

Historic District Commission Hearing and Meeting - Final Minutes
Sam Lake House – May 15, 2023

Members present:

Chairman Kevin Bragg, Jeff Leidinger, Ginger Laplante, Kent Ruesswick (BOS rep), Lois Scribner (secretary and alternate)

Members Absent

Anne Emerson, Harry Kinter

Agenda

1. Call to order

Kevin Bragg called the meeting to order at 7.07 pm.

2. Minutes of April 19, 2023

Jeff Leidinger moved the approval of those Minutes, and the motion was seconded by Kent Ruesswick and all voted in favor.

3. Revisions – 5th draft of Regulations

Jeff had circulated the 5th draft and recapitulated the process. The draft received its public hearing in April and does not have to go to Town Meeting. He had incorporated the suggestions of the members of the public who attended and gave feedback.

The next step following any final revisions made this evening regarding landscaping would be for the Selectmen to consider the draft and indicate their opinions about the regulations. This is primarily because the changes have implications for some additional responsibilities for the Code Enforcement Officer/Building Inspector. It is also because the HDC wants the support of the BOS going forward. Kent suggested it would be helpful if the HDC members came in person to talk to the BOS about these changes, and the two remaining parts of the HDC ordinance to be addressed. These are 1) the metes and bounds language describing the historic districts, to be replaced by maps and 2) the provision of a waiver authority for the HDC. Both these issues would require coming to

the Town Meeting for a vote to change Article 13 of the zoning ordinance. Town Counsel should be consulted for the waiver provision.

In terms of the revisions following the April hearing, Jeff said he had taken out 'historical' from page 12. He thought it had been correct but it was redundant as an adjective to the word 'preservation' and so he deleted it.

Kevin raised the issue of how to include language regarding removal of trees. Members are aware that different arborists can make different assessments regarding the health and longevity of trees. Such differences had been seen recently with the maples on Meeting House Lane at CSV. To expedite discussion, Kevin had copies of the section of the Amherst Historic District regarding Removal of Mature Trees. It includes language regarding "dying, decaying or diseased trees" requiring a Certificate of Approval for removal, and includes a provision for replacing a removed tree with a similar sized native species. Jeff agreed to include some of that language in section 13. M. regarding preservation of archeological resources, with similar protection for trees in the landscape. And it was agreed to add the word 'dead' in the section regarding Not Requiring approval. The onus would be on the homeowner to tell the town if it is so damaged it is beyond saving. If that was disputable the HDC could require the homeowner to research and check on the best course of action for the tree.

In Section C, regarding Definitions, it was agreed that Mature Trees should be defined in a subparagraph and to give details about the location of trees under consideration. If it was way out back of a property it would not be under HDC purview but if it was by the road and main property and in public view, it would be.

It was also suggested that the word 'terrain' be added under Criteria H, about alterations of buildings – to include terrain as well. And to encourage, rather than require, replacing a removed tree with a native species of similar size. At least there could be a discussion about replacing the removed tree if it is in the regulations.

This 6th draft of the Regulations will be posted in town and on the webpage. The members of the public who attended could be messaged too.

Kent was asked to find out when the HDC members could attend a Select Board meeting. It was proposed to think about attending September 18, prior to the HDC September 20

74 meeting when, if the BOS were in accord with the draft, the HDC members could vote to
75 approve the draft regulations. Jeff would be in town. The secretary likely not.

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77 4. Adjournment

78 There being no other business, Kent moved to adjourn the meeting and Kevin seconded.
79 It was 7.53 pm.

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81 Respectfully submitted,

82 Lois Scribner, secretary

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