

## **HERITAGE COMMISSION**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**March 7, 2024**

The Heritage Commission held its regular monthly meeting in Council Chambers at 37 Green Street, Concord, New Hampshire, on Thursday, February 1, 2024.

Attendees: Chair Richard Jaques, Vice-chair Jim Spain, Members Dr. Bryant Tolles, Jr., Mike Dunn, Carol Durgy Brooks, and Alternate Althea Barton

Absent: Councilor Jennifer Kretovic

Staff: AnneMarie Skinner, Acting City Planner  
Krista Tremblay, Administrative Specialist II

#### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jaques at 4:31 p.m. Ms. Durgy Brooks made a motion to seat Ms. Barton. Mr. Spain seconded. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **2. Minutes – Approve February 1, 2024 meeting minutes**

Mr. Spain made a motion to accept the February 1, 2024 minutes as written. Mr. Tolles, Jr. seconded. All were in favor. Ms. Durgy Brooks abstained. The motion passed.

#### **3. Demolition Review Committee**

a.) Mr. Spain reported two items. Mr. Spain first relayed that a new request for demolition was received. There is a site visit tomorrow at 145 Abbott Rd. Mr. Spain stated at the fork of the Abbot Rd/Sewalls Falls Rd intersection there is a large barn and house. Mr. Spain has been corresponding with Tracy Hutton and she made a request with the owner for the owner to be present at the site visit. Mr. Spain stated Ms. Hutton informed Mr. Spain to go forward with the site visit tomorrow at noon. They will view the house and document with pictures. Mr. Spain stated the barn is not being touched.

Ms. Durgy Brooks inquired about the age of the barn.

Mr. Spain stated a century plus.

Ms. Durgy Brooks asked if they applied for a barn easement?

Mr. Spain stated this is family owned and they are doing a subdivision on the land.

Ms. Skinner stated the subdivision is 16 lots.

Mr. Spain stated it is owned by a developer. He is happy the barn is staying.

Ms. Barton asked if this is the one he discussed before and thought it was dangerous to enter?

Mr. Spain stated no, this is not that property. He noted that the dangerous property was in East Concord and it was in rough shape. Mr. Spain stated the barn will remain intact and the house will be demolished.

Ms. Barton asked if this is the one that they planned to demolish the barn as well and someone spoke up

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and wanted to turn the barn into a house?

Mr. Spain stated he cannot speak to demolition permit and what was filed. He noted all the information he saw was house was to be demolished and not the barn.

Mr. Dunn thinks they wanted to resell.

Ms. Skinner stated the subdivision is approved and recorded as a 15-lot subdivision. Conditions of approval were that both house and barn were to be demolished before the plat was recorded. That did not happen and the plat was recorded. The property is up for auction. The original developers have not paid taxes. The two individuals that have applied for the demolition permit for the house only are in the process of purchasing it hopefully before it goes to auction. The auction was supposed to be on the 6<sup>th</sup> and it was postponed. The problem with the house and the barn remaining, which is why the condition of approval was made for them to be demolished, is because they are going across lot lines of the new lots. In order for the barn to remain they will have to do a re-subdivision per subdivision regulations. It remains to be seen how the lots will be reconfigured. These two individuals intend to keep the barn and convert to a house.

Mr. Spain said that makes more sense. He did not realize the auction piece.

Mr. Jaques asked if this was Planning Board or Zoning?

Ms. Skinner stated Planning Board.

Mr. Jaques questioned why they are required to have building and barn to be torn down to approve the plan.

Ms. Skinner stated it had nothing to do with approving the plan. It had to do with the recording the plat. The house and the barn are crossing lot lines of the newly created lots.

Mr. Jaques asked if the lot lines are created now?

Ms. Skinner stated yes, because the plat has been recorded.

Ms. Barton asked what is the plat?

Ms. Durgy Brooks stated the subdivision plan.

Mr. Spain stated it will be very interesting to see how it plays out.

Mr. Jaques asked why would they allow the plat lines to be made when the buildings were still on the site?

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Ms. Skinner stated the original plan was to demolish all of that and that is what was presented as part of the original application.

Ms. Durgy Brooks asked if a subdivision plan has been approved subject to demolition wouldn't the Planning Board wait to sign the subdivision approval plan until the demolition had been completed?

Mr. Jaques stated that is what he was getting at in trying to understand why they signed plans when the building had not been demolished.

Ms. Durgy Brooks questioned if Planning Board would say to a developer that they need to apply for demolition permit and wait out the days to show.

Mr. Jaques stated then they would go back to Planning Board to show the building was removed.

Ms. Durgy Brooks stated it is an interesting procedural issue.

Mr. Spain asked if it is a bank that is auctioning off the land?

Ms. Skinner stated it is not a bank.

Ms. Barton stated this is an item that needs to be resolved. Who would they go about communicating with – the Planning Board?

Ms. Skinner stated for Conservation Commission any applications that are brought forward for development in the shoreline overlay district or with impact to wetland buffers that they go to the Conservation Commission meeting for comment. At the request of the Tree Subcommittee, she is providing them with a Planning Board update. Ms. Skinner stated she can bring applications coming before the Planning Board to the Heritage Commission if that is the desire.

Mr. Jaques stated this is ongoing issue and there are times things are done that they did not know about.

Mr. Spain stated they just heard about this last week and was not aware of the history. He is concerned that the barn was going to be removed at some point.

Ms. Skinner stated it is not a requirement to tear down the buildings as a result of the subdivision. It is not the Planning Board saying they need to tear down the buildings. The original developer wanted to have 15 lots and the only way to get the 15 lots was to tear down the buildings. Ms. Skinner stated the plat never should have been recorded until the buildings were demolished.

Ms. Durgy Brooks stated a couple years ago they discussed refining and revising the ordinance on the Heritage Commission. Specifically, if there is a project coming up before a board or committee where any city permission is being approached for a potential demolition of a building that is 50 years or older, there should be notice given to the Heritage Commission. Ms. Durgy Brooks asked if they should draft a letter

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to the Planning Board or any city commissions to provide notice to the Heritage Commission of any applications involving possible demolition of structures 50 years or older?

Mr. Spain stated right now any property that applies for a demolition permit automatically triggers notice to the Demolition Review Committee if the property is 50 years or older.

Ms. Skinner stated that developers submit the permit applications when they want.

Mr. Jaques asked if there was a building permit when they did the lot lines? He stated if there was no plan in place there was no trigger to pull to notify.

Mr. Spain asked if they just applied to take the building down?

Ms. Skinner stated yes, just last week.

Mr. Jaques stated that is what triggered the Demolition Review.

Ms. Durgy Brooks stated the proposed thought process never made it in actual language for the city ordinance – if any city commission is aware of a planned demolition a building 50 years or older to let applicant know and Heritage Commission to open dialogue.

Ms. Barton stated the sooner they know, the better, and it should be across the board.

Mr. Spain asked if they own the property?

Ms. Skinner stated they are in the process of trying to purchase the property.

Mr. Spain stated they do not own the building, but they applied for a demolition permit?

Ms. Durgy Brooks stated she felt you should own the property before you can apply for a demolition permit.

Ms. Skinner stated the house stretches across two lots and they own the lot that has the barn and part of the house. Ms. Skinner stated she is not sure of the status of the other lot.

Ms. Durgy Brooks stated until they take title they cannot apply for a demolition permit.

Ms. Skinner stated they could have received permission from the property owner.

Ms. Barton asked if the ordinance now states if it has to be the owner?

Mr. Jaques stated no, a representative of the owner.

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Mr. Spain stated when make notes of the meeting tomorrow he will record the persons at the meeting. He noted they can walk on the land and take pictures. However, they might not have access to the inside of the house.

Ms. Barton asked if there is any action the Heritage Commission can take to write a letter to the other chairs of the commissions.

Ms. Skinner stated it would be appropriate to write to City Council.

Ms. Jaques will discuss with Councilor Kretovic.

Ms. Durgy Brooks made a motion to have Mr. Jaques speak to Councilor Kretovic to draft a letter to city council in reference to the owner of record being the one to apply for a demolition permit and that the Heritage Commission receive notice from any city commission of any proposed demolition in the course of applications. Mr. Spain stated that makes sense. Mr. Spain seconded. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Spain then reported on the second topic of the Norris House. Councilor Kretovic had an informational letter approved by Heritage Commission to go out for public relations. Mr. Spain stated at the last public meeting they did not approve the demolition of the Norris House. Mr. Spain met someone from Concord Monitor and an article was written about the Norris House. As a result of the Concord Monitor article, there were seven inquiries from people in New England. Mr. Spain formulated a response from them to contact Steve Duprey. One person of the seven is a certified architectural photographer. Mr. Duprey approved him to record the property inside and out with the agreement the photographs be available to city for free. The other people wanted to dismantle\move, pick the building up, or rehab on the site. Mr. Spain spoke with Mr. Duprey last night and Mr. Duprey sent an email update which he read to the group as follows:

*We have had lots of exchanges with Sarah Mathieu and given her access to all of our info. She got back to me this morning and is still in contact with the vendors but has not been able to get a final moving number from Geddes. The \$75,000 fee I provided in my testimony was to move the front part of the house to the first roof break and that is not sufficient for her purposes so she is getting a price on moving the back half. Given the price for moving just the front section, I would hazard a guess that the moving of the back half would be a similar cost. I have told her I assume the utility cost of \$63,000 would be the same. We explored moving the house to Stickney Ave to add to the redevelopment of the DOT property but after consideration, which I appreciate, it did not work well with the ownership plan. We have provided information to post about the house on a well-known national website but it is likely a user of the house would dismantle it and move it out of state. Similarly, a New Hampshire person has expressed interest in dismantling the house and rebuilding it in Wolfeboro and we await for more information on that user. There was a suggestion in the Monitor that we simply move the house to the lot on S. Main adjacent to the Ledyard Bank, which is technically feasible. However, the lot is listed for \$1,200,000 which is beyond the realm of possibility. Sarah indicated she was exploring other close-in lots but I doubt she will find one we have not considered. That is the update.*

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Mr. Spain feels Mr. Duprey is doing a great job at communication and his heart is in the right place to try to save the building. Mr. Spain feels it is coming down to the two people – the one that will dismantle and bring to Wolfeboro and Sarah who wants to move to another location in Concord. Mr. Spain noted if one of these parties had something going on Mr. Duprey would work with them.

Ms. Durgy Brooks asked about the photographs and if they will be accessible to the Heritage Commission?

Mr. Spain stated yes.

Ms. Barton wants to acknowledge that Sarah Mathieu sent a letter to Jennifer Goodwin, Liz Hengen, and Ms. Barton. Ms. Barton stated she forwarded the letter to Ms. Skinner to circulate to the Heritage Commission. Ms. Barton stated Ms. Mathieu detailed her thoughts at that time and tried to figure things out. Ms. Barton stated Ms. Mathieu offered to come to this meeting but it was too late in day to plan it out.

Mr. Spain stated he is willing to help. It is private property and the right people are talking.

Mr. Jaques suggested they send a letter or email asking if there is anything they can do to assist?

Ms. Durgy Brooks thinks that is a good idea to support the efforts.

Mr. Jaques asked for Ms. Barton to reach out to Ms. Mathieu and Mr. Spain to reach out to Mr. Duprey.

#### **4. Heritage Sign Program**

Ms. Durgy Brooks apologized for being out. There are a number of inquiries for people that have been to the workshop. They are still doing the research.

#### **5. Planning Board Update**

Ms. Skinner stated Christ the King is putting in a new food pantry.

Ms. Barton asked about the Norris House and if the plan is approved by Zoning or Planning.

Ms. Skinner stated it has to be approved by Zoning before it gets to Planning. Ms. Skinner stated the final plan set should be coming for signature. The only thing that will go to Planning Board at this point will be the architectural design review of the sign package.

Ms. Barton stated it would also apply if there was older building on property and there would be changes she felt that would be important to the Heritage Commission.

Ms. Skinner stated 59 S. Main St has applied for minor site plan approval. They will add 1,200 square

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feet to the building for an additional four dwelling units.

Mr. Jaques stated that they are not notified if the buildings are not in historic district. If the building is in historic district it is one of the things that triggers notification.

Ms. Skinner there is nothing in the historic district at this time that is going before the Planning Board.

Mr. Spain mentioned that they received notification for a front door paint change several years ago on N. Main by Kimball Jenkins.

Ms. Durgy Brooks stated let's say there is building more than 50 years old and they will put addition on that is a demolition of sort.

Mr. Jaques stated that Heritage Commission would be interested; however, there is nothing to automatically trigger notification unless in the historic district or on the national register.

Ms. Skinner stated they are remodeling and rarely hear the word demolish unless they are taking down the entire structure.

6. Council Update

Councilor Kretovic is not present.

Ms. Barton watched the council priority setting session on Monday. The new mayor was presented a detailed list of priorities. Each priority had a lot of back up information. The councilors chime in and edit the document according to their own priority. Councilor Todd made a recommendation to add historic preservation to the community and economic development section of the priority list. Ms. Barton believes this might be the first time that historic preservation has been on the city priority list. Ms. Barton stated it is tentative and this is a brainstorming meeting. It has to be approved at a City Council meeting. Councilor Todd talked about heritage and preservation being important for the economy, making Concord more of a destination, and telling stories of people lived through generations. Ms. Barton stated it seems the other councilors seem to agree and thinks it will be approved.

7. Old Business

a. Magnificent Ten – Honoring Architectural – Historic Buildings –

Mr. Jaques asked the Heritage Commission if they can change the name from the Magnificent Ten to Property Recognition Ad Hoc? Mr. Jaques handed out the meeting minutes. Mr. Jaques stated they discussed each topic listed. They decided on what they will do first is the categories for the awards. This was discussed in other meetings. Mr. Jaques wanted to set up another Ad Hoc meeting and come up with categories.

Ms. Barton explained these materials were provided by Maggie Steer or the Wolfeboro Preservation Alliance.

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The Heritage Commission set an Ad Hoc meeting date for March 28, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. at 11 Penacook St.

i. Heritage Awards Program

Ms. Barton asked about the budget. The Heritage Commission has \$25,000. Ms. Barton asked where is the money and how do they get access. What is the process? How to get donations into it?

Ms. Skinner said the Heritage Commission budget has \$25,000.

Ms. Barton asked if Conservation Commission has procedures to put money in or take money out.

Ms. Skinner stated money that goes in is received as a donation and it goes to City Council to accept.

Ms. Barton asked when they want to spend money is there a process?

Ms. Skinner stated a report needs to go to City Council and they have to approve the expenditure.

Ms. Barton stated once they establish a budget for the awards program with any fliers they want to make, and then submit to Council.

Mr. Jaques stated yes.

b. Gas Holder Building

Ms. Barton has no real update. She noted that on March 16 and 17 the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance is doing an expo. It will be at St. Anslem College. It is on the website [nhpreservation.org](http://nhpreservation.org).

c. Website

Mr. Dunn no update.

d. Monuments and Granite Markers

Mr. Spain has some cool information. Mr. Spain is writing an article about “where have all the monuments gone?” He stated in 1942 all of the iron fences were taken down from the old Victorians and brought up to Concord High School for the war effort. Mr. Spain stated he has a picture of it.

Mr. Jaques stated there was a house in Penacook and they did not allow it. Mr. Jaques noted they were ostracized by the residents in Penacook.

Mr. Spain read on April 26, 1948 the hitching posts were under ban. Hitching posts were the granite or cast of iron and were in front of the houses built in 1700 or 1800. You would hitch your horse or wagon to the hitching posts. The board of public works authorized the removal of all sidewalk and



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street obstructions. There have been too many snow plow blades that have been bent or broken during recent winters with contacts with snow. The hidden steps and posts serve no purpose. The commissioner sent a plan to city council selectmen so they could be removed by the city. So, in spring 1946 after a rough year hitting snow plow blades the city went and removed obstructions. Mr. Spain stated there are some that still exist to this day.

Mr. Jaques stated during WWI all of the hitching posts had an iron loop and they would remove the iron loop to melt down.

Mr. Spain stated it was the City of Concord board of public works that went before council in April 1948 and hitching posts were removed during that time.

Ms. Durgy Brooks asked if there is a graveyard for the hitching posts.

Mr. Spain stated most likely. He stated there are two sites where the city used as quarries.

e. CSX Tower

Mr. Spain he will reach out to Conrad Extrum. Mr. Spain stated last week in the Concord Monitor there is a picture of the people that live by the tracks with a massive bonfire. He is concerned the building would be damaged or destroyed. Mr. Spain stated there is a lot of trash.

8. Other Business

a. Correspondence

Ms. Skinner has nothing to report.

b. Attendance

Mr. Spain, Ms. Durgy Brooks, and Ms. Barton will attend the next meeting.

Ms. Skinner stated she will not be in attendance at the next meeting, and Matt Walsh will take her place to discuss.

9. Adjourn

Mr. Spain motioned to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Durgy-Brooks seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously at 5:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Krista Tremblay  
Administrative Specialist II