

TOWN OF NEWPORT
Heritage Commission Meeting
Minutes of March 27, 2023 6:00 pm
Municipal Building - Newport, NH 03773
Board of Selectmen's Room/ 15 Sunapee Street

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael Loftus, Jim Burroughs, BOS Representative
Jacqueline Cote and Virginia Irwin

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Ken Vigue, BOS Representative

COMMUNITY MEMBERS: none

VIDEOGRAPHER: NCTV

STAFF PRESENT: Christina Donovan, Zoning Administrator; Hunter Rieseberg, Town Manager

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Donovan called the meeting to order at 6:24 p.m. followed by a roll call.

ADMINISTRATION:

An Organization of the Commission needed to be held to appoint officers. Ms. Donovan asked for a nomination for Chairperson. Mr. Burroughs made a motion *to elect Mrs. Virginia Irwin Chairman of the Heritage Commission*. It was seconded by Mr. Loftus. *The motion passed by roll call 4-0-0.*

Chairperson Irwin took over the meeting.

Chairperson Irwin made a motion *to elect Mr. James Burroughs as Vice Chairman of the Heritage Commission*. It was seconded by Mrs. Cote. *The motion passed 4-0-0.*

NEW BUSINESS:

Rules of Procedure

Chairman Irwin passed out copies of the Rules of Procedure. She addressed the Commissioners; asking them to review them before the next meeting. The Commissioners discussed the dates of amendment (last June 13, 2016). After a discussion on the time and dates of the Heritage Commission meetings, Chairman Irwin stated that a tentative change would be: they will be scheduled on the fourth Monday (page two, Article II-MEETINGS Section A.). If there was a consensus, they would be ratified at the next Heritage Commission. Commissioners were asked to look the Heritage Commission's Rules of Procedure for content and to bring it up at their next meeting. Ms. Donovan was asked to type up a signature page for the Rules of Procedure.

The Order of Business on page two was discussed and explained as written.

Chairman Irwin stated the consolidation of three committees: Heritage Commission, Historical District and Monuments and Memorials would be discussed after the Town Office Windows.

Town Office Windows

Mr. Rieseberg addressed the Commission and explained the process the Town had undertaken to get replacement window for the Town Offices. Two years ago the Town applied for and received a congressional appropriation of \$250,000 based on bids to replace all 97 windows and air conditioning located in the Town Office building.

Mr. Rieseberg explained the new guidelines the Federal Government (Department of Energy) and Town have to follow and their delay in receiving the federal funds. The Town was told that the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) may comment on the project. Mr. Rieseberg said that NH SHPO could not stop a project, but they can impose conditions. NH SHPO asks local Heritage Commissions to look at and comment on the proposal.

Mr. Rieseberg asked the Heritage Commissioners to look at the material and pictorial packets he provided. He gave a brief explanation of the windows and manufacturer. After answering all questions from the Commissioners, Mr. Rieseberg expressed the urgency to start the project

soon. He asked the Heritage Commissioners to opine and draft a letter stating the Commission has met and reviewed the Town's proposal and they have no objections with the proposal. He said the Commission or Ms. Donovan could write the letter. Chairman Irwin asked if the letter was to go to the Department of Energy or the State Historic Preservation Office. Mr. Rieseberg was unsure; he suggested the Commission send the letter to NH SHPO with a copy to the Department of Energy.

Chairman Irwin had one additional question. The bid (quote) was from December of 2022. The cost was approximately \$69,000. She asked if it was still applicable. She was told it was. Mr. Rieseberg explained the project as originally presented was \$250,000 (now approximately \$303,000). A 20% match is required from the Town, or \$50,000. The necessary 20% is in the budget (money was encumbered from last year). After further discussion by the Commissioners on similar projects, Mr. Burroughs made a motion *that the Commission supports the project as presented and directs Ms. Christina Donovan to write a letter in support to be forwarded to the necessary state and federal agencies that are overseeing this grant.* It was seconded by Mrs. Cote. *The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Chairman Irwin asked to see the letter before it is sent. Ms. Donovan agreed. The motion, date and time would be noted in the letter. Ms. Donovan was directed to send the letter to everyone (on the Commission). Chairman Irwin will sign it as Chair.

Main Street Parking Scheme

Mr. Burroughs addressed Mr. Rieseberg and asked if the Commissioners had been provided with the latest parking scheme. He told the Commissioners that it was his understanding that the Main Street design was a 'dynamic' scheme undergoing corrections. Ms. Donovan informed the Commission that she did not have any information on the Main Street proposals (before or after March 20th). She printed the NHDOT design from the Town website (not up to date). Ms. Donovan asked what the vote was concerning the proposal. Chairman Irwin said there was a request that the latest information be forwarded back to the Board. The state would be making revisions to the initial proposal. A committee would be established to review the proposal. She repeated that it was a recommendation; she did not know if a committee was created. Mr. Burroughs said the Commission should not opine on the parking scheme until it is finalized. Ms. Donovan asked if moving forward the Commission is supposed to have input; (she knew that Mrs. Cote went to represent the Commission February 2, 2023). Chairman Irwin said yes. Mr. Rieseberg addressed the Chair and stated the plans before them have been changed and continue to change daily. Chairman Irwin stated she hated documents without dates. There are no dates on the state documents. If the Town Manager's office sends the Commission information and the state has not dated it, the Town Office was asked to put a date on it. Chairman Irwin said the Commission will table further discussion until the Commission hears something else.

Proposal for a Vintage-inspired "Welcome to Newport" Mural

The train mural was redone in the alleyway of the (Aurora) bakery. The Library Arts Center (LAC) has proposed new a mural on Sunapee Street on the building where One Wild Salon and Petal Patch are located. Chairman Irwin asked that the Heritage Commission meet in April to review and approve the LAC proposal. She said that the Commissioners had the LAC mural proposal (Newport "old time postcard"). After a brief discussion, the Commissioners were asked to review it before the April meeting. Mr. Rieseberg stated he has not shared the idea with the whole BOS, but said a mural on the side of the Opera House dedicated to celebrating the Arts would be proposed. It would be affixed to the building, not permanent

A new back entrance and ramp to the Opera House will begin construction on April 3, 2023. Chairman Irwin said the Heritage Commission should have been asked to opine about it; the Town is changing the exterior of a historic building. The Commission will have a lot to do in April:

1. Review construction plans for the back entrance and new ramp to the Opera House. Chairman Irwin asked that the Commissioners be sent the schematics of the construction.
2. Review the mural proposal of the Opera House
3. Review the LAC welcome to Newport mural on Sunapee Street on the building where One Wild Salon and Petal Patch are located

Chairman Irwin stated that the Commissioners had pages of the RSAs for the Heritage Commission and the area of land in Newport that they are responsible for: Professional District, Historical District, and Historic Commission (the fitness center and the proposed LAC mural will be attached).

Chairman Irwin gave a brief history of the murals around Town that were first painted during the Library Arts Congress in Newport.

4. Any new Main Street parking scheme might be discussed at the same April meeting.

Ms. Donovan set the next meeting for April 24, 2023 at 6 pm. Ms. Kate Luppold, Library Arts Center Director and Ms. Fran Huot; LAC will be notified.

Ruger Mill

Chairman Irwin said the mill was a historic building. She did not know what the outside façade would be or the proposal for the renovation. Because it is a historical building, it needs a recommendation from the Heritage Commission. Mr. Rieseberg stated it was his understanding they will not change the exterior of the building. A couple of the outbuildings might be taken down. Chairman Irwin said they needed to come before the Commission and confirm it. There was a brief statement on the old (Brampton Mill) records being given to the NH Historic Society.

Members

Chairman Irwin asked if Kenneth Vigue was still an alternate. She was told he was an alternate officially through 2023. Kate Luppold is a member of the Historic District; she needs to be asked if she will sit on the Heritage Commission. Mr. Burroughs is both BOS and Planning Board representative.

Combining Heritage Commission, Historic District and Monuments and Memorial Committee

Chairman Irwin and Mr. Burroughs have discussed the combining of the three committees. The Monuments and Memorial Committee only meets when something is donated to the Town. There was a discussion on the combining and the similar responsibility of the three groups. Mr. Burroughs asked what needed to be done on the Town side to merge the three groups into one. Chairman Irwin said she believed it was through the BOS. They need to take the Monuments and Memorial Committee (created Ordinance through a Warrant Article) and merge them. The voters established the ordinance, not its structure. Mr. Burroughs asked about the Historic District. Chairman Irwin stated that it had been combined (did not know when). When asked, Chairman Irwin stated that Ms. Luppold is a member of the Heritage Commission.

Addressing Mr. Rieseberg she stated Todd Cartier or a representative from Public Works needed to be a member on the Monuments and Memorial Committee to address concerns of placement, and maintenance.

Mr. Burroughs asked that at the April meeting the Commission look at what the Town has for donated items. Mrs. Irwin said that information on the Monuments and Memorials Committee was not on the Town website. Mr. Burroughs asked Chairman Irwin to compile items for the next BOS meeting.

Chairman Irwin agreed to compile the list of items for the next BOS meeting.

Mr. Rieseberg addressed Chairman Irwin and stated that there will be many opportunities to donate money for benches for the Community Center and for the Town's dog park and community garden. Chairman Irwin and Mr. Burroughs told Mr. Rieseberg they became a public structure, a monument. They were informed there will be a thank you board inside. Mr. Burroughs said he believed it was important that the Commission get moving. It has been a long time. Chairman Irwin informed Mr. Rieseberg what was on the website, what wasn't and what needed to be added.

Bridge Naming

Chairman Irwin asked Mrs. Cote for an update on naming the new bridge in North Newport. There had been a request to the Monuments and Memorials Committee to approve the name Sibley Family Bridge. The Committee approved the name; she asked where the Town was with it. Mrs. Cote said that Covid ended a lot of things. After an explanation and discussion on the bridge and Sibleys, the Commission questioned the status of a diorama for the bridge and site.

Mrs. Cote said that Newport was a Certified Local Government (CLG) town. There is grant money through the NH Division of Historical Resources. Interactive Signs were purchased through their grant money. Mrs. Irwin asked what CLG meant. Mr. Rieseberg said that the Town follows a set of criteria. Mr. Burroughs asked what the status of the cleanup of the Ambargis Mill. Mr. Rieseberg said that the Town has applied three times for a Brownsfield grant and not been awarded one. Chairman Irwin asked about the wooden structure at the Andrews/Reid Park that used to have a map. She was told it is in storage. There is currently a wooden structure with overhang (grant). The Commission will need to speak with anyone wanting to post items on the structure.

Recruitment of New Members

Mr. Burroughs said that he has found that the best recruitment comes from within. We can ask our associates and friends.

MINUTES: December 29, 2020

Chairman Irwin tabled the minutes of the December 29, 2020 meeting to the April 24th meeting; they would be formalized at that time.

Mr. Rieseberg addressed the Commissioners and listed the extensive reconstruction of the back doorways of the Opera House.

Amy Dixon will be contacted to attend a Heritage Commission.

Ms. Donovan was asked to send out meeting notices via Google calendar.

Chairman Irwin asked if there was anything else to come before the Commission. There being nothing, on a motion by Mr. Burroughs seconded by Mrs. Cote; the *Heritage Commission adjourned at 7:31 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Stetson
Scribe

Approved on April 24, 2023