

Public Notice – Historic District Commission Regulation changes

The Canterbury Historic District Commission (HDC) will be holding a public hearing regarding the redrafting of their Regulations and Guidelines and future amendments to the zoning Ordinance that are being considered. The meeting will be held on Wednesday April 19, in the Meeting House, at 7 pm.

The HDC was formed back in 1990. The details of its purview lie in Article 13 of the zoning Ordinance. It's main mission was "to recognize and preserve" the "structures, sites and viewsapes" within the designated historic districts – one of which is the Town Center, and the other of which is the Shaker Village district.

Members of the HDC have worked on revisions since early 2020 with much of the drafting work being spearheaded by Jeff Leidinger. The final draft will be available in several places prior to the hearing. Hard copies will be in the Town Office and Library. Digital copies will be on the town website. Questions may be emailed to Chairman Kevin Bragg at Kbragg@live.com. The intent behind this work has been to produce an updated document for guidance and process, clarifying the procedures and criteria adopted by the HDC to be fair and effective for residents within the districts, and ultimately upholding the spirit of purpose behind the ordinance.

If residents look at the draft document, they will see that it is divided into 4 sections. (1) the Ordinance, which is currently unchanged (2) the revised Regulations section (3) the revised Application form, which has new elements to it, including notices, fees, and decisions. And (4) the revised Guidelines, intended to be user-friendly for applicants and the Commissioners alike.

If this draft is acceptable to the Board of Selectmen and the public, there are two further amendments to the Ordinance that may be proposed. One is to replace the 'metes and bounds' language describing both historic districts in the Ordinance with the new maps prepared recently by the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission. These maps show lot lines and are much easier to understand. Secondly, it is proposed to include a new 'waiver section' in the Guidelines, with the ordinance granting the HDC the power to issue waivers.

