

Meeting Minutes

Augusta Historic District Review Board

March 21, 2017

6:30 pm at City Center, Conference Room C

Members Present: Lorie Mastemaker, Dan Stevens, Amanda Taylor, Cheryl Clukey, Bob Corey, Jesse Patkus, Michael Hall

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Matt Nazar-City Staff, Betsy Poulin-City Staff

- Meeting Minutes
 - Motion by Bob to approve meeting minutes from January 17, 2017 as written.
 - Seconded by Cheryl.
 - Vote 6:0. All in Favor. Motion passed.

- Historic Resources Cheat Sheet – Written by Amanda.
 - Amanda noted under “Standards in a Nutshell” that new construction should be of its own era and sensitive to surroundings. It does not need to match the era of the building.
 - Amanda noted that the National Register listing is largely honorary. The historic district ordinance is what will keep the district historic in character.

- Bylaws.
 - Based on Planning Board Bylaws.
 - Bob asked to add in reference to training new Board members, which was in the PB Bylaws. The Board agreed.
 - Bob brought up discussion about Section 4, and the number for a quorum. The draft states 5, but he feels 4 could work. The Board agreed.
 - Bob asked to add “New Business” to Section 9. The Board agreed.
 - Lorie asked about Section 5, and how it relates to the Historic Preservation Commission and the Demolition Delay ordinance. It was discussed that any demolitions in the Historic District would be reviewed by the Historic District Review Board. Demolitions proposed outside these boundaries would still fall to the Historic Preservation Commission. Lorie and Dan will relay this to the Commission. The Demo Delay ordinance will be reviewed/revised as necessary to match above. The Board’s review of Demolitions allows for denial of an application, the Commission could only put a delay on a demolition.
 - Bob asked about Public Hearing time limits in Section 10. He would like the time limits noted in the PB bylaws to be added into the document. Matt noted it is the right of the chair to monitor time limits. Discussion by the Board settled on a 10 minute limit.
 - Bob asked about Section 7, Officers. Under Section c, Secretary, could number 2 be deleted. The Board agreed.

- Bob made a motion to adopt the bylaws as amended.
 - Seconded by Cheryl.
 - Vote 6:0. All in favor. Motion passes.

- Historic District Boundaries.
 - A message from Christi Mitchell at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission was provided to the Board as well as maps of the existing local historic districts with contributing and non-contributing buildings.
 - City staff can look at finding a consultant to re-evaluate the contributing and non-contributing buildings of the Winthrop Street and Crosby Street Historic Districts, as they were completed in 2001 and 1986. A consultant's expertise would provide the Council a better level of comfort with the designations, something that wasn't part of previous discussions about the district boundaries.
 - Motion by Bob to move forward with the Water Street and Bond Street National Register Districts to be adopted as Local Historic Districts and to move forward with the Winthrop Street and Crosby Street National Register Districts re-evaluation.
 - Seconded by Amanda.
 - Vote 6:0. All in favor. Motion passes.
 - Matt: This will go to the Council Informational Meeting on March 9th and presumably the Business Meetings on March 16th (First Reading) and April 6th (Second Reading). Dan, as Chair, can be present at the meeting. Matt will give a summary to the Council and Dan can speak on behalf of the board and answer any questions by Councilors.
 - Matt will check with the City Manager to see where money might be available to evaluate the Winthrop Street and Crosby Street Districts. If it is under \$10,000, three bids can be requested. Over \$10,000, the project would need to be advertised.

- Historic District Design Guidelines.
 - This is a guide for citizens and the Board.
 - If a building owner wants to do work, they can look to this document for guidance.
 - Jesse notes that windows and siding were the biggest topics of discussion. The intent is to maintain the historic appearance of the house; the materials have some flexibility due to cost factors.
 - There is a misconception that these guidelines HAVE to be followed, but they are actually a resource.
 - When an applicant comes to the Board, the process should be a conversation about the proposed work and how it would be completed.
 - A new title for the document could be considered.
 - Amanda had some comments about the document.
 - Page 1 – Downtown could read Historic District.
 - Page 3 – Outbuildings. These first three paragraphs to apply in Augusta.
 - Page 7 – Paragraph 2 – Yes, this applies in Augusta.

- Page 10 – Hardiplank/cementitious board could be an alternative material.
 - Page 23 – Delete Waterville reference (last bullet). Review entire document to remove these references.
 - Page 23 – Remove “Victorian” from General Sign Guidelines. This is an era, not style.
- Other.
 - Bob notes about economic hardship factor. Matt states this is a judgment of the Board for each situation.
 - Bob notes from Christi Mitchell’s email, penalties for non-compliance.
 - Matt responds that the Historic District Ordinance is incorporated into the Land Use Ordinance which already has penalties noted.
 - Bob notes the Historic District Ordinance update about representatives of business owners has not been brought into the ordinance.
 - Betsy responds that the code company makes these updates, and it has not been completed yet.
 - Cheryl asks about tax credits available for Historic Districts. Matt noted that generally the credits are only worthwhile for large projects, like the Hodgkins and Cony School projects.
 - Matt confirms that staff will proceed with finding a consultant to re-evaluate the Winthrop and Crosby Street Districts.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:21.

Next Meeting March 21, 2017 at 6:30pm.

Minutes by Betsy Poulin, City Staff.