

DURHAM HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Thursday, February 9, 2023-- 6:00
Durham Town Office

MINUTES

I. Call to Order and Establishment of Quorum

In attendance: Candy Decsipkes, Emily Alexander, Paula Erdmann Purdy, Mary Cullen Fallon, Lois Kilby-Chesley

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Amendments to Agenda

Jerry Douglass was unable to attend due to a family emergency. Adjustments to the Agenda are made below.

IV. Acceptance of Minutes.

**Minutes were sent to Commissioners on Dec 9, 2022.
Moved Mary Seconded Candy**

V. Informational Exchange

From the Dec 8 “to do” list

- **Edit and prepare 2023 budget for distribution.** Distributed to Town Manager, Select Board and Budget Committee through the Town Office on Dec. 14 *Copy included in Commissioners’ packet. After a contact by a Budget Committee member it appears there was an oversight and not all Budget Committee members received all the information. Lois spoke to Jerry Douglass about the Warrant Item that the DHDC requested for \$10,000 for the Union Church. He took a note and will talk to the Select Board about the request.*

A question for Jerry: Can a motion be made from the floor of the Town Meeting on April 1 to request consideration of \$10,000 applied to the Restoration line of the budget for the Union Church, if the Warrant Item is not included at Town Meeting?

- **Set a meeting with the Town Manager/Select Board** Lois met with the Town Manager on Dec. 19. *Notes were sent to Commissioners on Dec. 21*
- **Research land owners and addresses of property in the Historical District in preparation of sending introductory letters.** A list of all property owners was sent to Commissioners on Dec 12. *There was some discussion on whether this was an accurate list. Tax information was used to develop the list.*
- **Check on location for 1/12/2023** The new location for 1/12/23 was determined to be the Town Office at 6 pm. Notification was sent to Commissioners on Dec. 12. *The January meeting was canceled due to weather concerns*
- **Communication with Jonathan Lobo** about the Parker School demolition. *Communication between Codes Officer, Jonathan, and Lois was included in Commissioners’ packets.*

VI. Continuing Business

^This was postponed until Jerry can meet with us. 1. Jerry Douglass, Durham Town Manager, will be joining us for conversation

What training do others do? Set up training. (Comprehensive Plan 3.4)

We need to build consensus between the Town Manager, Select Board, and Town employees regarding our Mission, the Town Ordinances, and the Comprehensive Plan that was approved in 2018 and updated on April 6, 2021 by the residents. (Section 2 - Historic and Archaeological Resources). It is important to have common understanding and agreement, including roles, responsibilities and authorities. (Comprehensive Plan 3.4)

^This was postponed until Jerry can meet with us. 2. Meetings with Select Board

What do other Committees do to get info to the Select Board?

3. Ordinance changes Article 12 and 5.14 - continuing discussion We decided not to have further discussion at this meeting. We have completed much of this work and will await future conversation on the changes.

4. Calendar planning for 2023 Community Presentations and Education

After the Town Meeting we will know if we have received money for this. We will see about getting presentations set up to reinforce the Commission to Community pipeline. (General description on the website - “educate the town about its unique historical heritage” and #5 of the Comprehensive Plan.)

In the meantime to work toward this goal, Lois has been posting historical information at the Durham Historic District Commission Facebook page.

Additionally Tia Wilson, chair of the Durham Historical Society, has been posting information on the Historical Society Facebook page and on All Things Durham. Historical facts are also posted at the Friends of the West Durham Methodist Church Facebook page.

VII. New Business

- After the December meeting, when there was some confusion about the various documents and what was contained in each, Lois did a research into to original Durham Historic District Commission ordinance (2016) and those that followed and were formatted into the Durham Land Use Ordinances. One of the problems that is evident is the lack of a glossary of definitions after 2016, for terms that are used in the Ordinances. Terms should be clarified so everyone knows what the Ordinances say and do.*
- When Lois met with Jerry in December 2022 he mentioned an issue with the visibility from the Wingate Development to Route 136/Royalsborough Road. The Commissioners agreed that the driveway from/to Wingate is not likely part of our oversight. The change to the corner should involve the land owner whose property is affected. The building is one of the five in Durham that have been found to be eligible for the National Registry by the Maine Preservation Commission, but the road is a State road and decisions for repair should go the DOT.*
- Tia Wilson, chair of the Durham Historical Society, has been posting many interesting pieces on the DHS Facebook page. One was about the Sylvester Dance Hall which*

once stood on the site of the Wingate Development and holds historical significance to the DHDC. A question has arisen as to the fate of the foundation after the housing development was built. Was the foundation preserved or was it plowed under? Discussion on FB is on-going with former and current residents weighing in on the history of the Sylvester Dance Hall. How does Ordinance section 5.14 relate to the development? There was lively discussion on this topic.

VIII. Other Business

- 1. Next regular meeting: Thursday, March 9, 2023**

IX. To Do

X. Adjournment