

**TOWN OF KINGSTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**Tuesday, February 14, 2017**  
**Public Meeting**

**Members Present:**

Charlotte Boutin, V. Chair  
Glenn Coppelman, Planning Board representative  
Susan Prescott  
Stanley Shalett  
Stacy Smoyer

Absent: Virginia Morse, Chair

Other Attendees: Ernie Landry, Heritage Commission

No other members of the public were in attendance.

Ms. Boutin called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM.

**Town Board Updates:**

**HDC:** Ms. Boutin asked if everyone had read the minutes of the prior meetings. Mr. Coppelman confirmed that there are 2 sets of minutes for review, November 16 and December 14. Ms. Boutin gave the Board a few minutes to review these.

Ms. Smoyer noted that there was a misspelling of “Grace Daley” in the report but otherwise looked okay. Mr. Coppelman moved to accept the minutes for November 16. Ms. Smoyer seconded the motion. Ms. Prescott abstained as she was not at the meetings. Mr. Shalett also seconded the motion. All others present in favor.

Mr. Coppelman moved to accept the minutes for December 14. Ms. Smoyer seconded the motion, and all others present in favor.

**Planning Board:** Mr. Coppelman could not think of anything of note related to the Historic District.

**CIP:** Mr. Coppelman stated the committee completed the CIP for this year, and it will either be on the next Planning Board agenda or the one after because the Planning Board needs to approve it, and then it will be forwarded to the Selectmen and Budget Committee for review as it needs to be approved so it can become an advisory document.

**Board of Selectmen:** As there were no representatives present from the Board of Selectmen, no updates were provided.

**Heritage Commission:** Mr. Landry, Vice Chair of the Heritage Commission, stated a number of things are going on particularly around town warrant and voting.

A town warrant asking voters to raise funds for work on repairs to the Nichols Library building (now the Nichols Historical Museum) is requested by the Board of Selectmen to get the town's input on spending money out of the Building Maintenance Fund to bring the building up to standards.

Another article initiated is asking the voters to see if they would approve the Selectmen and its agents to engage in conversations with the Sanborn Regional School District to transfer the Seminary complex to the town and for the town to determine the use of property.

The Heritage Commission with the HDC, the Planning Board, and the Museum Committee applied and received a grant through the Division of Historical Resources to have a historical resource chapter for the town's master plan developed. That was approved. This grant is a 60/40 match (town 40%), but the match can be in hard or soft match (i.e. money versus volunteer work). The projection is for the match to be favoring the soft match. This is an exciting project to formalize the future of the town from a historical perspective.

**ZBA:** As there were no representatives present from the ZBA, no updates were provided.

**Informational Discussion: Application from Richard Edmunds**  
**187 Main Street, Demolition and Construction**

Richard Edmunds was present as well as his son, David Edmonds. They informed the HDC that they will work together on the project. The HDC had drawings as well as a letter Richard had submitted with his rationale for demolition of the existing structure rather than rehabilitation. Richard shared that there are multiple reasons why he desires to demolish the house, one of which is a desire to have a basement with a higher ceiling height. The existing foundation is a combination of bricks, blocks, and stones with an existing ceiling height of 5.5 feet. He would like to have a poured concrete foundation allowing for a higher ceiling height to make the basement more usable. He also wants to move the house back 4-5 feet to make space for a new septic system in front of the house. The existing septic system, which has not been inspected at this time, is believed to be on the left, although he is not sure of the exact location. The proposed plan shows a new location for the septic system that is a further distance from the wetlands on the property between the front of the house and the road. No soil testing has been done yet, but he has spoken with an engineer who has done work in Kingston before, and the engineer expects there to be favorable soil conditions for a septic system based on his prior experience. Richard also questions the structural integrity of the existing frame due to its age, and he wants to bring the house up to current building codes. He also has concerns about the floor plan. The house consists of 2 homes that were connected over 100 years ago, making the existing floor plan not workable for his needs and could make the house difficult to sell, heat, and cool. He desires to build a new, energy-efficient house. Richard also noted that he plans for a fast, efficient demolition to minimize disturbance to the neighbors.

Ms. Boutin passed around his letter to attendees. She noted the letter includes what Richard just shared with attendees but also mentions that the letter notes the foundation is caving in at the front of the house. Richard confirmed that the foundation is indeed a problem.

Ms. Boutin asked where the well will be placed. Richard noted the new location is on the proposed plan facing East Way, not Main Street, at end of driveway on the east side of the property. The proposed new septic system would be in front of the house near Main Street, away from neighbors' wells, at least 75 feet away from any well in accordance with regulations. Richard mentioned he believes he will have a drilled well installed to avoid shortages of water in the event of extreme drought conditions as were just experienced in town. He is not sure, but he believes the existing well is a dug well. He plans to move the house back off the property line 27 feet, 35 feet off of the pavement line. He said the house would be close to the street, similar to other houses on Main Street. Mr. Coppelman mentioned that the layout of houses in a New England village setting is usually close to the road.

Mr. Shalett asked about the location of the leaching field for the proposed septic. Richard said the septic tank is noted on the drawings, about 5 feet away from the leaching field.

Ms. Smoyer asked what the grading for the septic system would look like, if there would be a raised hill in front of the house. Richard said the water table is 6 feet plus with sand and gravel, so he does not anticipate a problem with soil testing. He said he has not talked to the town's Road Agent on this and may possibly have to move the existing culvert, which goes toward the proposed garage. That will be discussed with the Road Agent as well.

Mr. Coppelman said the drawing of existing conditions does not detail the proposed septic system. After some discussion, it was determined that the HDC was provided with 2 drawings, existing conditions and proposed conditions. The HDC members present made sure they had a copy of each of these drawings to minimize confusion during the discussion.

Richard pointed out that on the drawing of existing conditions, the septic pipe from the basement leaves the house on the left side going east, and when they put the culvert in, apparently they did not encounter the septic system, but the system might have been a cesspool. No digging has been done yet at the site.

Mr. Coppelman asked Richard if the Road Agent has been contacted. He replied that he did talk to him briefly, but no meeting was held. He mentioned he wanted an attached garage, and the culvert was in the way. In his informal discussion with the Road Agent, Richard offered to put the culvert under the garage, but the Road Agent declined. Mr. Coppelman concurred and said the town would not have access to the culvert for maintenance if it ran under the garage. Richard suggested the other solution would be

two 90-degree turns or possibly two 45 degree turns. The engineer drew these up with covers for servicing. Mr. Coppelman said it sounded like the 90 degree angles might be too severe, but it is up for Road Agent to determine.

Mr. Coppelman wanted to make sure everyone was clear on why Richard was present at the HDC meeting. This discussion was preliminary to share ideas and provide guidance for Richard for the final discussion which is to occur on March 1. More information is needed for the public hearing. The HDC members and the Edmunds agreed that they hope the public hearing goes smoothly so as not to waste attendees' time.

Mr. Coppelman expressed that as a HDC member, his preference is to not take historic buildings down but acknowledged that Richard determined for his own purposes it would not work due to his personal and financial concerns. Per Mr. Coppelman, if Richard chooses not to save the house that anything replacing the house would need to fit very well with other buildings around it. The existing proposal had a good elevation view, but he would like to see a photograph of what it might look like. The drawings given to the HDC show a traditional, colonial-looking house that would go in a modern subdivision but not necessarily a historic district. For the final public hearing, he recommend that Richard review in detail Section 1200 for Historic District regulations as that is what will be used to evaluate his proposal and offered that Richard should try to better explain what it will look like including renderings and pictures. In his previous discussion with Ms. Morse, she wanted to see listings and/or samples of materials to be used. Ms. Smoyer gave Richard a copy of Section 1200 at the meeting for him to keep.

David, Richard's son, asked if the HDC concerns were primarily cosmetic. Mr. Coppelman confirmed this. He explained that the HDC is only responsible for exterior appearance and that the interior of homes is not under the HDC's purview.

Richard mentioned that there is a smaller second building on site that Ms. Morse wanted to try to reuse as part of the historical buildings in town. Mr. Coppelman said he believed the Road Agent might have mentioned this as well. Richard said that this second building has a more solid structure that might be able to be moved.

Ms. Boutin wanted to know what materials were planned to be used for the outside structure. Richard wanted to use vinyl, and Ms. Boutin expressed concern about that being too modern. Richard said it does not look that much different. Mr. Coppelman mentioned sometimes the HDC will allow the installation of vinyl but with great care. David said there are many options for vinyl that can make the house look more traditional and provided a sample of an asphalt roof shingle. Ms. Smoyer said that samples must be brought to the final hearing, and Ms. Boutin concurred.

Richard and David were asked about the entry steps to the house. Richard said he plans to install a couple of steps with a deck, and David added the steps would probably be granite block steps. Richard said that on the proposed plan, it shows that the existing foundation is below the road level, and he wants to regrade the land and raise the foundation to bring it higher than the road.

Mr. Coppelman added that once the HDC provides its approval, Richard and/or David would need to apply for a building permit which triggers other town offices to review, including the health officer and building inspector, and all issues with regard to setbacks, septic system location, piping and culvert concerns, etc. will be handled by the appropriate inspectors.

Ms. Smoyer asked if any members of the HDC are concerned about moving the septic system to the front of the house including re-grading of the land. Richard said he chose the corner for new septic to stay away from wetlands but reiterated he still needed to have soil testing done. Mr. Coppelman noted that the well radius goes onto other properties, so easements may be needed. Rich said that is common but was not sure if that will be the case.

Ms. Boutin asked if the driveway would only be on East Way, not Main Street, and if there would be only one driveway. Richard talked with the Chief of Police already who preferred keeping the address of the home the same. He agrees so will connect the proposed new driveway on East Way to the existing small one on Main Street to keep the same address. This will be detailed on the plan for the final. Mr. Coppelman asked if that will interfere with the septic system. Richard said no, that it should be just a short driveway with a walkway from the front door and a mailbox with the address listed. He added that the driveway off of the proposed 2-car garage will be wide, but the one in front would be small, single driveway. Richard said he does not feel it is necessary to change the address of the house from Main Street to East Way.

Ms. Prescott said she noticed that the information in Richard's letter came from his own assessment and wondered if anyone professional evaluated the house. David said he is registered in the State of Massachusetts as a home improvement contractor and also a construction supervisor. He has the knowledge and background to make assessments. He also added that the State of New Hampshire does not require licensing for trades. Richard said he wants to lift the house up to increase the ceiling height for the basement. He reiterated he does not like the floor plan, and it is unworkable for him. Ms. Prescott clarified that she understands Richard's concerns but wanted more definition as to why the building could not be salvaged, what was structurally deficient. Richard stated the foundation is not good, so the house would need to be raised up to rebuild the foundation. David added that the desired look and feel can be achieved with new construction. Richard also added that the interior stairwells are very narrow and to change that in an older home can be complicated. Ms. Prescott informed Richard that he should strengthen that case when the time comes for the public hearing. David asked if having contractors evaluate the house would be helpful, and the HDC recommended that be done. Richard added that there is water damage with a potential mold issue. Richard said if he could keep the house he would, but it is cost prohibitive and would still have an unfavorable floor plan. Mr. Coppelman said it is not a question of what can be done to the house but what the property owner wants.

Mr. Shalett lives on East Way and said the house has been in disrepair for a long time. He wondered if Richard could use the same footprint and build a similar home. Richard reiterated the existing footprint includes multiple additions, and the front part of the house is narrow with a difficult footprint to work with. He also wants to move the septic system to the front of the house and move the house back. Mr. Shalett was concerned about the house being too close to wetlands, and Richard noted his plan would keep the house and septic system away from the wetlands completely. Mr. Shalett wanted confirmation that there would be a change in elevation, and Richard said there would be a gradual slope and a change in grading. Richard shared that he has extensive building experience in multiple surrounding towns, and he would like to get the job done quickly.

The HDC members agreed that as this discussion was for informational purposes only that no motions were needed.

Ms. Boutin gave Richard guidance on what to bring to the public hearing and advised that he discuss the culvert issue with the Road Agent and review Section 1200 to be clear about what is required in the Historic District. She also encouraged Richard to bring samples of materials that could be used. She stated Richard needed to provide letters to abutters, and Richard said he had already done so. Mr. Coppelman said the notification is made so abutters can come to the meeting or submit written comments. Richard added that there are only about 7 abutters to the property. He reassured the HDC that his new house would aesthetically match the existing neighborhood properties. Mr. Coppelman said most of the houses in that area are from the 1700s and 1800s with many varieties of styles. He recommended that Richard show images of homes surrounding the property to see how it fits in when he attends the public hearing.

David looked for HDC direction on the drawings provided at this meeting and their opinion on what could be problematic. Mr. Coppelman wanted to see more visuals, maybe 3-dimensional perspectives. David asked if their presentation at the public hearing should focus on exterior appearance, and Mr. Coppelman agreed.

David also offered to reach out to colleagues in the construction industry to evaluate the existing house and write up their assessment. Ernie Landry of the Heritage Commission mentioned that they have a program where they evaluate houses in the town that are susceptible to loss including extensive documentation about the property and pictures. He may have one for this property and will look into it.

Ms. Boutin excused the Edmunds.

### **Memorial Gift for the Bandstand**

Ernie Landry of the Heritage Commission provided an update for the construction of the bandstand in the Plains.

After another extension, the bandstand will be done by the end of August including landscaping and structure.

There were discussions about 2 years ago about the plan for the bandstand. Over time, as the job progressed, there was talk about adding low-voltage lighting, possibly adding granite posts with chains as a fence, and possibly installing benches. The Lions Club will be celebrating their 100th anniversary and volunteered to do a project for the town and wanted to help with bandstand. After internal discussion, the Lions indicated they wanted to install granite posts with chain fencing around grandstand. When Mr. Landry contacted LCHIP about this, they were reluctant to have this done since these grants are given out for historic preservation, and they assess if repairs are meeting standards for rehabilitation. In these standards, they try to keep the structure historic including the nature of the building as well as the surrounding area. Mr. Landry was therefore reaching out for HDC input.

Mr. Landry praised Ms. Smoyer's work on creating visuals for the options to be discussed. He went through these visuals and solicited thoughts from HDC members. The present landscaping plan is to have mulch with low-growing ground cover. There are already benches around the Plains right now, which are less intrusive than a granite post with chain fence. He reiterated that the Lyons Club would be glad to help with whatever we choose, including benches. Installing granite posts with chains will change the context of the bandstand, so he shied away from that option, but if it is chosen, he will need to run it by LCHIP. Mr. Landry discussed the installation of posts with others around town, and the feedback was that the bandstand was used in the past by many people. One of the discussions centered around if it should only be used for special occasions such as concerts, town events, etc.; if the posts and chains are installed, the notion of exclusion is reinforced.

Ms. Prescott asked if we had decided upon installing curbing around the bandstand. Mr. Landry said that was not mentioned, but once the decision is made on what the town wants to do with this project, he will contact LCHIP again.

Mr. Shalett asked if paving stones could be installed in concentric circles rather than mulch. Ernie said that is a possibility, although in the past it had mulch and the initial thoughts were to keep it the same.

Ms. Prescott stated she preferred the visual without the granite posts with benches and mulch and curbing to contain the mulch, making it easier to care for. Mr. Landry said the benches would need to have a foundation to avoid sinking.

Mr. Coppelman asked if anyone had considered a walking path from the street to the bandstand, and Mr. Landry said they have not discussed this.

Ms. Boutin asked if there would be steps or a ladder up into the gazebo, and Mr. Landry said that steps or a ladder will be built and will be removable.

Mr. Landry said the Lyons Club offered to help with maintenance.

Ms. Smoyer and Ms. Boutin felt that the granite posts and chain changed the appearance.

Mr. Landry then asked if the posts need to be there, and the HDC members felt that was not necessary, just to ask LCHIP about adding curbing. Mr. Coppelman said the curbing would be close to the ground anyway, thus not as visible, and will help with maintenance. The Road Agent will be contacted to discuss this as well to make sure he agrees with adding curbing.

Mr. Landry said he will try to get the project done by Kingston Days. The remaining projects to be done include repairing the interior ceiling, which is open now and needs to be put up and painted. The ladder or stairs need to be built, and trim pieces need to be added. Rich and his employees will finish the ceiling and painting and will be in charge of timing to get that done.

There were no other comments.

**MM&S to adjourn at 8:50 PM.** Ms. Prescott moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Smoyer. All members agreed.