

MEETING MINUTES OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Tuesday, June 13th, 2017

CONVENE: Mr. Lescarbeau called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Lescarbeau, Mr. Shields, Ms. Charren, Mrs. Hints, Ms. Kenower, Mrs. Connell, and Mrs. Anderson.

ABSENT: Mrs. Douglas

ALSO PRESENT: Michael DeLuca, Director of Community Development; and Denise Russ, Clerk of the Board

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

Mr. Lescarbeau opened by stating that tonight's meeting will give us a good chance to discuss some items that we have not had time for.

He explained the Public Workshop with the Town Council went very well. Prior to the Workshop, he stated, the Commission was only sure of maybe ¾ of the votes; but he has since spoken to several Council members and has received more positive feedback. Councilwoman Jill Lawlor states she is 100% with us; and President Susan Buonanno has not only confirmed her alliance, but now realizes that the voluntary district creates more confusion than it makes actual sense. He added they have both confirmed that Michael Moretti is also 100% on board as well.

CONSENT AGENDA

1C: Approval of Meeting Minutes from May 9th, 2017

A Motion is made by Mr. Shields and duly seconded by Ms. Kenower to approve the meeting minutes of May 9th, 2017. Motion passes 6 to 0.

(Mr. Lescarbeau, Mr. Shields, Ms. Charren, Mrs. Hints, Ms. Kenower, Mrs. Connell, and Mrs. Anderson)

NEW BUSINESS

2NB: Draft Media Publication for Tax Credit

Mr. Lescarbeau suggested waiting until we get closer to the September Public Hearing before that is sent out.

3NB: Draft Application for Tax credit

Mr. Lescarbeau stated that because we now have an approved Tax Credit Ordinance, we should be altering it to the updated version for any future applicants that may come forward.

Mr. DeLuca stated he has not yet had a chance to work with the full-time Tax Assessor to create an application for the Tax Credit simply because that position has not yet been filled. He informed the Commission that he went on the HPHC website and found the Tax Credit Application that the State uses; but he explained the technical detail portion of it is not necessarily applicable to our proposed application. However, he shared copies of the proposed format with the members and went over each section of the application with them.

After a thorough perusal of the form, Mr. Lescarbeau suggested that Mr. DeLuca e-mail this to the members, along with the draft of the pre-application as well, and they can finalize any suggested edits at the July meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

4OB: Preparation for September 18th Public Hearing

Mr. Lescarbeau explained that the final vote for the proposed redistricts will take place at the Town Council Public Hearing, which is scheduled for Monday, September 18th. He stated this is when the Commission could be exposed to some public opposition. He noted it was important that the Commission have their voices present because the public will be expressing their own opinions; and we need to have the same volume in the affirmative.

Mr. DeLuca suggested that between now and then, the Commission may want to speak to people they know who would be supportive, who have already been through the HDC process, and who may want to attend the Public Hearing.

Ms. Charren asked what would happen if certain groups show up, i.e. Boon Street, and don't want the added districts; but the Narragansett Avenue group might really want it. Do they get to pick and choose what areas get approved?

Mr. Lescarbeau replied there is no doubt we will not get all of these locations approved.

Mr. DeLuca stated that any individual site is opened to being removed. In the Boon Street areas, they have to decide whether or not they want districts; and whether or not they want the one that the Commission proposed. Central Street already has a district, and now they have to decide how much they would want to expand it by. They could actually draw their own lines; although he doesn't feel that any of them have enough confidence in their own personal understanding of it to make that decision. More than likely, he explained, after the opening presentation, speakers will go to the podium expressing their

pros and cons. Interaction between the Council members and the HDC will take place, and there may be some open discussion at that point about the districts. If there is any controversy about the district perimeters that have been proposed, they will give the Commission some indications of which areas they question.

Mr. Lescarbeau stated while there will have to be compromise; overall the Commission has more than proven their case. He feels the Town Council knows that any substantial town, i.e. Providence, Newport, Bristol, etc. that has risen to a level of stability to a point where they should have an HDC is something they understand. He feels the Commission has done their homework in the selection of the proposed districts and in the Public Workshops.

Mr. Shields stated one of the issues he recalls from the original Town Council approval was that the option was left open to have voluntary lots within the historic district; and because of that, property owners in areas like Wildfield Farms managed to convince the Town that their area should be made voluntary. He noted that will not happen this time around because we are eliminating voluntary districts, which precludes a lot of 'give' on the part of the HDC.

Mr. Lescarbeau asked how the Commission could get the word out to the public to make them aware of the upcoming Workshop.

Mrs. Hintsu stated she thinks it important we make sure that not everyone invited is from Ocean Road or other multi-million dollar properties, because it could look like we are just helping out the upper income residents.

During this period, the members openly discussed and put together a list of all of the potential invitees.

Mrs. Connell suggested creating a 4 or 5 question survey requesting feedback from former applicants would be willing to share with the public for the upcoming public hearing. The Commission could ask each former applicants/participants to fill it out, describing what their HDC experience was like; and then ask if they would be willing to share their testimonial at the Public Hearing. This would tell us, both good and bad, what did and did not work for them; hoping it was a positive experience for each applicant.

Mrs. Hintsu stated that would be great information to present to the Town Council at the Public Hearing. She added the Commission should also reach out to the developers, the architects, and the contractors who have also been involved in these projects.

After a lengthy discussion, the commission members told Mr. Lescarbeau which names on the newly created list they would be comfortable contacting to inform them about the upcoming Public Hearing.

Mr. DeLuca stated he wanted to work on the survey and put together some questions relating to their individual experiences. Mrs. Connell offered to help him and suggested using the 'Survey Monkey' as a guide.

Mr. Lescarbeau stated he would like to compile a Master List of all the applicants and monitor which member is going to contact them. At the next meeting, he would like to have the surveys and mailing list available.

Mr. DeLuca explained to the members that they should do a brief overview and presentation of the highlights.

Mr. Lescarbeau noted the goal is to pre-empt the adverse comments that may come up. Before the residents even get the opportunity to speak, we should briefly elaborate on the fact that we are known to be very user friendly and have a high batting average of approval.

5OB: Tip of the Month –

Mr. Lescarbeau gave Mrs. Russ the 'Heat is On' Tip of the Month for publication in the Narragansett Times. She explained to him that because of the fiscal year ending as of June 30th, 2017, it cannot be processed until after July 1, 2017.

ADJOURNMENT:

A Motion was made by Mr. Shields and duly seconded by Mrs. Anderson to adjourn this meeting at 8:15. Motion passes 7 to 0.

(Mr. Lescarbeau, Mr. Shields, Ms. Charren, Mrs. Hints, Ms. Kenower, Mrs. Connell, and Mrs. Anderson)

Submitted By:



Denise Russ
Clerk of the Board