

# Wiscasset Historic Preservation Commission

Minutes, 6/29/17

Present: John Reinhardt, Wendy Donovan, Gordon Konrath, Susan Blagden  
(James Kochan absent)

## 1) Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm

## 2) Consideration of minutes

Susan moved to approve the minutes of the 6/8/17 meeting, Al seconded. Passed 4-0

## 3) Certificate of Appropriateness review

a. Hooper St – Tax Map U04-Lot 021B: New construction. House meets all setback requirements. Al moved to approve the application as presented with the condition that the applicant will need to return for an amended Certificate of Appropriateness if the decks are not built at this time. The motion passed 4-0.

b. Lee St – Tax Map U01-Lot 54: new construction. John recused himself as he is an abutter to the property. The applicant presented examples of stone walls and plantings he would like to add to the property. Al asked if the applicant would consider siding other than the vinyl clapboard-style siding that was proposed, since the site is very visible and at the entrance to the historic district. (There was discussion of the siting of the house with regard to an existing right of way on the property and of the potential for the site to have water runoff issues, but neither of these fall under the purview of the Historic Preservation Commission and so would not affect the application.) Al moved to table the application to the next meeting (July 6) so that he can do a site visit, and to give the applicant time to look into other siding options. Wendy seconded, and the motion passed 3-0.

## 4) Public comment

There was no public comment.

## 5) Other business

Ben's last official day is 6/30/17. The commission will have no staff services available after that date. Regarding Certificate of Appropriateness reviews: people with questions that cannot be handled by the Codes Officer will be referred directly to John or to Al. Certificate Applications will need to be processed in the town office by HPC officers. Hard copies of any files we need are currently in Ben's office, and we should check with the Town Manager for anything we need. The Commission will have to prep its own meeting packets. COA applications need to be distributed to HPC members 2 weeks before meetings. Our agenda needs to be posted to the town website at least a week in advance of meetings. The HPC will also need to ensure that findings of fact are drafted and approved within 14 days, and then given to the town office to go on the hard drive and the town website. Ben recommends meeting bi-monthly to allow for approval of findings of fact.

In addition, the Select Board has not approved John or Jim's re-appointment, so as of the July 6<sup>th</sup> meeting we are down 2 commissioners. Susan moved to elect Al chair of the commission in John's absence, and the motion passed 4-0.

John extended a heartfelt thank you to Ben for his help and guidance.

#### 6) Drafting of letter the Board of Selectmen regarding the Historic Preservation Ordinance

Susan read from the draft of information that Jim had provided previously, detailing the achievements of the Commission to date.

Ben has a spreadsheet that lists the COA reviews we have completed to date (not including tonight's applications). He recommended that our letter focus on the positive benefits of having an Historic District, including our efforts to become a CLG and the potential for grant money, potential for economic growth, town pride, and the Historic District's importance to the Comprehensive Plan.

Al pointed out that the town has been known for many years as "the Prettiest Village in Maine", and has been on the National Register since 1973. In order to be included on the National Register, the town had to approve of the designation. The job of the Historic Preservation ordinance is to protect that designation. If projects in town are allowed to degrade the historic value of the district, the town can lose its designation on the register. The current situation with Haggett's Garage is one concrete example of what can happen to an historic property without the protection of a preservation ordinance.

According to the original letter, our response is due to the Select Board by August 8<sup>th</sup>, to be reviewed at their meeting on August 15<sup>th</sup>. We are also required to hold a joint public hearing with the ORC and Planning Board, which requires a 12-day notice. Al will need to coordinate with the ORC chair as soon as possible to set up the meeting with the planning board. The goal would be to be on the agenda of the Planning Board meeting on 7/24.

The meeting was adjourned at 7 pm

The next commission meeting will be Thursday, July at 5:00 pm.