

**City of South Portland**  
**Arts & Historic Preservation Committee**  
**July 12th, 2018**  
**Planning and Development Department**

**Members in attendance:**

Doreen Gay, Vice Chairperson  
Hannah Homes, Chairperson  
Jessica Kessler, Secretary  
Mary DeRose  
Alessa Wylie, Greater Portland Landmarks  
Kathy DiPhilippo, South Portland Historical Society  
John Godin

**Members Absent:** Lynn Duryea

**Staff in attendance:**

Charles “Tex” Haeuser, Planning & Development Director

Chairperson Hannah Holmes called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m., seconded by Jessie.

**Minutes:** A motion to accept the minutes from the June 7th meeting was made by Hannah, seconded by Kathy. The motion passed with all members in favor. Hannah made Jessie aware of new attendance reporting requirements for the city.

**Action items:** Jessie will create the necessary spreadsheet reflecting attendance, and forward it to the city clerk each month.

**Knightville CPIP update:** Tex reviewed the content of the Knightville survey and encouraged all members of the committee to complete it, if they have not already. Tex went on to explain that the survey has been available for a couple of weeks, and is being conducted in two parts. Kathy suggested forwarding the survey to the community email list to reach a broader audience.

Tex passed out information on the anticipated timeline for the survey and the summarization of its findings. Hannah called attention to how the timeline affects the committee’s contribution to the process, and requested member input on how to best meet our goals. Tex stated that there would be a public forum on July 26th, and encouraged the committee to take part in that conversation. Hannah focused on #8 of Tex’s handout, referring to “modifying design standards if necessary” for historic preservation, and reminded the committee that this is a high priority project. Doreen asked for a refresher on existing design standards, prompting Tex to pull up the city’s current standards (Section 27-1566). He encouraged all members to explore these standards and compare them to subsequent standards.

Tex announced that on July 30th, a new city planner, Justin Barker, will be added to staff. Tex relayed that Justin has an architecture degree and will be a resource to our committee as we evaluate potential historic designations throughout the city. Mary reminded the committee that there is also a need for a historic review process, in addition to design standards.

Tex summarized his experience moderating a discussion for the Portland Society for Architecture, and distributed information about the principles of design. He reviewed how the city of Portland is approaching design standards in the face of new development, and drew comparisons to our challenges in South Portland.

**Action items:** All members are encouraged to attend the Public Forum on July 26th, and to review the city's existing design standards.

**Historic database discussion:** Doreen asked how our database of historic properties may be used as a resource in recommending new design standards for Knightville. The committee discussed the importance of designating properties as historic before they become vulnerable, and that the database is our first step in identifying potentially historic sites. Mary announced that she has met with former committee member (and current city councilor) Adrian Dowling, who is willing to submit our database to the city council for formal recognition. Mary explained that the city can designate properties as historic with a vote, and that this designation is just as legally protective as being on the National Registry. Members acknowledged that the list is incomplete and in need of review. The committee debated whether or not to focus on completing and formalizing individual neighborhoods within the database as a first step. Mary expressed concern that the West end of the city continues to lose historic properties to development, and that we cannot afford to neglect those areas any longer in favor of preserving the East end. She recommended finalizing the database in its entirety, regardless of neighborhood, in order to submit it to Adrian for council recognition. Members acknowledged these concerns, but also expressed the need for a streamlined review process for efficiency. It was suggested that the Knightville neighborhood properties be finalized as a first step, due to the ongoing survey and design standard project. Members requested a historic preservation subcommittee meeting, in order to focus on the database and prepare it for council review. A subcommittee meeting was scheduled for Monday, August 6th, at 6pm at the Planning Department.

Jessie sought clarification on how design standards impact the building/remodeling process. Tex explained that currently, if a project is big enough to go to the Planning Board, it is held to existing design standards, regardless of whatever historic characteristics may exist. He went on to say that our committee's objective is to expand on current design standards to include "historic considerations." The committee discussed various methods that the city could use to enforce such expanded design standards. Alessa suggested the use of grant-funded interns to do an architectural review of city properties. Kathy detailed her experience analyzing the Willard neighborhood, and explained the challenges of using less-experienced volunteers. The committee discussed potential resources for evaluating properties, and methods other communities use to address design challenges.

**Action items:** All members are encouraged to attend the Historic Preservation Subcommittee meeting on August 6th at 6pm, and to become acquainted with the status of the database prior to that meeting.

**Art Subcommittee report:** Jessie summarized the Art Subcommittee meeting on June 20th (please see Art Subcommittee Minutes, 6/20/18). Jessie explained that after careful review of the Armory site, the subcommittee concluded that an art installation there would not be feasible. It was decided that the committee should focus instead on public art to support the Gateway Project. Jessie sought clarification from Tex on the status of the Gateway plan. Tex explained that the DOT was preparing to replace the light poles on the Casco Bay Bridge, which would feed into the timing of the project. It was suggested that the subcommittee reach out to Steve Cecil, the "design guru" working on the Gateway plan. Jessie submitted a formal public announcement for interested parties to participate in the working studio and commercial gallery database, to be published in the Sentry and the city's website. Mary made a motion to approve of the announcement wording, seconded by Hannah. The motion passed unanimously.

Hannah called attention to the upcoming middle school consolidation project, highlighting its potential for Percent for Art funding. Members discussed opportunities for public art in the new middle school, and the time frame in which the project would be likely to happen. Members concluded that the project should be the next focus of the subcommittee, after public art for the Gateway project is complete.

**Action items:** Members of the subcommittee will continue the conversation with Tex regarding the Gateway Project and opportunities for public art within the plan. Jessie will submit the approved formal announcement for publication.

**Signage/funding meeting update:** Hannah reviewed her conversation with the Parks Department. She explained that signage requests are to flow through Kevin Adams, and that ideally the AHPC would have a plan for signage projects to submit to the Parks Department for their annual budget. This would provide a potential scope of work and allow the Parks Department to be financially supportive in our effort to create signage throughout the city.

**Armory kiosk placement discussion:** Members discussed their observations from their visits to the Armory site. Several members reiterated their preference to place a kiosk in front of the Armory, due to the proximity to the building, as opposed to Kathy's suggestion of placing it across the street on the Greenbelt. Tex announced that the Greenbelt extension project is moving forward, and may provide a more appropriate location for the kiosk (considering proximity to the building as well as pedestrian access). The extension would flow behind the armory, following the power lines, ultimately connecting pedestrians to the entrance of Hinkley Park on Highland Ave. The committee concluded that this was a promising site for a kiosk project, and agreed to table the discussion until the final approval of the Greenbelt Extension. Jessie requested that Tex bring a map of the Armory area to the next meeting, to better determine what sections of land are city owned, state owned, and privately owned.

**Action items:** Tex will bring a map of the armory area to the next meeting.

**Redbank sign update:** Mary explained to the committee that ownership of the circle in question remains unclear, and is difficult to determine without involving a lawyer and incurring potentially large legal fees. Tex stated that he has not been able to discern ownership of the parcel in his research.

Mary made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Hannah.

Meeting concluded at 9:16 a.m.

**Next Meeting: August 2nd, 2018 at 7:30 a.m.**