

CITY OF LACONIA HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
6:30 PM City Hall - Armand A. Bolduc City Council Chamber
Accepted July 27, 2021

6/29/2021 - Minutes

1. Call to order

Chair Tara Shore called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM

2. Roll call

Members present: Karl Reitz, Laurel Briere, Hillary Martin, Mark Haynes, Charlie St. Clair, Tara Shore

Absent: Sonya Misiaszek

3. Recording secretary

Kalena Graham

4. Staff in attendance

Planning Director Dean Trefethen

5. Acceptance of Minutes from previous meeting

5.I. Acceptance of minutes from May 25

The minutes were accepted as written.

6. Public comment

For clarification to the members that were not at the Council meeting, Chair T. Shore gave a synopsis of the meeting.

Bruce Cheney of 61 Pickerel Pond Road and Ward 1 Councilor, addressed the Commission. He explained his perspective on the issues with the proposed expansion. He made it clear that he speaks only for himself. He wants it clear that he is not opposed to the Commission or the expansion but how the ordinance is written at the present time. He added that all the members are reputable. He went through the language of the ordinance and would like to see it be tighten up as it is vague. His desire is to see is clearly defined. He feels that Council wants the process to move forward. He also went over the rules and procedures and the amendments that were suggested.

Chair T. Shore appreciates the information sharing and communication. She is frustrated because the original proposed language was tight and was asked for vagueness and now it needs to be tightened up. She understands but is frustrated.

B. Cheney suggested a subcommittee with Council and Commission members to get it done. Chair T. Shore suggested inviting some downtown business owners as well.

Breanna Henderson, downtown business owner address the Commission. She feels that outreach should be done first as it involves the downtown businesses. The change is substantial going from 4 buildings to an entire economic area. To C. St. Clair, it was about structure and façade which would deal more with the property owner. B. Henderson noted that the new businesses should be cared about and make the process

as simple as possible, especially for first time businesses. She noted that there's not always communication between the tenant and landlord. K. Reitz noted that some landlords don't want anything to do with their properties. B. Henderson's concern is perception.

Chair T. Shore asked B. Henderson what she thought the best ways to reach out to the community and was told there isn't one answer. Chair T. Shore also asked how she can contact the business owners and B. Henderson will share what she has. C. St. Clair brought up that there are some businesses downtown that are just offices and don't necessarily care about what happens and would like to concentrate on the property owners and not leave them out. H. Martin feels that it is a two way street and people need to do their research as well. B. Henderson noted that the City doesn't market ideas very well and nothing sells like face to face.

K. Reitz brought up a prior liaison that the Chamber had, J. Bart Connors and suggested maybe there could be another recreated.

H. Martin thanks B. Henderson for the different perspective and said the overlay wasn't meant to be dropped on downtown as something shady or sneaky or not public and a negative review is worse than a bunch of positives. H. Martin asked B. Henderson how high the negativity toward the Commission is and was told not unforgivable.

7. Applications & Public Hearings: *The purpose of this agenda section is for the Commission to have a presentation from the applicant and open a Public Hearing for the public to provide input. The Board may also deliberate the application, decide and conduct a final vote at this time.

8. New business

8.I. Review of Council meeting

M. Hayne's represents the Heritage Commission and this Commission. His concern is that in December the Council went through the ordinance line by line but the HOD was issue driven for the Church. Council decided to approve the ordinance. When a building is set to come down, is when people are driven.

Chair T. Shore said from day one the catalyst for the HOD and the Commission was the possible destruction of the church. The reality is, it still can happen and could've happened anywhere in the last few years. C. St. Clair brought up Lakeside Ave and Hathaway House. The hope is to reuse vs demolish, to help the economic base. She will reach out to the Mayor on creating a subcommittee.

8.II. Discussion on work being done at the Busiel House

Chair T. Shore feels that some things happening at the house should've gone to the Commission or the Planning Dept and the owner has not. She asked Planning Director D. Trefethen the best way to approach the owner and was told a letter would be. Director D. Trefethen spoke with the property owner and has reminded that she needs to talk with the City on changes. He suggested creating a subcommittee that can look at minor changes so it won't need to go before the entire Commission.

8.III. Discussion regarding a possible meet and greet on the Commission and Historic Overlay Ordinance

A general reach out to the public should be a first step that explains what the Commission is and what they are there for both the business and property owners. Then further talk about the possible expansion. A general meet and greet. Pamphlets were discussed to pass out to downtown business owners.

9. Old business

9.I. Update from K. Reitz for artists

This item tabled

10. Other business

10.I. Work on the welcome postcard

This item tabled

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM

Respectfully,

K. Graham