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City of Rochester
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION Minutes
June 13, 2018 at 7 pm

Conference Room, City Hall Annex
33 Wakefield Street, Rochester, NH
(These minutes were approved July 11, 2018)

Members Present

Molly Meulenbroek, *Chair*
Sandra Keans
Marilyn Jones
Martha Wingate, *V Chair*

Members Absent

Nancy Dibble
Joyce Bruckner, (*Planning Board Rep*)
Peter Bruckner
Matt Wyatt, Alternate

- I. **Call to Order.** Ms. Meulenbroek called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.
- II. **Approval of minutes for May 9, 2018.**

The minutes from May 9, 2018 were approved by Ms.Meulenbroek and seconded by Ms. Jones.

III. BendonAdams Historic Overlay review

Reilly Thimons from BendonAdams conferenced called into the meeting to give an overview of the design guidelines, and historic overlay changes, and community engagement for the projects. Ms. Thimons explained the project and the process thus far. BendonAdams has made two trips to NH to meet with over 10 community organizations, held a Rochester Listens Session, created an online survey, and meet with downtown businesses. The themes from the survey and outreach include making sure there is affordable housing in the community, historic preservation of downtown, and reduce development barriers (residential and commercial). The projects has used best practice using national standards for historic preservation. There was a process mapping conducted by BendonAdams which concluded that the development process needs to be more clear and streamlined for applicants and more guidance given to applicants.

There was a discussion about the review process, consolidate review, demolition by neglect, and no negative effect. There HDC will be working on the design guidelines and ordinance changes at the next meeting.

The Historic District Commission reviewed the revised overlay ordinance. The members had a questions about the (3) special consideration for historic buildings within the historic overlay district. Is this just for contributing resources? There was also concern regarding the no negative effect and consolidated review with the Historic District Commission. There was a discussion regarding letting staff have administrative review authority for paint colors and signage. The HDC did discuss that the paint colors if within the historic color palette may not need review. Under section (J) development involving property within the historic overlay (h) the words landscaped area should be removed. There was a discussion regarding section c procedures for review of application regarding the monitoring committee and putting it in the amendments section. The HDC also discussed removing under the exempt activity single family and duplex. HDC wanted stronger language to include supporting documentation that needs to be provided in order to demolition. There was a general question regarding relocation. Is it preferred to be in the HDC or outside of the district? There have been two properties relocated within the city one by Frisbee Hospital and one in East Rochester. The HDC asked to provide a scenario or example of hardship that could come before the HDC. There also needs to be a definition of hardship. There was a question if under the hardship if the burden of proof falls on the developer. Is it a financial loss? The process language needs to be cleaned up. There was also a discussion regarding demolition by neglect and if the HDC wanted to proceed with this in the overlay or remove this completely. The HDC will wait until the next HDC meeting to discuss this with other members.

IV. BendonAdams Design Guidelines review

The Historic District Commission quickly reviewed the Design Guidelines. There was a comment regarding not allowing LED open signs in the downtown. Solar panels will also be added to the design guidelines.

V. Certified Local Government

Staff and the chair will be attending the National Preservation Conference in Iowa July 18-22 which was funded by a certified local government travel grant.

VI. Other Business/Non-scheduled Items

None

VII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Ms. Wingate to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 pm and seconded by Ms. Keans. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Mears, *Senior Planner*