

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

**Meeting Minutes  
January 12, 2015**

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

Absent: E. Chick

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7:04 p.m.

The minutes of the November 10<sup>th</sup> meeting were distributed. It was moved by R. Harrington to accept minutes as written. Seconded by N. Potter. Passed and carried.

The minutes of the December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting were not available for review.

There was no new correspondence.

Old Business

1) Historic District Signs.

The Assistant Chair presented the mockup of the smaller signs for the Lord's Hill Historic District which indicate that it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, which was prepared by Sign One. The signs would be 6"x12" in size and would cost \$20 each. Four signs would be required (two for each post on either side of the Lord's Hill District).

The Secretary will follow up with the NH DOT regarding the necessary permissions to add these smaller signs to the sign posts already approved.

2) Historic District maps/Planning Board.

The applicable town tax maps for the Lord's Hill Historic District have been placed online with the boundaries of the Historic and Village districts highlighted in color. However, the highlighted boundaries still seem to be incorrect. In addition, no maps of the Center Effingham Historic District have been added.

The Secretary will follow up with the Town's webmaster (Theresa Swanick) about getting the Lord's Hill District maps corrected and the Center Effingham District maps added.

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 reported that the revised regulations were filed with the Town Clerk and are now in effect. Drafts of a revised Application for Certificate of Approval and Rules and Procedures for the Commission are not yet ready but will be prepared in time for discussion at the February meeting.

5) Potential Members/Vacancies on the Commission.

Due to the fact that a proposal to reduce the size of the Commission is currently in process and that this means that two of the current members (the Assistant Chair (R. Harrington) and J. McRae) would cycle off the Commission and might be able to then fill the currently vacant Alternate positions, no further action regarding recruitment was deemed necessary at this time.

The Assistant Chair did indicate that she would not be interested in serving in an Alternate position if the proposed changes to Article 15 of the Zoning Ordinance pass.

6) 2015 Town of Effingham Budget request.

The Secretary reported that the Budget Committee approved our 2015 budget request of \$390 but that they still had questions/concerns regarding our "slush fund". The Secretary advised them that we are working, in a responsible manner, to use up that fund and that once depleted, a fund will no longer be maintained since at this point, all of our financial needs can be handled through the Selectmen's Office.

The Secretary suggested that since the monies needed for the Historic District signage **have** already been committed or soon will be, that we consider looking at trainings for Commission members as a good use of that fund in 2015, with a possible goal of depleting it by the end of this budget year.

7) NH Preservation Alliance membership.

The membership application was submitted on our behalf by the Selectmen's Office but no confirmation of our membership has yet been received.

The Secretary will follow up with NH Preservation Alliance to confirm that we are listed as members.

### New Business

1) Handicapped Accessibility of the Modular Office Building.

The Secretary brought up the issue of the lack of accessibility of the Modular Office building where the Commission, amongst other boards and departments, technically have our "office." It has been requested by another town board that each board or department which is affected write a memo to the Board of Selectmen requesting that the accessibility issue be corrected by adding a path around to the back of the Modular Office Building and a ramp up to the back door located there.

As an example of why this could be a problem, the Secretary gave the **scenario** that if the Commission wished to have a work session to go through our files, we would be unable to do so in that building because work sessions must be open to the public and therefore handicapped accessible. That would mean that we would have to bring the files into the Meeting Room of the Main Building, which would be very inefficient.

L. Edwards noted that when the Department of Labor recently made an inspection of the Town's buildings, they did not comment on the fact that the building is not accessible. In addition, one of the issues with making the building accessible via that back door is that the door itself does not meet the guidelines because it is not wide enough.

**Furthermore**, the Board of Selectmen are concerned that if they attempt to make the building partially compliant that they will then be put in the position of having to make it completely compliant, which could become an expensive endeavor as the bathroom in the building also does not meet the required standards.

The Chair noted that making that building compliant for use for public meetings would be of great advantage especially to the land use boards and departments as it would give them a space where meetings could be held where all the files and maps would be readily available for reference if needed.

It was moved by the Assistant Chair, seconded by J. McRae, that a memo be sent by the Secretary on behalf of the Commission to the Board of Selectmen indicating that the Historic District Commission is in favor of the Board pursuing upgrading the building to make it handicapped accessible for the reasons discussed. Passed and carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erik Jones  
Secretary