

These minutes were approved at the August 3, 2023 meeting.

DURHAM HISTORIC DISTRICT/HERITAGE COMMISSION
Thursday, June 8, 2023
DURHAM TOWN HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Larry Brickner-Wood, Chair; Charlotte Hitchcock, Vice Chair; Aaron Wolfson-Slepian, Tom Janosz, Alternate; Michael Hoffman, Carolyn Singer, Councilor Eric Lund, Town Council Rep.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jennifer Becker, Alternate; William (Bill) McGowan, Planning Board Rep.

ALSO PRESENT: Town Planner Michael Behrendt

I. Call to Order

Chair Brickner-Wood called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

II. Roll Call

Eric Lund, Town Council Representative; Michael Hoffman, Carolyn Singer, Larry Brickner-Wood, Chair; Charlotte Hitchcock, Vice Chair; Aaron Wolfson-Slepian, Tom Janosz

III. Seating of Alternates

Chair Brickner-Wood noted that because Mr. McGowan is a Planning Board Representative, the HDC will not be able to seat an alternate to vote for his position.

IV. Approval of the Agenda

*Michael Hoffman **MOVED** to approve the agenda, as presented. The motion was **SECONDED** by Councilor Lund and **PASSED** unanimously, 6-0, by a show of hands.*

V. Approval of Minutes: May 4, 2023

Minor edits were submitted to Administrative Assistant Tracey Cutler for inclusion prior to the meeting.

Chair Brickner-Wood noted that votes which were taken on items that counted alternate members would need to be corrected to remove those votes as alternates are not regular voting members. Planner Michael Behrendt said he would make those corrections to the minutes.

Councilor Lund MOVED to approve the meeting minutes of May 4, 2023, as amended. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Wolfson-Slepian and PASSED unanimously, 6-0, by a show of hands.

VI. Public Comments

There were no members of the public present in the Council chambers or via Zoom for comments.

VII. Staff Report

Planner Michael Behrendt said he and HDC member Mike Hoffman attended the Preservation Conference in Claremont, NH on May 19, 2023.

Mr. Hoffman said it was interesting to hear from other communities that are going through rough times and how they have recovered. He said Durham is doing a fantastic job with its preservation efforts.

VIII. Local Barre – sign. 1 Madbury Road. Hanging sign for Local Bronze Spray Tanning. Leighann Johnson, Local Barre, LLC, applicant. Portsmouth Sign Company. Mark Henderson, property owner. Map 108, Lot 19. HDC

Ms. Singer asked if there was a problem with hanging an additional sign under the other sign that currently exists at that property in terms of the HDC's sign requirements.

Mr. Behrendt replied here was not. He explained that he and Zoning Administrator Audrey Cline were wrestling with the zoning aspect of this application because the HDC Ordinance only allows 6 square feet per sign, whereas the Town's Zoning Ordinance has a provision that allows for one hanging sign per business establishment. Ms. Cline determined that the original idea of hanging the proposed new sign from the existing sign would not meet the Town's Zoning Ordinance provision. However, placing a separate sign on a separate bracket does meet zoning.

Vice Chair Hitchcock said that the HDC had previously approved the Em & Elle sign at 1 Madbury Road and at that time the Local Barre sign was already in the top location. She asked Mr. Behrendt if the new Local Barre sign would be replacing the Em & Elle sign that had been on the bottom.

Mr. Behrendt replied that it would. He said that Em & Elle has moved to Main Street so there is now a vacant spot and Local Barre will be installing a new bracket to install the new sign underneath the existing sign that is already there.

Ms. Singer MOVED to APPROVE, as presented, the application at 1 Madbury Road submitted by Local Barre for a hanging sign for Local Bronze Spray Tanning, without inclusion of any framing around the sign. Mr. Hoffman SECONDED the motion and it PASSED unanimously, 6-0, by a show of hands.

IX. Wagon Hill Farm. Update on LCHIP application for renovations to the Chesley-Bickford farmhouse. **HC**

Ms. Singer reported that the application is in progress awaiting numbers. She asked Mr. Behrendt if the application would be going before the Town Council for endorsement.

Council Representative Lund replied that the Town Council endorsed the application at its meeting on Monday evening, June 5, 2023.

Ms. Singer noted that LCHIP has very little money this year. She also informed the other members that there will be a cleaning day for the farmhouse on Monday, June 12, 2023, at 9AM, and invited any members that may be available to join in this effort.

X. Updates on Various Projects.

Vice Chair Hitchcock reported that the rock and bench to be installed at the Lafayette marker site are now ready for placement. She suggested that a forthcoming announcement could be placed in the weekly Friday Updates requesting people to donate to the Historic Preservation Fund to assist with payment towards installation of the bench, which will be approximately \$1,000 plus. She also reported that Durham Day was moderately well attended and described the display she had prepared for the HDC table at the event.

Chair Brickner-Wood reported that because of the change in his schedule it has become difficult for him to attend the Land Stewardship Subcommittee meetings as the HDC's representative. He asked if any other members might be available on Tuesday mornings at 9AM. He indicated that the subcommittee is thinking about moving its meetings to Thursdays. No one was available at this time to meet on Tuesday mornings.

Chair Brickner-Wood said he is scheduled to give an update before the Town Council at its meeting on June 26, 2023, regarding the HDC's current activities. He asked other members if there were any items in specific, they would like for him to mention at that meeting besides projects the commission has approved and other updates such as the Wagon Hill farmhouse, the state historic marker and inclusive narrative process, etc.

Suggestions included:

- Historic walking tour.
- Historic District plaques.
- Providing a program for the upcoming Durham Parks & Recreation Family Picnic at Wagon Hill Farm that would include a musical group to play historical music.

XI. Other Business

Mr. Hoffman said that Vice Chair Hitchcock had mentioned earlier the Heritage Trust/Historic Preservation Fund. He asked how anyone would know how to donate to that fund. He said if the commission made it easy for people to donate or made them aware that they could donate to that fund, then it may have more money to accomplish preservation efforts.

Council Representative Lund said it may be something that needs to be worked out with the Town Council as it is the legislative body that approves donations and unanticipated revenues.

XII. Adjournment - by 9:30 p.m.

Ms. Singer MOVED to adjourn the meeting. The motion was SECONDED by Mr. Hoffman and PASSED unanimously, 6-0.

The meeting ADJOURNED at 7:41 PM.

Jennie Berry, Minutes Taker