

CITY OF LACONIA HERITAGE COMMISSION
5:00 PM City Hall - Armand A. Bolduc City Council Chamber
Accepted June 14, 2023

4/12/2023 - Minutes

1. Call to order

Chair Marjory Wilkinson called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

2. Salute to the flag

Chair Marjory Wilkinson led The Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll call

Mark Haynes, Lois Kessin, Scott Ringer, Catherine Tokarz, Jane Whitehead, Chair Marjory Wilkinson, Dean Trefethen Planning & Development Director and Code Secretary Yanis Banks.

4. Recording secretary

5. Staff in attendance

Tara Shore Chair of The Historic District Commission.

6. Acceptance of Minutes from previous meeting

Acceptance of edited March 8th, 2023 Minutes. Lois Kessin made a motion to accept the minutes, Scott Ringer seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

6.I. Acceptance of March 15 minutes

Revision: March 8th, 2023 Minutes

7. City Council Liaison Report

Councilor Mark Haynes stated it's been a slow season and the meetings have been short. The Government Ordinances Subcommittee is getting ready to take up several subjects. One being Sunset Legislation when it comes to demo permits. Tara Shore asked what Sunset is, Mark responded that there needs to be a specific time. The City Council and The Government Ordinance Subcommittee would like an update about the changes made to the City Ordinances pertaining to HDC.

Tara reminded Mark that it's in the hands of the Government Ordinance Subcommittee. Marjory asked Tara if there are changes made to the City Ordinances for the HDC. Tara responded that the original HDC City Ordinances were approved about 1-2 years ago.

8. Planning Board update

Dean said there isn't much to discuss other than he is meeting with the sub-committee as well on the 24th of the month. Short term rental is one of the topics that will be discussed in addition to Sunset legislation regarding demos and the Historic District Commission. As for the State School, the developer is moving

forward with the plans as discussed, the last two meetings and there may be a conceptual plan presented by the end of May or early June. They will also be putting on a public meeting to allow the public to ask questions as well to allow them to present the current plan and address any concerns.

9. New business

9.I. Discussion on merging HDC & Heritage Comm

Tara Shore said that she spoke with Andrew from the NH Preservation Alliance, and he suggested the best resource regarding a merger would be the Town of Gilford as they went through a merger a while ago. Andrew's feedback was that the biggest change with the merger would be that it would add more to do to the Commission. There would also need to be some changes made to the City Ordinances to flow better once the merger is complete. Marjory said that is best to wait until the next meeting to further discuss the proposed merger. Tara said she will speak with her members and receive feedback if they wish to proceed with the merger.

9.II. St. Joseph Church Preservation Society

Marjory welcomed two Members of the St. Joseph Church Preservation Society in which Heritage Commission had extended an invitation. Marjory asked for an update regarding the current situation of the church as she has seen several articles come out in the newspaper recently. One being Father Marc's letter about raising funds for the preservation and restoration of the church.

Marjory asked the two members present if the church is expecting for the current funds that The St. Joseph Preservation Society has raised to go towards the preservation and restoration of the church. One of the members said she is sure they are counting on those funds and that they have not asked for it. Marjory asked if of the \$450,000 raised, if some of those funds include the previous donations from parishioners of the church. One of the members said that the previous campaign funds were used to paint and complete other work for the church, but the remainder was diverted to Sacred Heart Church.

The two members said they have been actively seeking to be involved in the plans presented by Father Marc for the restoration of the church. However, they have not been asked to become part of the process at this time. One of the members explained that she read in the article from the newspaper that 1.5 million needs to be raised to complete the restoration of the St. Joseph's church. Although she informed the members of the HC that the figure is what Father Marc suggested is the cost for the renovations in which it doesn't include the construction of the columbarium for the church. Currently Father Marc doesn't have a number since it is in the early stages, and he has yet to outsource bids.

Lois Kessin asked the two members if the diocese should be responsible to cover these expenses for the church's restoration and construction of the columbarium. One of the members responded that she does believe he should take responsibility for the cost, however she is unsure of what the outcome will be at this time. One of the members said that Father Marc has agreed to meet with the St. Joseph Preservation Society in which they are going to ask him a series of questions that they have been waiting to receive clarity on. Whether they will get the answers they are looking for is to be determined. The members said they have taken proper steps to preserve any funds raised by the St. Joseph Church Preservation Society in case the diocese decide to access those funds for a different purpose.

9.III. Discussion of by-laws and procedures

Marjory said that the HC currently doesn't have any by-laws, the procedures available are limited, in which those need to be done to have them for this commission. Marjory asked if all HC members could read the Historic District Commission's by-laws and procedures and see which specifically would apply to HC. Dean stepped in and said that he would have them sent to the HC via email, he also advised that the HDC by-laws and procedures are very specific to their board and may not necessarily apply to HC. Whatever is drafted will need to be revised to fit the HC and its purpose. By-laws are how you run the commission and are created and approved by the board. Procedures are the rules and how the commission handles applications of demo permits etc.

9.IV. Discussion of Demolition Permit fee increase

10. Old business

11. Public comment

12. Other business

13. Adjournment

Scott Ringer made a motion to adjourn. Lois seconded the motion. All voted in favor.