

Durham Historic District Commission

Thursday, June 11, 2015

Attendance:

Chair Candy Descipkes

Secretary Seth Koenig

Joe Donovanick

Paula Erdmann-Purdy

Call to Order and Establishment of Quorum

Amendments to Agenda

Paul: Discussion of upcoming application

Joe: Discussion of frequency of meetings

Acceptance of Minutes

Motion: Seth made a motion to accept the minutes from the April 9, 2015, meeting

Joe seconded

Vote: 5-0

Continuing business

Historic District Map

- Candy distributed map that has now been made by GPCOG
- 47 A & B not included, because that lot had been subdivided prior to the creation of the district

District Property Owner List

- Candy distributed latest (third) draft
- Stephen Libby acquired lot 31 A from the Koval family; so he'll need a letter from the district
- Candy: The letters have been sent out to all other property owners on the list

Bylaws

- Candy will bring the bylaws to the selectmen at the next opportunity
- Candy: If we're going to update the bylaws to regulate how alternate members can participate, we should do that before turning bylaws in to the selectmen (who don't have approval, but need to have copies)
- Seth: I'll ask my friend if he's willing to sign up as alternate
- General consensus of board: Don't turn in bylaws in to selectment until we've altered them to reflect alternate members
- Paul: We can use language already used for alternate members of the Planning Board

Alternate members

- Candy: Does anyone else have any members to recruit as alternate members?
- Paula: Richard Hodges?

Historic Society Liaison

- Paula and Candy have been going to the meetings
- Paula: They haven't talked about the preservation of the old town hall
- Candy: They do have a report detailing the repair work needed
- Joe: Did you get the sense that they would open to a joint venture down the road, like a pamphlet or publication? (Candy: Yes)
- Paula: Could Tia Howe be an alternate for this commission?

Ordinance review

- Paul sent out proposal to town attorney, who responded with comments
- Attorney said we must specify criteria defining “minor” changes that could be decided by a sub-group of the Commission (proposal had envisioned creating a smaller, executive committee which could approve minor changes along with the CEO)
- Paul: If you're really, really clear about the line between “major” and “minor,” you won't be legally challenged; or if too many applications are caught at the “minor” level, the ordinance could be determined to be irrelevant
- Joe volunteers to work on legal wording of ordinance, but would need help (maybe from vice chair Ben Love, with construction experience)
- Paul: Go through existing ordinance, put some criteria on the left and some on the right, then in the criteria that are harder to classify one way or the other, figure out where to put the lines
- We'll request Ben join Joe; Paul said he would work with Ben and Joe on the process
- Paul: Will appeals come up to larger board? Or to the appeals board?
- Joe: What should we call it? (Candy: Process for minor changes?)
- Paul: Make sure you sell your ordinance changes to the public; if there are parts of the ordinance that might be easier to pass by town meeting, break them out as separate warrant articles; maybe seek past applicants' input
- Paul: Look carefully at the schedule we have; we may only have three or four meetings to do the work

Maine Historic Preservation

- Paula canceled previous meeting, but said she'd get back to him – fee for HDP presentation would be around \$150
- Paul: Could Historic Society pick up part of the tab?
- Paula: He talked about how the town could map its historic sections? Maybe the selectmen could be included in a workshop setting; may be Sept. or Oct. before we can get him scheduled
- Paul: What about a historic kayak trip along the river? Pamphlets? Plaques
- Joe: A good idea, but not urgent; the ordinance review and district tour are more important
- Candy: Maybe he could help determine how to approach historic preservation models outside of creating a district? (Paula: I could ask him)
- Paula: He could help with the comprehensive planning process, too

New Business

Walk around district

- Candy: Is that something we still want to do?
- Joe: It's good for the group; we don't have to make a big deal out of it

- Candy: Are we going to walk on people's properties? Should we get permission?
- Joe: We can see almost anything from the road
- Seth: Anything we can't see from the road is probably outside our scope of authority anyway
- Paul: You can announce the walk-around on the TV station
- Paul: You'll likely have an application at your next meeting
- *(Paula and Seth can't do July 9 – group discussed holding the next meeting on July 16)*
- June 16, 23 and 30 for starters as potential walk-around dates; we'll check calendars and get back on a final date

Paul: Boy Scout wants to do gazebo work; he has picked up an application – board may have to hold a meeting on another night to ejudicate it

Meeting times/frequency

- Joe: This is essentially a new board; I would suggest once we're settled and we've finished with the ordinance review, we meet less frequently, perhaps quarterly and/or whenever there's an application; take summers and December off, etc.
- Candy: If we want to do anything, we may need to meet about those things
- Seth: I still think we can meet quarterly and conduct business

General consensus: Board will hold July meeting on the 16th instead of the 9th (Seth: Candy can you announce that meeting change on the TV station as well)

Motion: Joe made a motion that we adjourn at 7:43 p.m.

Candy seconded

Vote: 5-0