favorite commented that he was happy that Bristol was ahead of others and that its District guidelines were not as restrictive as those he had seen in other towns.

Ms. Gordon stated that she would like the Commission to consider implementing its goals as educators and decide what that might look like.

Mr. Lagueux stated he liked the suggestion of meeting with property owners. He felt it was an opportune time to do so with some changes happening with businesses in Central Square and it would be good to reach out to the established businesses as well.

There was some additional discussion about the demographic shifts and increases to Real Estate prices. Some of these changes could be due to the onset of Covid 19 and the influx of people who wanted to take advantage of our great outdoor locations. Mr. Lagueux stated that the influx has brought some great people to the area that have wanted to share their expertise and get involved. He thought it would be a great time to invigorate the Community noting the business community stabilization presently and the opportunity to encourage others. Mr. Sandler stated that the financial incentive is a good news item that should be shared.

Ms. Bailey stated that the Land Use Office would be happy to assist the Commission with exploring this and other suggestions and could help to facilitate this event. Ms. Gordon offered to meet with Ms. Bailey to discuss the meeting with property owners and they could come back to next meeting with a proposal for consideration.

Mr. LaFlamme suggested that there be a brainstorming session at the May meeting to consider all the suggestions and any others that might come up. Ms. Gordon and others agreed to this and she stated she will also further pursue the property owner meeting idea with Ms. Bailey for discussion at the next meeting.

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COMMUNICATIONS:

Ms. Bailey updated the Commission about the recent change to the use of Outlook Calendars for meeting scheduling and that when Commission members are notified by email about an upcoming meeting, if they used Outlook, they could just click on the Accept button within the email to let the Land Use Office know they would be attending. For those not using Outlook, they could continue to reply to the email sent on whether they would attend or not so that the Land Use Administrator would know if a quorum would be present. She stated that Ms. Donna Sullivan is now the Land Use Administrative Assistant and she will be sending the emails going forward.

Ms. Bailey informed the Commission about other training opportunities from the NH Business and Economic Affairs Department. The April 29th session via Zoom would have a Historic Preservation Track that might be of interest to them. She will send the link to the Commission members. Ms. Gordon shared that there is an annual report that needs to be filed indicating any training hours members had for the year. She can provide the office information for this.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEXT MEETING: May 9, 2023

ADJOURNMENT:

With no other business before the Commission, Mr. Lagueux motioned to adjourn. Mr. Sandler seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Cote
Land Use Associate