

**City of South Portland
Arts & Historic Preservation Committee
September 6th, 2018
Planning and Development Department**

Members in attendance:

Hannah Holmes, Chairperson
Jessica Kessler, Secretary
Mary DeRose
Alessa Wylie, Greater Portland Landmarks
Lynn Duryea
Jon Godin
Doreen Gay, Vice Chairperson
Kathy DiPhilipppo, South Portland Historical Society

Staff in attendance:

Charles “Tex” Haeuser, Planning & Development Director
Justin Barker, Community Planner

Chairperson Hannah Holmes called the meeting to order at 7:40 a.m., seconded by Kathy.

Minutes: A motion to accept the minutes from the August 2nd meeting was made by Hannah, seconded by Jessie. The motion passed with all members in favor.

Membership update: Members were encouraged to continue the search for interested community members to fill vacancies, especially on the West End of the city. Lynn stated she will try to attend meetings through October.

Historic preservation subcommittee report: Subcommittee members decided to utilize the Maine Historic Preservation Commission Building/Structure form as a format for entries to the database. Each member of the committee is tasked with researching their database entries using this form. Jon cleaned up the existing database, and described what information is needed for each entry moving forward. Mary explained the three different means by which a property can be recognized as historic in the city of South Portland:

- a.) a State historic designation
- b.) be included in the city’s comprehensive plan
- c.) be on a list of historic properties, adopted by the city.

Mary informed members that she is focused on documenting historic properties on the West End of the city. A historic preservation subcommittee is planned for Tuesday, September 18th, at 6pm in the Main Library. At this subcommittee meeting, members will be able to support each other’s research efforts as we add to the database.

Knightville design standards discussion: Tex shared the city’s code of ordinances with the committee, to evaluate what language already exists. He focused on sc. 27-1426, standard “M.” Members engaged in discussion about the various methods of protecting historic properties, as well as the current issues with existing ordinance language. Property rights were discussed at length, debating how rigorous or restrictive the process should be for historically designated properties. Kathy suggested that whenever a demolition permit is pulled, there should be a short moratorium to give the community and our

committee time to respond. Mary mentioned that major renovation permits should be considered in this way, too, and reminded members of the West End church case. She explained that the property was already listed as historic by the city, but was not protected by city code as there was no mechanism to alert Code Enforcement of the designation. Members discussed the lack of communication between the two departments, and how to correct the problem. Tex stated that our aim is for a council order to accept an expanded list of historic properties, as well as zoning amendments for historic properties. He went on to suggest that owners of historically designated properties should be alerted, perhaps by a letter from the AHPC. Mary reiterated that preservation process should include an educational component. Mary inquired about historic protections for graveyards. Tex explained that the city is creating a Cemetery Commission, and that the open space committee is also working on this.

Gateway update: Tex detailed the status of the Gateway project, explaining that the proposed sequential banners beginning at the South Portland end of the bridge have been removed from the plan. He relayed concerns expressed by Portland City Manager Jon Jennings and the Maine DOT, regarding aesthetics and maintenance of the banners. Instead, Tex said, the focus will be on light wands and decorative pole wraps. Tex expects an updated design from Steve Cecil, soon. Committee members discussed the proposed light wands at length. Kathy expressed the need for more resources devoted to landscaping.

Redbank kiosk discussion: Mary displayed her design for the Redbank kiosk. Alessa felt that there was too much text, and was concerned that people would not take the time to read the information. Mary explained that the length was intentional, as the history of Redbank is extensive and underrepresented. Mary went on to say that every word included was necessary to detail the story of the neighborhood. Members debated the structure of the design, as well as what information would be most impactful to include. Hannah suggested that the committee workshop the design at the next meeting, October 3rd.

Round robin: Committee members discussed changing the day for meetings each month, concluding that Wednesdays at 7:30am would best fit the schedules of the membership majority. Jessie expressed concern that she may have difficulty making future meetings due to a shifting schedule at home, but resolved to explore solutions.

Tex made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mary.

Meeting concluded at 9:00 a.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday October 3rd , 2018 at 7:30 a.m.