

Heritage Commission Meeting Minutes  
Londonderry, New Hampshire  
November 19, 2009

In attendance: Vice-Chairman Jim Schwalbe, Commissioners David Colglazier, John Dahlfred, Sue Joudrey, Debra Paul, Alternate Commissioners Tom Bianchi & Pauline Caron, and Councilor Michael Brown.

Absent: Chairman Commissioner Arthur Rugg, Alternate Commissioner Lara McIntyre, and Town Planner Tim Thompson.

Vice-Chairman Schwalbe called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM in the Sunnycrest Meeting Room of the Town Hall.

Vice-Chairman Schwalbe appointed Alternate Commissioner Bianchi to vote for Chairman Arthur Rugg.

Commissioner Dahlfred moved and Councilor Brown seconded a motion to accept the special meeting minutes of September 24, 2009. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Steven McDonough, owner of the Homestead Restaurant at the corner of Mammoth and Nashua Roads, made a presentation about a proposed signage change for his business. Mr. McDonough provided some visual aids and an artistic rendering of the new sign structure. A central roofed display will house a new carriage. There are to be four columns at the corners supporting a shallow hipped roof with glass panels on all sides bordered by the white cylindrical columns at the corners. This section is 12 feet wide by 8 feet deep overall. There are to be two wing walls angled backwards at the rear corners. These walls are to be ten feet long and six feet high overall above a two-foot high faux stone base, similar to the base under the carriage structure. The sign walls are 16 inches deep. The owner stated that lighting for the carriage and sign reader boards was to be pointing upwards. He also said that the reader boards were to be dark colored with white letters.

Commissioner Dahlfred wondered about the location. The owner stated that the new sign would be behind the current sign and slightly to the right of it. Dahlfred liked the sign example of gold letters on a small background that will be above each reader board.

Councilor Brown was concerned about the total size of the assembly of the signboards and the central carriage display structure. The owner discussed the sizes and location. He had the length and widths of the sections, but only had a firm height for the signs. The height of the carriage structure is still being considered.

Councilor Brown noted that he was having some difficulty considering this large an assembly, but that he was beginning to grasp that this is a small structure with signs on either side. Councilor Brown said that he was leaning towards liking the concept of faux stone as the base material.

Commissioner Joudrey wondered about the plantings in front of the base. The owner noted that the rendering was showing bushes, but he thought that would end up with flowerbeds instead.

Commissioner Bianchi was concerned about the placement of the sign walls. The owner provided some more verbal description of the sign walls.

Commissioner Colglazier was concerned about the upwards facing lighting for the carriage and the signs. Colglazier suggested that the normal recommendation from the Commission was for down lighting. This would apply to the carriage and the signs.

Colglazier was also concerned about the size of the carriage structure versus the size of the carriage itself. The owner was a little vague about the dimensions and how they all fit together. Colglazier suggested that there should be some specific drawings made, which would help with the planning and actual construction.

Vice-Chairman Schwalbe was concerned about the overall size of the sign and carriage structure. The owner noted that there was plenty of land for this and that it would not be crowded.

Schwalbe did not like the glass. The owner said that he needed it to protect his investment in the modern carriage, so that it would not be ruined by exposure to rain and snow. The owner did not think that just a roof over it would offer enough protection. Schwalbe said that he would not vote approval for it with the inclusion of glass.

Alternate Commissioner Caron was concerned about the color of the floor under the carriage. The owner was sure that it would be a gray cement color. Caron had been by the site and was not concerned about its placement on the property or the use of glass panels.

After some more general discussion with the owner the Commission voted to approve the design concept as proposed along with the suggestions made by the different Commissioners. There was no formal motion. Commissioner Paul said that she would abstained from voting because the owner is a client of her business. Vice-Chairman Schwalbe asked for a show of hands in favor, against and abstaining. The proposal was approved 5-1-1. Vice-Chairman Schwalbe voted no due to the glass issue and Commissioner Paul abstained.

Commissioner Paul called the invited speaker, but he did not make it to this meeting.

Commissioner Colglazier gave a brief explanation of a guideline that was distributed with regards to how one could grade historic structures. Certain criteria would be used for several building elements that were felt to be important for qualification for a tax break for a historic structure. Colglazier also handed out a sample of 36 Historic Inventory houses with a listing of their assessments for the structure, outbuildings and the real estate. Colglazier will discuss this grading system with Commissioner Dahlfred before sending suggestions to the State Architectural Historian, James Garvin. Mr. Garvin has promised to help with legislation that we hope to have passed by the State to allow Towns to give some tax relief to owners of historic residences.

Councilor Brown asked about progress at the Historical Society construction area. Commissioners Colglazier and Dahlfred provide some basic information about the progress on the Rev. William Morison house. Robert Pothier, First Period Colonial, has almost finished the first floor level floor framing. There are new sills around the perimeter and some new flooring timbers for the rear room floor. The original timbers are being used for the front of the house. A small percentage of them will be replaced due to rot and insect damage. Mr. Pothier will continue to work to erect the frame despite the coming cold weather.

Alternate Commissioner Caron announced that she had not applied for re-appointment to the Commission due to health issues. Various Commissioners thanked her for her service.

Councilor Brown moved and Commissioner Paul seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion approved 7-0-0 at 8:45 PM.

David Lee Colglazier  
Secretary