



Office of Planning & Codes

51 Bath Road • Wiscasset, ME 04578

WISCASSET HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes, November 5, 2015

Present: John Reinhardt, Gordon Konrath, Wendy Donovan, Susan Blagden, Jib Fowles, and Town Planner Jamel Torres

1. Call to Order

Town Planner Jamel Torres called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. Introductions

The Commissioners went around the room and introduced themselves, where they live, and why they wanted to join the Historic Preservation Commission

3. Elect Officers

John Reinhardt was elected as Chair. Vote 4-0-1.

Gordon Konrath was elected as Vice Chair. Vote 4-0-1

Wendy Donovan was elected as Secretary. Vote 4-0-1

4. Review Historic District Map

The Commission discussed how the Historic Overlay District originated and had some questions about the different zoning districts in the village. Jamel Torres explained the Village I, Village II, and Village Waterfront Zoning Districts and how they originated (from the Comprehensive Plan). The commissioners requested that they each have a large copy of the Historic Overlay Map so they can read them easier and get to know the district better. Jamel Torres said he would look into making large copies of the map for each commissioner.

5. Historic Preservation Ordinance

The Commission discussed the ordinance and the responsibilities they have as commissioners. Jamel Torres asked the commissioners to study the ordinance since they will be responsible for following the provisions and come back to the next meeting with any additional questions they may have. The commissioners also discussed how important it will be to educate the property owners in the Historic Overlay District about the ordinance and its provisions. Susan Blagden suggested that the commission have a few experienced planners in historic preservation attend an upcoming meeting to give the group

advice/training. Jamel Torres said he would contact several experienced planners around the State and see if they could come to an upcoming meeting or two. Susan Blagden said she was not comfortable with Section 10.7.2, Exemption for Substantial Hardship and asked Jamel Torres to research other community's Historic Preservation Ordinances and look at what language they use for their "Exemption for Substantial Hardship" provision. Jamel said he would do some research and bring back some suggestions at the next meeting.

6. Certificate of Appropriateness Draft

The Commissioners agreed that they thought the draft was complete and thorough. They discussed how the ordinance only regulates the outside of the buildings and not the interior. Gordon Konrath explained that the ordinance regulates what can be seen from the public way (outside of buildings). The Commission agreed. Susan Blagden suggested the commission needs to be thinking about the replacement of an existing building/new construction in the Historic District and how the commission will regulate this. The commission discussed how it would be cost prohibitive to require new construction to replicate the building it would be replacing and how the commission should be understanding and entertain 21st century construction. The commission decided that it will look over the draft and bring back comments to Jamel Torres at the next meeting. Thus, it is still in draft form.

7. Fee Discussion

Jamel Torres shared some fee prices for a Certificate of Appropriateness Application that he had researched across the State:

- Portland: \$100
- Topsham: \$0
- Saco: \$0
- Bar Harbor: \$26
- Kennebunk: \$25

Susan Blagden made a motion that there shall be no fee for a calendar year for a Certificate of Appropriateness Application. Vote 5-0-0.

8. Historic District Survey Discussion

Jamel Torres said that he had gone to the Maine Historic Preservation Office in Augusta and made copies of the National Historic District Survey. The paperwork can be found in the Planning & Codes Office. John Reinhardt said that Ed Kavanagh of Lincoln County Historical Association has many photos of historic properties throughout the village. He also said that the Wiscasset Public Library has similar photos available. Jamel Torres said he was going to create an inventory of contributing/non-contributing properties in the Historic Overlay District based on the survey done by the Maine Historic Preservation Office. He said that non-contributing properties would not need to be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission. Susan Blagden expressed concern about this and thinks that all properties in the Historic Overlay District should need to be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission. The group agreed with Susan Blagden. Jamel Torres will still be creating a

street-by-street inventory of contributing/non-contributing properties and will bring this inventory to an upcoming meeting.

9. Meeting Attendance Discussion

Jib Fowles is in Texas December-May and would like to attend the meetings via skype or videochat. Wendy Donovan moved to allow commissioners to attend meetings via skype if necessary. Vote 5-0-0.

10. Meeting Schedule

The regular meeting schedule for the Historic Preservation Commission is the first Thursday of the month, at 5 p.m. The next meeting will be on Thursday, December 3, at 5 p.m.

11. Other Business

The commission asked Jamel Torres to email the Historic Preservation Commission roster to each commissioner so everyone has each other's contact information.

John Reinhardt talked about the Town creating a Blasting Ordinance in response to a surprise blasting in the historic district in October. Gordon Kontrath said that the Town's Ordinance Review Committee is creating a draft blasting ordinance per request of the Select Board.

Jib Fowles talked about how he was disappointed that Jenny Spaur was unable to serve on the commission because she is a Canadian resident. Susan Blagden suggested that she could be a consultant for the group and still attend meetings but would not be able to vote. The commission asked Jamel Torres to reach out to Jenny Spaur and ask if she would like to be a consultant for the commission.

12. Adjournment

John Reinhardt moved to adjourn at 6:20 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.