



Somersworth Historic District Commission

One Government Way
Somersworth, NH 03878

Minutes of Regular Meeting on 28 June 2017: Adopted as submitted

Praesens:

Laura Barry, Chair
Jenna Dunham, Vice-Chair
Martin Dumont, City Councilor and Representative to the HDC
Tim Metivier, Building Inspector
Richard Brooks, Commissioner
Edward Levasseur, Alternate Commissioner
George Poulin, Commissioner
Pius Charles Murray, Commissioner and Secretary

In absentia:

Arthur Hendrickson
Beth Poulin, Commissioner

Members of the Public Present:

David Baker (on behalf of HDC #09-2017)
Marc R. Batchelder (on behalf of HDC # 03-2017)
Sarah McGraw (in support of HDC #09-2017)
Luke Sweetman (on behalf of HDC 08-2017)
Theresa Tozier (on behalf of HDC #02-2017)

Agenda & Minutes

I. Call to Order: At 7:00 P.M. by the Chair.

II. Approval of Minutes:

1. Motion to approve the HDC Boundary Subcommittee Meeting minutes of 12 April 2017 as submitted was made by Mr. Murray and seconded by Councilor Dumont. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of 24 May 2017 as submitted was made by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mr. Brooks. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Motion to approve the full HDC Workshop minutes of 24 May 2017 was made by Mr. Murray and seconded by Ms. Dunham. Motion passed unanimously.
4. Motion to approve the HDC Ordinance Subcommittee minutes of 31 May 2017 as submitted was made by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mr. Brooks. Motion passed unanimously.
5. Motion to approve the HDC Ordinance Subcommittee minutes of 7 June 2017 as submitted was made by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mr. Brooks. Motion passed unanimously.
6. Motion to approve the HDC Ordinance Subcommittee minutes of 16 June 2017 as submitted was made by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mr. Brooks. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Projects of Minimal Impact Report:

Mr. Metivier reported that there were four projects of minimal impact during the month as follows:

- (a.) Jeff Trimble, 28 Lincoln Street, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 05, HDC #05-2017. Application for mechanical equipment was approved.
- (b.) Mary and Vasiliki Semitros, 20 Lincoln Street, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 128, HDC #06-2017. Application to replace vinyl siding and fence was approved.
- (c.) Stateline Pawn, 77 High Street, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 62, HDC #07-2017. Application for sign replacement was approved.
- (d.) Market Street Dress Shop, 90 Market Street, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 201, HDC #10-2017. Application to erect signs was approved.

IV. Comments by Visitors:

There were none.

V. Old Business:

A. Breitling Holdings, LLC is seeking a certificate of appropriateness for a building renovation for apartments and commercial space on property located at 67 Elm Street, in the Business Historic (BH) District, Assessor's Map 10, Lot 174, HDC #03-2017.

Marc R. Batchelder was present to discuss the project. Mr. Metivier offered the following short introduction to the project to the HDC: Breitling Holdings is returning under old business with the information that this board requested:

- (a.) The board asked the applicant to return with a more architecturally historic appealing fence choice over the proposed chain link fence
- (b.) It was requested that the location of the proposed AC condensers be depicted on the plan and to show screening choices of those condensers for the board consideration.

- (c.)The board asked the applicant to return with other siding choices other than vinyl siding that is currently proposed and
- (d.)The board had also asked for the applicant to reconsider the material choices of pressure treated lumber for the replaced and improved rear egress stairway proposed

Mr. Batchelder described the various aspects of this project. Upon recommendation by the HDC that the fence be more architecturally visual than the proposed chainlink fence, the new proposed fence calls for a black aluminum decorative fence. Secondly, in response to the HDC's request that the location of the HVAC be seen in the plans as well as the screening for it proposed. The new proposal calls for the HVAC mechanical equipment pad be located on the south side of the building not visible to Washington Street and screened by a 4' high fence made of Azek composite boards similar to the dumpster. Thirdly, the project was asked to investigate materials other than vinyl for the siding to be more historically accurate; given the budget, the proposal requests vinyl be given consideration for approval. Finally, the project addressed the HDC's concern about pressure-treated wood for the rear egress; once again the budget did not allow the upgrade and so there was a re-request for use of standard-pressure treated lumber.

The HDC's discussion (led by Mr. Poulin and Mr. Brooks) centered on the fear that the pressure-treated lumber would be left unpainted. In order to approve the project, the HDC wanted to insure that the lumber would be painted the same color as the rest of the building.

Motion to approve HDC # 03-2017 with the stipulation that the pressure-treated wood used in the rear-egress be painted (cf. C2-C8-C10 of the plans submitted) was made by Mr. Poulin and seconded by Mr. Brooks. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Councilor Dumont requested an adjustment in the agenda at this point to introduce the HDC's newest member, Edward Levasseur, an Alternate Commissioner recently confirmed by the City Council. After Mr. Levasseur introduce himself, the Chair warmly Mr. Levasseur to the HDC. Since there were Commissioners absent, the Chair informed Mr. Levasseur that he was invited to vote.

C. Any other old business that may come before the Commission.

VI. New Business:

A. Seeds of Faith, 21 Grand Street, in the Historic Moderate Density (HMD) District, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 17, HDC #02-2017.

Appeal of the HDC requirement that the nonarchitectural door be replaced. Theresa Tozier, Executive Director, was present to discuss the appeal. Mr. Metivier offered a brief introduction to the appeal: Seeds of Faith is looking to appeal the condition to replace the missing planked storm door as part of a prior approval set during the April 26th meeting. Ms. Tozier read into the record her appeal letter.

The HDC discussion centered on whether or not there were plans for another door. Councilor Dumont stated that this property has gained in value with the work already undertaken by Seeds of Faith and he recommended HDC approval.

Motion to grant the appeal to HDC #02-2017's requirement to replace the missing planked storm door was made by Mr. Poulin and seconded by Ms. Dunham. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Vibe Art Gallery, 67 High Street, in the Business Historic (BH) District, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 63, HDC #09-2017 is seeking a certificate of appropriateness to erect a sign.

David Baker was present to discuss the project. Mr. Metivier provided an introduction to the project: VIBE Art Gallery for 335-337 LLC owned by David Baker, is here due to a sign proposed was denied as minimal impact because the proposed sign did not meet the criteria of ordinance 19.14.e.3.c.ii. Projecting signs shall align with some horizontal element of the façade (i.e. top of sign aligns with top of window; bottom of sign aligns with bottom of window, bottom of sign aligns with top of lintel. Where possible signs shall be aligned with other signs on adjacent buildings. This sign proposed is vertical not horizontal and it doesn't line up with adjacent signs.

The HDC discussion centered on whether or not the sign was intended as a permanent sign or a temporary one which could remain on the sidewalk. Ms. Dunham remarked that the proposed sign did align with the windows and so would be acceptable. Mr. Brooks inquired whether or not the sign fulfilled the city's sign ordinances.

Motion to approve HDC #09-2017 as submitted was made by Mr. Murray and seconded by Ms. Dunham. The motion was approved by majority vote 5-2 with Mr. Brooks and Mr. Poulin opposed.

C. Luke Sweetman is seeking a certificate of appropriateness for property at 28 Linden Lane, in the Single Family Residential with an Overlay Historic (R1AH) District, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 100, HDC #08-2017.

Luke Sweetman was present to discuss the project. Mr. Metivier provided an introduction to the project: Luke Sweetman is here to ask for the appropriateness to build and install a door in the opening of the brick wall of his barn/shed in a response to a property maintenance notice he received on the buildings conditions. This is the applicants proposed solution correct the condition.

The HDC discussion concerned what happened to the door transoms which are visible in a 1986 survey photograph (according to Mr. Brooks). Mr. Metivier replied that they were re-used as door entrances in the back.

Motion to approve HDC #08-2017 as submitted was made by Mr. Brooks and seconded by Mr. Poulin. Motion passed unanimously.

D. HDC Ordinance proposal and HDC Standards for Review.

The Chair presented to the HDC the final reports of the HDC Ordinance Subcommittee. The Chair expressed an intent to ask the full HDC to approve each section, the HDC Ordinances and the Standards for Review, separately. If approved, they would be forwarded to the City Council for the next step. After a brief discussion, the HDC consensus was that the City Council could make any changes it felt necessary.

The Chair called for a vote on the HDC Ordinance proposal. Approval was unanimous.
The Chair called for a vote on the Standards for Review. Approval was unanimous.

E. HDC Boundary Subcommittee report

Mr. Brooks and Ms. Dunham presented their subcommittee's final report. Two alternatives were discussed. One followed the streetscape of the historic district which would enlarge it slightly, the alternative would maintain the current boundary. There was brief discussion concerning inclusion of non-territorial places on the National Historic Register and those that the Vision 20/20 Committee had asked the HDC to consider including. The HDC consensus was that the City Council could address those issues as it might see fit.

The Chair called for a vote on the streetscape approach to the HDC Boundary which would enlarge it slightly. Approval was unanimous. The vote on the alternative of retaining the current boundary was superfluous.

F. Any other new business that may come before the Commission.

VII. Closing Comments by Visitors:

Sarah McGraw thanked the HDC for approving the petition of the Vibe Art Gallery which she believes will be a vibrant contributor to downtown Somersworth..

VIII. Workshop Business:

A. Mr. Metivier reported that the Davenports, 16 Lincoln Street, were able to have their plan for the doors on their garage approved as minimal impact.

B. The Chair called for volunteers for the Cemetery Subcommittee. Mr. Brooks, Ms. Dunham, and Mr. Poulin volunteered. The Chair reported that the condition of the Horn Cemetery had deteriorated since her last visit and so encouraged this subcommittee to move quickly.

C. Any other Workshop Business that may come before the Commission.

IX. Communications and Miscellaneous:

A. Ms. Dunham announced that she and her husband had bought a house outside Somersworth and would be moving in August. Thus she would have to resign from the HDC. She would attend the July meeting which would probably be her last. The Chair expressed the Commission's appreciation for Ms. Dunham's contributions to the HDC during her term of service.

B. Councilor Dumont reported on the success of the Food Truck Festival and that there would be another one next year.

C. Mr. Brooks brought up the notion of the land-use boards interacting more frequently and more formally. Mr. Metivier stated his opinion that while this is an excellent idea it would require action on the part of the other boards to change their bylaws in order to make this happen.

D. Any other Communications and Miscellaneous that may come before the Commission.

X Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn at 7:28pm was made by Mr. Brooks and seconded by Councilor Dumont.
Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pius Charles Murray

(Mr.) Pius Charles Murray, MLS, MPA
Secretary

Attachment (1)