

HERITAGE COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
January 3, 2019

The Heritage Commission held its regular monthly meeting at Council Chambers, 37 Green Street, Concord, New Hampshire, on Thursday, January 3, 2019 at 4:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order and Seating of Alternates

Chairman Jaques called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Present at the meeting were Chair Richard Jaques, Vice Chair Jim Spain, Councilor Allan Herschlag, Members Rich Woodfin, Robert Johnson II, Bryant Tolles, and Alternate Sarah Galligan. Staff present included City Planner Heather Shank, and Administrative Specialist Lisa Fellows-Weaver.

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Johnson moved to approve the December 6, 2018 minutes. Mr. Woodfin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. New Business

a. Election of Officers: Heritage Commission and Demo Review Committee

Mr. Spain made a motion nominating Mr. Jaques for Chair of the Heritage Commission through December 2019, seconded by Mr. Woodfin. With no other nominations, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Johnson made a motion nominating Mr. Spain for Vice-Chair of the Heritage Commission through December 2019, seconded by Mr. Woodfin. With no other nominations, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Spain made a motion nominating Mr. Johnson for Chair of the Demolition Review Commission through December 2019, seconded by Mr. Woodfin. With no other nominations, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Woodfin made a motion nominating Mr. Spain for Vice-Chair of the Demolition Review Commission through December 2019, seconded by Mr. Johnson. With no other nominations, the motion passed unanimously.

Item 3.b was taken out of order

4. Demolition Review Committee Report

Mr. Johnson stated that there were two applications received for the month of December.

The first request was for 26 Centre Street. The demolition equipment was already on site at the time Mr. Johnson was contacted for the sign off. He explained that, according to Code Administrator Mike Santa, there were concerns expressed relative to the safety and condition of the property. The demolition application was received by the Code Department Friday, December 14. Mr. Santa signed off on the application after discussion with Mr. Johnson on that same day. The DRC agreed that the property did not have any historical significance.

The second request was from Griffin Meadow Group for property at 46 Allison Street, a single family home dating back to the 19th century. He stated that the property appeared to be in poor condition and although there does not appear to be any architectural or historical significance, the structure is sound and could be restored.

Councilor Herschlag expressed frustration that the Centre Street application process was not adhered to, and that this is not the first time that there have been issues with miscommunications and the process. Councilor Herschlag noted that delaying the demo one day would have allowed for proper notification to occur. Mr. Johnson commented that there may be costs accumulated to

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the property owner should the City delay demolition progress due to agreements with the contractor that had already been made, equipment rental fees for the property owner, etc. Councilor Herschlag stated that he does not believe it to be unreasonable to expect the City to pay the cost for a delay, if necessary. He suggested that a letter be sent to the Code Department. Mr. Johnson added that Mr. Santa was apologetic about the situation and he does not feel that anything would be gained with a letter of complaint.

Ms. Shank stated that it had been the desire of the City for a long time to have the building removed due to multiple complaints by residents. City Administration thought that the demolition process had gone through all necessary steps years ago. After further review, it was discovered that the property never went through the DRC. She stated that it was not anyone's intent to circumvent the process.

3. b. Gas Holder Building – Liberty Utilities Representative

John Murphy and James Wieck, both of GZA Geo Environmental, Inc. attended the meeting at the request of the Commission to discuss improvements that had already been made to the building and possible courses of action to address the conditions of the site and further improvements needed to stabilize or repair the building.

A PowerPoint presentation was given for the gasholder house, a manufactured gas plant that was built in 1888 and disused operation in 1953 when coal gas was replaced by natural gas. Pictures included information of the history of the building, the operation of the plant, and the structure which has been deteriorating over the years. Pictures showed general deterioration over time causing structural damages and roof damages from storms which has also contributed to the shifting of the structure. Some repairs were done in the 1980's.

Additional discussion was held regarding the options for the building which was added to the National Historic Register last year. GZA included options for the building including demolition at the least expensive at \$350,000 to repairing the roof for \$600,000 and fixing the entire building for \$2.1 million.

Mr. Wieck stated that there is contamination as a result of the coal. There is a remedial action plan that has been put in place, which will need to be monitored for many years. He noted that the plume of contamination is old; the levels are stable, are not expanding, and there is no vapor intrusion.

Mr. Wieck stated that it is unknown how long the integrity of the building can be maintained. He noted that the roof will need to be assessed thoroughly.

Grants and alternative funding options were mentioned. Mr. Woodfin stated that this is more than a local issue; it is a state and a federal issue because of the importance of the structure as the last remaining gas holder in the country.

Several members asked if the City would intervene on behalf of Liberty Utilities. Ms. Shank stated that this was unlikely since there is no developer or other incentive for the City to get involved. The only option that would make logical sense would be if the City purchased the building because they felt it was worth it as a historic resource, repaired it and sold it, similar to what they did with the tannery site.

Mr. Spain stated that the building is a great piece of history and needs to be preserved. It is important to look at the short term now for repairs. He stated that all of the options should be explored.

Ms. Galligan left at 6:07 pm.

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5. Old Business

a. CLG Grant – Meeting with DHR

Ms. Shank stated that she will be meeting with Nadine Miller of DHR tomorrow.

b. Historic Photo Repository

Mr. Woodfin stated that he sent the Flickr link to Mr. Fabian, Library Director.

c. Sewall’s Falls MOU

Ms. Shank stated that she does not have anything to update

d. Alternate Members

Mr. Jaques stated that James Dean sent him a letter expressing an interest in being an alternate on the committee. He will provide to staff to distribute prior to the next meeting.

In addition, the resume of alternate candidate Mike Dunn was distributed and reviewed. Mr. Jaques made a motion to recommend Mr. Dunn as an alternate member to the Heritage Commission. Mr. Spain seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

e. Website

Ms. Shank stated that staff is still working on the site.

f. Demolition Delay Ordinance

Reminder - Work Session scheduled for February 12, 2019 at 4 p.m.

6. Any other business to come before the Commission - none

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Councilor Herschlag motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:19 p.m. Mr. Spain seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Administrative Specialist