

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

**Meeting Minutes
April 10, 2017**

Present: E. Chick, S. Finn, E. Jones, L. Espie (Selectmen's Representative)

Absent: None

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by E. Chick. There was one member of the public present. That individual was: J. Meisner.

The election of officers occurred:

E. Jones nominated E. Chick as Chair. Seconded by L. Espie. Passed and carried.
E. Jones nominated S. Finn as Assistant Chair. Seconded by E. Chick. Passed and carried.
E. Chick nominated E. Jones as Secretary. Seconded by S. Finn. Passed and carried.

The minutes of the March 13th public hearing were distributed for review. It was moved by the Chair to accept the minutes as corrected. Seconded by the Assistant Chair. Passed and carried.

The minutes of the March 13th meeting were distributed for review. It was moved by the Assistant Chair to accept the minutes as corrected. Seconded by the Chair. Passed and carried.

The minutes of the March 27th work session were distributed for review. It was moved by the Chair to accept the minutes as corrected. Seconded by the Assistant Chair. Passed and carried.

The Secretary advised the Commission that three new pieces of correspondence were received since the last meeting. One was a brochure for the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance's (NHPA) Statewide Historic Preservation Conference, one was a flyer for upcoming NHPA programs, and the last was materials from a program presented by the NHPA in Wolfeboro on barn preservation as part of their "52 Barns, 52 Weeks" initiative. This program was attended by Karen Payne, representing the Effingham Preservation Society, who provided the materials, which were discussed further during new business.

The Secretary advised that he has registered for the NHPA Conference in Concord on April 21st. The Assistant Chair advised that she has registered for a three program series on barn preservation to be presented by NHPA at the Prescott Farm in Laconia.

Old Business

1) Historic District Signs.

No update. The Secretary will continue to follow up with the former Chair about the National Register signs for Lord's Hill.

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

The Secretary reported that based on his research, he has revised the proposed marker text to reflect the correct year in which the Town began using the building for town offices and meetings (1891). After review, the Chair moved to approve the revised text. Seconded by the Assistant Chair. Passed and carried.

The Secretary explained the information contained within the 1890-1893 Effingham Town Reports that support 1891 as the year the town began using the building. It was decided that these materials would be used as the necessary supporting documentation for that date in the bibliography required in the application.

The parts of the application were again reviewed briefly. All elements of the application have been compiled. The Secretary will handle preparing the complete application for submission to the Division of Historic Resources by the end of the month.

3) Potential Members/Vacancies on the Commission.

No update.

4) Lord's Tavern/Failure to obtain Certificate of Approval.

The Chair shared with the Commission the content of a letter sent by Town Counsel to the property owner which requires action no later than the 22nd of April. As suggested by the Commission, the offer was made that if an application and required fees are submitted, only costs incurred by the Town in this matter will be pursued. If no application is received by the deadline, Counsel will pursue further legal action and civil penalties.

5) Restoration/Maintenance to Historic Effingham Town Hall.

No update.

6) Creation of a Master List of Data for Historic District Properties.

The Secretary suggested the use of the Division of Historic Resources Individual Inventory Form, since it includes almost every piece of information that the Commission might wish to collect for a historic properties inventory. In addition, should an owner ever wish to pursue having their property added to the state's historic landmarks register, this would provide a jump start to that process since it is a required element.

There was a lengthy discussion on specifically which parts of the form would be completed as part of the project, where in town to start, where and how to gather information for the inventory, and when to begin.

It was moved by the Chair that for this historic properties inventory/database, the Commission complete the first two pages of the DHR Individual Inventory Form, with the exception of item #6 (current owner), to start with properties located in the Lord's Hill Historic District (for which some information has already been compiled), and to determine what resources and information might be available in the Commission's files before beginning the project. Seconded by the Assistant Chair. Passed and carried.

7) Town Meeting – Display Table.

It was reported that the display table seemed to be successful. It was well browsed by those in attendance and was a great opportunity to obtain the necessary signatures for the petition of support for the historic marker project.

8) Memo from Board of Selectmen re: land use questions for Town Counsel.

There was varied discussion on topics that included what the intent of the request was, what situations might arise, how the different land use boards interact, and how all of those could potentially lead to different questions and/or concerns where counsel might need to be consulted.

The need for advice on the process for abolishment of the Commission by petition, specifically to whom the petition must be submitted and the time frames for the various steps, was mentioned as a concern.

It was also pointed out that a general discussion amongst the various boards, commissions, and offices involved might help to determine what the questions are that should be submitted to Counsel.

It was decided that the Chair would submit a memo to the Board of Selectmen which includes an inquiry about the process and timeline of abolishment of the Commission via petition, as well as the suggestion that a meeting of the various players be held to discuss what questions should be submitted to Counsel.

New Business

1) Barn Tax Credits.

The Barn Assessment Tax Credits which are authorized by RSA 79-D were discussed. This is an area where the Commission might be called upon to advise, but the process and final decision are handled by the Board of Selectmen according to rules and regulations determined by law and the DRA.

Mr. Meisner indicated that it was his understanding, from when the topic came before the Board of Selectmen some years ago, that the process is complicated, so most interested parties don't follow through.

It was noted that there is at least one property owner in town who will likely be looking to apply at some point during the year.

2) Commission File Cabinet Clean-Up Work Session.

It was decided to schedule a work session for Monday, May 22nd at 6 p.m. in the Modular Building for the purpose of going through the file cabinet with a goal of better organizing it, weeding out unnecessary items, and allowing any resources it contains to be better utilized by both the Commission and the public.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erik Jones
Secretary