

**Town of Effingham, New Hampshire
Historic District Commission**

**Meeting Minutes
August 11, 2014**

Present: P. Potter (Chair), R. Harrington (Assistant Chair), E. Jones (Secretary), J. McRae, N. Potter, L. Edwards (Selectmen's Representative)

Absent: None.

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7:01 p.m.

The minutes of the July meeting were distributed. It was moved by R. Harrington to accept the July meeting minutes as corrected. Seconded by J. McRae. Passed and carried.

Old Business

1) Historic District Signs.

The signs have been ordered and should be in hand in September. Mr. Edwards will leave the information he pulled together on the breakaway posts at the Selectmen's Office and the Secretary will speak with Claudia Lamphier about getting four of the posts ordered. Once the signs and posts are in hand, the next step will be scheduling their installation with the NHDOT, who must be present to supervise according to their permission letter granting us the right to place the signs in the state right-of-way.

2) Historic District maps/Planning Board.

The Secretary obtained a copy of the written meets and bounds legal description of the Lord's Hill Historic District from the Planning Board files courtesy of Barbara Thompson. After reviewing the description more than once, the boundary of the district has been highlighted in green on the copy of the hand-drawn map of the district in the Commission's files. Since it appears that the colored maps of the Lord's Hill District prepared by the Planning Board may still in fact contain errors regarding the boundary, this version is likely the most accurate.

The Secretary also followed up with the Town's webmaster regarding the placement of the maps on the Town website. The webmaster indicated that it should be no problem to place a PDF version of the map on the website, which will enable those viewing them to drag, zoom, and so forth in order to view the maps and district boundaries correctly. The webmaster did note that the PDF available is black and white but that it may be possible to add color to the boundary in the PDF as was done with the paper maps. This may take a little time but will be added to the list of to-do items for the website.

3) Historic Roadside Marker for the Effingham Town Hall building.

No update at this time.

4) Updates and Revisions to the Commission Application Form, Fee Structure and Review Process.

The Secretary distributed the Historic District Regulations as revised during the July 28th work session. The regulations were again reviewed page by page. The only additional changes made during this review were to #16: Signs, where it was clarified that the rule applies only to permanent signage, to #24: Tree Cutting, where it was agreed to use the definition of a tree found in RSA 231:158 so that trees are treated consistently within the Historic Districts and along any designated scenic roads, and to #33: Penalty, where it was agreed that this section should mirror exactly the penalty/fine structure laid down by the General Court in RSA 676:17.

The Secretary then explained the procedure for adoption as required by statute and as clarified through consultation with a staff attorney at the Municipal Government Association. The proposed regulations must be presented at a Public Hearing, which must be held within the district. Since we have two districts, we must hold a public hearing within each district. In the Lord's Hill District, Fire Station #1 must be utilized as it is the only handicapped accessible building in the District. This has been cleared with the Fire Chief. In the Center Effingham District, the meeting room at the Effingham Public Library is the most convenient option.

The Commission scheduled the Public Hearings to occur concurrently with/in addition to our regular monthly meeting on September 8th. The Public Hearing in the Lord's Hill District will begin at 6:30pm at Fire Station #1. The Public Hearing in the Center Effingham District will begin at 7:30pm at the Effingham Public Library. The Secretary will handle the posting and publication of the required public notices.

The Chair noted that the procedures for amending Historic District regulations as they currently stand seem to create a hardship to towns by requiring that the Public Hearing(s) must be held in a handicap accessible building within the district (s) rather than simply holding one hearing at a more convenient and accessible location. The Chair suggested that Commission should contact Bill Nelson who represents this area at the General Court and discuss with him the possibility of a change to the law. The Secretary agreed to contact Mr. Nelson with regard to this matter.

5) Potential Members/Vacancies on the Commission.

No update at this time.

New Business

1) Effingham Preservation Society/Site Work at the property

The Assistant Chair, speaking on behalf of the Effingham Preservation Society, inquired about the idea of, when their septic system is installed, also installing a parking area for the building on the Town House Road side of the property.

The Commission advised that the only potential concern likely to fall under its jurisdiction would be the cutting of trees on the lot in order to make room for both a leach field and a parking area. Assuming the proposed amendments are put into place, this would mean that approval must be obtained to cut any tree larger than 15 inches in circumference at 4 feet from the ground. The Commission also advised that the Preservation Society may want to consult with the Zoning Enforcement Officer regarding other zoning

requirements and/or restrictions. Specifically, whether or not the town's driveway regulations will be a factor.

2) 4 Plantation Road - Lord's Hill/fence installation

It was brought to the attention of the Commission that Jennifer Murphy, who owns the residence on the southern corner of the intersection of Plantation Road and Province Lake road (Route 153), is in the process of installing a white picket fence. It was agreed by the Commission that no Certificate of Approval has been issued for such a project and that such permission was not granted as part of the Certificate of Approval issued to Ms. Murphy last fall. Concerns were raised as to the height and type of materials of the fence (regulations require wood, cut stone, chain, or wrought iron in some combination of no higher than 4 feet). It was agreed that the Secretary will contact Ms. Murphy by telephone and follow-up on any conversation with a letter from the Commission with the hope of reaching a fair and equitable resolution.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erik Jones
Secretary