

**Somersworth Historic District Commission  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
25 August 2021**

**Members in Attendance:** Laura Barry, Chair; Lindsey Gagnon, Vice-Chair, Councilor Matthew Gerding; Richard Brooks, George Poulin; Charles Murray, Secretary

**Excused Members:** None

**Staff in Attendance:** Tim Metivier, Code Enforcement Officer

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

1) **Approval of Minutes of 2 2021 minutes.**

Motion to approve the minutes of the 25 July 2021 minutes as submitted was made by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mr. Brooks. Motion was adopted by unanimously.

2) **Projects of Minimal Importance**

Mr. Metivier announced the approval of two projects of minimal importance:

1. 2 Main Street in the Business with Historic Overlay (BH) District, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 202, HDC # 11-2021. Application approved to install and repaint sign was approved.,
2. 24 Maple Street, in the Residential Single Family/A with Historic Overlay District, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 103, HDC #120-2021. Application to re-roof un kind was approved.

3) **Public Comment by Visitors:** There were none.

3) **OLD BUSINESS**

A) Any further Old Business that may come before the Commission.

4) **NEW BUSINESS**

A) Debra Klein is seeking a certificate of appropriateness to demo and repair barn area and partial of main building and repair of existing structure due to fire on property located at 9 Linden Street, in the Residential Single Family/A with Historic Overlay (R1AH) District, Assessor's Map 11, Lot 177, HDC #13-2021.

Petitioner present: Debra Klein

Discussion: Mr. Metivier described the project from recommendations made by Mr. Keith T. Kallberg's letter of 15 July 2021 based on an investigation of the extent of damage: "Physical evidence at the subject property suggests that the barn structure might nit be feasibly repairable., The original structural system of the barn was modified to accommodate conversion into habitable living space. Framing in the barn is irregular and portions of the undamaged framing are unlikely to be useable given current code-mandated design loadings. ..." Ms. Klein added that both the Fire

Department and her Insurance Company agreed that the barn needed to be replaced. Her intention is to replace the barn with an exact replica. Councilor Gerding inquired about the timeline; Ms. Klein said she would like to begin immediately but would do whatever paperwork (including obtaining necessary permits) first. Councilor Gerding also asked about the state of the chimney to which Ms. Klein responded that it had been extensively damaged. To save some money, Councilor Gerding recommended installation of a chimney top only without having to rebuild the entire chimney stack. Mr. Poulin asked if any changes were proposed; Ms. Klein replied that any replacement would be an exact replica of what it was replacing. The Chair asked if the proposed rebuilt barn would be grandfathered; Mr. Metivier answered that it would not be an existing building; in any new structure would have to have its egress and double-hung windows meet code standards. Mr. Brooks asked if this petition was to approve the proposed new structure to which Mr. Metivier replied that this petition was to approve demolition only. An application for any new structure would have to be submitted at a later time. Mr. Metivier inquired if vinyl siding was to be used in the new structure, to which Ms. Klein replied that vinyl siding would be used. Ms. Gagnon asked if the siding would be done all at once, to which Ms. Klein responded that it would be.

Motion to approve HDC #13-2021 as submitted to demolish the existing structure was made by Mr. Poulin and seconded by Mr. Brooks. The motion passed unanimously.

B) Any additional New Business that may come before the Commission.

## **5) WORKSHOP BUSINESS:**

A) The Chair requested Mr. Murray address the Commission. Mr. Murray presented his resignation as both a Commissioner and Secretary of the HDC effective 1 September 2021 as he is relocating to Boston, MA. Mr. Murray thanked the Commission for the high honor and privilege of having served as Secretary for 8 ½ years – his entire tenure on the HDC. Mr. Metivier reminded the HDC that it had continuously voted to allow Mr. Murray to be re-elected after serving his first two years.

B) Motion to open voting for a new Secretary was made by the Chair and seconded by Mr. Murray. Motion passed unanimously.

The initial vote between Mr. Brooks and Mr. Poulin for Secretary ended in a 3-3 tie. The discussion then turned to seeing if Ms. Gagnon would be willing to step down as Vice-Chair to become Secretary. Mr. Brooks asked Mr. Metivier if staff member could take HDC minutes as the other land use boards already do. Mr. Metivier said he would look into it. Ms. Gagnon asked if the city could provide a laptop for her to take HDC minutes. Mr. Murray stated that the HDC rules required election of a Secretary; Mr. Metivier consulted the HDC rules and confirmed Mr. Murray's statement. Mr. Metivier thought that would be possible. Vote to accept Ms. Gagnon's resignation as Vice-Chair and election as Secretary was 3-2, with Ms. Gagnon abstaining.

C) There was next a vote for the new Vice-Chair. Mr. Poulin was elected by a vote of 3-2 over Mr. Brooks with Ms. Gagnon abstaining.

D) The Chair reminded the Commission that its rules required a minimum of four Commissioners for a quorum. Since there was only four Commissioners remaining, all must attend meetings. Any potential absences should be communicated to the Chair as early as possible. The Chair also asked Commissioners to actively solicit application for three open full Commissioner seats.

E) Any workshop business that may come before the Commission.

**6) COMMUNICATIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS**

A) Councilor Gerding reported that the City Council had accepted the educational grants for the HDC to conduct public workshops. More specific information would be forthcoming.

B) The Chair canvassed the Commissioners inquiring whether or not any candidates had been found to fill the HDC's position for three full members as well as all three alternates. No one reported any success.

C) Mr. Poulin reported that the Somersworth Historical Society would be sponsoring Cemetery Tours on Saturday, 2 October 2021 which was a change from his report last meeting.

**7) ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: To adjourn made by Ms. Gagnon

The MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Poulin

The MOTION CARRIED by a 6-0 vote.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25PM.

Respectfully submitted:

*Pius Charles Murray*

Pius Charles Murray  
Secretary