

Minutes of the Historic District Commission

York, Maine

Meeting of January 2, 2019

Present: Kurt Hultstrom, Kari Laprey, Amy Phalon, Scott Stevens, Bryce Waldrop.

Hultstrom called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. He welcomed Phalon as a new commissioner.

Hultstrom raised the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness regarding demolition of the structure at 40 Southside Road, Map 74 Lot 2-A. Rob McKie, contractor, and Zachary Donnell, current owner were present. Hultstrom asked for their comments. McKie said the new owners have a P&S agreement contingent on a permit to demolish. They want to demolish the existing house and build a new one closer to the river. He shared photographs giving more details of exterior and interior features. He said the original construction date was 1939. Stevens moved not to delay demolition. Laprey seconded the motion. Commissioners discussed the current appeal of mid twentieth-century materials. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioners reviewed a draft prepared by Waldrop and Stevens of a revised application form. They made suggestions for changes:

- Add "Board of" before "Selectmen" in the first sentence
- In paragraph 2, move mention of Article 12 to the first sentence
- In the second paragraph from the bottom, be more specific about the process – that it could take place over several meetings/months
- Add "alteration" to 12.14.2 Rehabilitation, Renovation, or Alteration on the first page of the checklist

Stevens suggested field testing with some property owners. He agreed to make the suggested changes and bring a revised draft to the February meeting. Discussion ensued of informing property owners that the application and procedures have changed.

Consultant Steven Mallory spoke to the commission about his update of the survey of York Street west of the First Parish Church administration building (aka old library building) to the corner of routes 1 and 1A. He note that the survey was funded by a Certified Local Government grant through the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC). He gave an overview: to take another look at structures surveyed in 1973 and 2002 by the Town of York and document the buildings for the state's Cultural Architectural Resource Management Archive (CARMA) database. He documented what had changed, and what met eligibility criteria for the National Register of Historic Places. The underlying purpose was to inform consideration of extending the Village Historic District. Records of all the surveyed structures are now in CARMA, and hence publicly accessible. The survey update area had been determined by the Historic District Commission. Criteria for inclusion were: frontage on York Street, 45 years old or older. None of the resources previously surveyed is

individually listed on the National Register. There is a large National Register District that includes the survey area, created in the 1970s, but no individual structures dating after the 1890s were documented in that. This survey included 98 buildings; some properties have more than one. The structures within it represent a complete stylistic catalog from the early eighteenth century to World War II. Four have undergone change since 2002; none had been demolished. There had been no new construction. From the perspective of the MHPC it was a good area for a historic district because of the continuity; there are few intruding noncontributing buildings. Noncontributing garages were built after 1980s or will soon be old enough to qualify for the National Register. Thirty-four buildings meet the basic criteria for the National or state register. Eighty-nine of the 98 predate World War II. There are 5 attached historic barns and 4 detached Yankee barns. There are three smaller, gable-end barns dating to the late nineteenth century. There are two camps. Five garages were built before 1968. There are 4 noncontributing commercial buildings. There are four post-1968 garages. Continuity with few or no intruding buildings. Mallory said the key threats are uncontrolled remodeling and expansion, or demolition. The Davis Family land is under consideration for development, which will alter the viewshed. It is the last surviving eighteenth-century farmscape He recommends a 500-foot setback. A minor threat to the integrity of the area could be routine DOT work – digging up York Street to replace utilities. The trees along the street are mostly Norway maples. He recommended banning them in the future as an introduced species prone to splitting and dying young; also blue spruce, dying from a canker and becoming unstable. Mallory further recommended survey of Organug Road and the southern end of Lindsay Road.

Hultstrom noted it was time to elect officers. Laprey nominated Stevens as Chair. Waldrop seconded the nomination. The motion passed. Stevens nominated Hultstrom as Vice Chair and Waldrop as Secretary. Laprey seconded. The motion passed.

Stevens related an idea he had for a fee on demolitions funding assistance for property owners in districts, then explained why attorneys at the Maine Municipal Association said it was not legal. Further discussion ensued of how to achieve rewards for owners. Commissioners considered a possible workshop with a municipal law expert to hammer out measures.

New Business: Waldrop related a request from the First Parish Church Buildings and Grounds Committee for a design charrette with the Commission as part of a long-range planning effort looking at various projects. In discussion, commissioners agreed that the church should have its charrette, then then bring concepts to an official meeting of the commission. Waldopr said he would send a response on letterhead, copying other commissioners.

The meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.