

**HERITAGE COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING
TOWN OF LITCHFIELD**

Held on December 11, 2018

minutes approved on Apr-09-2019

The Litchfield Heritage Commission held its first meeting in the Town Hall meeting room, 2 Liberty Way, Litchfield, NH 03052 on Tuesday, December 11, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Karl Franck – Chairman, Kimberly Queenan - Vice-Chairman, Brent Lemire - Selectmen’s Rep, Steven Calawa, Harry Menzigian.

MEMBERS ABSENT: none

ALSO PRESENT: none

CALL TO ORDER

Selectmen’s Representative Brent Lemire called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Input: No Public input on non-agenda items.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Assignment of Officers

Karl Franck expressed interest in being Chairman. Steven Calawa makes a MOTION seconded by Harry Menzigian to elect Karl Franck as Chairman. Motion carries (5,0,0).

Karl Franck took over the meeting as Chairman.

Kimberly Queenan expressed interest in being Vice-Chairman. Karl Franck makes a MOTION seconded by Harry Menzigian to elect Kimberly Queenan as Vice-Chairman. Motion carries (5,0,0).

No one expressed interest in being Secretary/Clerk. Will leave vacant for now. Kim Q. will take the Meeting Minutes until a Secretary/Clerk elected.

2. Demolition Applications Reviewed

Reviewed three properties requesting Demolition Permits.

All three properties are owned by the State of New Hampshire, and therefore are exempt from Litchfield's new Demolition Ordinance.

Steven C. explained that the State of New Hampshire purchased these homes for the proposed Circumferential Highway. However, the State cannot rent the homes since no-one wants them.

a. Litchfield NH: 15 Charles Bancroft Highway

Steven C. believes this property was built around 1850-1860. He explained that the Litchfield Historical Society (LHS) tried to get a year-to-year lease of this property from the State of NH. He mentioned that the house had been vandalized, someone had stolen part of the house's plumbing system, someone had stolen the home's electrical wiring, and that there was also a big hole in the roof. He said that LHS cannot afford to fix it – only to have the building gone the following year if the lease is not renewed.

Steven C. stated that demolition companies can usually keep what they want when they demolish a property. He said that he had spoken with the demolition company handling this property, about saving the front doors, interior doors and mantels. The demolition company said LHS could take what they wanted. Steven C. said he rescued one interior door today, but for safety reasons he agreed with the demolition company not to rescue the front doors yet, but to wait until the day they were actually demolishing the building, so that no-one would be tempted to burn the building down.

b. Litchfield NH: 242A Derry Road

This property is the boarded-up yellow home on Rt 102, located next to the Tabernacle Baptist Church. It does not really have significant historic value.

c. Litchfield NH: 231 Derry Road

Steven C. said that the State of NH expressed to him that this property was a fabulous example of a mid-century house, however LHS did not have any means to buy it. Although it is a nice 1950's untouched home, it does not really have significant historic value.

Steven C. expects the three homes to be torn down early next year.

Harry M. asked what we thought would happen to the three properties once the buildings were demolished. Steven C. believes the State will keep the properties vacant and allow growth of trees and bushes on them.

Karl F. was surprised that there is no “end date” on the Town’s Building Permit Application form, which is used for demolition requests. There was only an “application date” on the form. Heritage Commission members were not sure if there was a legal clock started for a #of days allowed after the “application date” was filled in on the Town form to get the demolition completed, or if the application remained open indefinitely.

Harry M. asked if the demolition companies being used will clean up the site, on all items on the property, such as cars. Steven C. believed they would.

3. Establishing Heritage Commission By-Laws

The Town of Litchfield wants to create Heritage Commission By-Laws that are “advisory only”, as passed by the Litchfield voters in 2018.

Members reviewed existing Heritage Commission By-Laws that were adopted from the towns of Weare, NH (in September 2010) and Frankestown, NH (in August 2017).

Similarities: Both towns followed a similar outline and contained a majority of the same wording. New Hampshire RSA Heritage Commission Laws were copied directly into their Heritage Commission By-Laws.

Key Differences:

- a. Historic District Commission (Not applicable to Litchfield):
Weare included this section, Frankestown did not.
- b. Acquisitions and Holdings (May not be applicable to Litchfield):
Weare included this section, Frankestown did not.
- c. Heritage Commission Fund & Officer Roles:
Both towns stated power to “Receive gifts of money and property...” into a Heritage Commission Fund.
Frankestown defined a Treasurer Officer role to handle the Fund, and would reconcile Fund activity with the Town Treasurer. No Vice-Chairman role defined.
Weare did not define a Treasurer Officer role to handle the Fund, giving the Town Treasurer more direct responsibility for the Fund. They did define a Vice-Chairman role.
- d. Weare did a better job explicitly stating one of its powers was an: “Advisory Role to the Town Boards and Commissions” and also provided examples of how the Heritage Commission would assist their town.

Kim Q. will create the initial Litchfield NH Heritage Commission By-Laws that contain advisory powers only. They will be reviewed by the Litchfield Heritage Commission at their next meeting on **Jan 8, 2019**.

4. Establishing Email Addresses for Heritage Commission Members

Brent L. stated that all Heritage Commission members must use Litchfield Government email addresses.

Brent L, Kim Q, and Harry M. already have established Litchfield Government email addresses.

Kim Q. will send a request to John Brunelle to establish Litchfield Government email addresses for Karl F. and Steven C. Kim Q. will cc Troy Brown, the Town Administrator, for this request.

5. Awareness of Drainage Issues Near Historical Sites

Steven C. stated there is water across the road near the Litchfield Town Library, that the swales are not correct, and that water is backing up.

He also mentioned Litchfield did not have as many fields in the past since the land was not tillable. But now, current technology (tilling, plowing, digging, raking, etc.) allows many fields to exist, some of which contain areas of water that are not being drained properly.

Therefore, the Heritage Commission should become aware about drainage issues near historical sites.

6. Committee Reports: none

7. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: n/a

8. Other Business: none

Steven C. makes a MOTION to adjourn, seconded in synch by everyone else. All in favor. Motion carries (5,0,0). Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Kimberly Queenan