

**City of South Portland
Arts & Historic Preservation Committee
October 3rd, 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 7:30 a.m.

Minutes: Mary requested that Jessie amend the minutes from September’s meeting to include her statement encouraging an educational component to the preservation process. Alessa made a motion to approve last month’s minutes with Mary’s amendment, and Kathy seconded. The motion passed with all members in favor.

Membership update: Nothing to report at this time.

Historic preservation subcommittee report: Nominations for properties are still being collected. Hannah expressed concern that the forms used to identify details are missing a great deal of information. She asked if we should proceed with these forms as we prepare our list for the city. Kathy recommended that the committee focus on one section of the city at a time, to be more thorough. Alessa reminded the committee that the Greater Portland Landmarks has hired interns who will be surveying Ferry Village next summer. Mary expressed that the city is in crisis, and felt we should move forward with what we have so far. Mary also explained that the Planning Board already has excellent protection for historically designated properties, but that undesignated properties and those slated for demolition or renovation are vulnerable. She reiterated that there must be something to trigger a preservation process, to flag a property for protection. Justin pointed out that the committee needs to demonstrate why a property is historic, specifically the building’s significance. After much discussion it was decided to proceed using the forms, but to amend our database to include a column listing “significance.” Members then reviewed and discussed Justin’s Demolition Delay memo. Justin explained that the delay would apply to properties on our database. Tex alerted members that this list could be the first step in the committee becoming an historic review board for the city. Kathy said we could skip that process by submitting nominations to the South Portland Historical Society for review, which may eliminate the need for public hearings. Mary asserted that the public has an important role in the conversation, and should be included. Hannah suggested that if there was a triggering mechanism to alert the S.P. Historical Society, our committee would also need notification so that the two groups can work together. Kathy and Hannah volunteered to meet with Tex on this issue. Tex told members to aim for a council workshop on this in

January, submitting a portion of the list to the council prior to that. Mary and John volunteered to update the database worksheet to include more information.

Cottage Road Convent: Tex explained that the city has received many calls requesting a zone change for 265 Cottage Road. Tex has reached out to the owner to discuss this, and is awaiting their response. He would like to set up a joint walk through of the property, to include our committee and the Planning Board. Kathy alerted members that the old convent in question is actually the Captain Boyd House, and that she was not in favor of rezoning. Hannah offered her perspective as a Real Estate Broker, explaining that rezoning may be necessary because no one would buy the property as a single family home. She used the phrase, “highest and best use,” to describe what a buyer would look for in a property like this. She offered to reach out to the selling realtor of the property to start a conversation. Jessie alerted members that this discussion may also pertain to the Cape Elizabeth Home, which recently closed and will be for sale soon.

Redbank kiosk discussion: Mary asked that this item be removed from the agenda, stating that the Redbank Neighborhood Association would be better suited to complete the kiosk project. When pressed to see if she would reconsider, Mary explained that the scrutiny of her proposed design at last month’s meeting left her feeling that her efforts were undervalued. The committee discussed this at length, expressing varying degrees of frustration with the process, for different reasons. Eventually, Doreen made a motion to accept and implement Mary’s design, with minor edits and photo resolution improvements. Lynn seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Justin suggested that for future installations, members should either hire a professional or form a subcommittee for the design work, so that it doesn’t become personal.

Art Subcommittee Report: Lynn expressed her willingness to continue as an occasional volunteer for the art subcommittee, though her time on the AHPC has ended. Jessie reported that the announcement for studio and gallery submissions is getting traction on social media, and has been shared widely. A formal letter to the Armory property owner has been drafted, and will be submitted to the committee at large for approval at next month’s meeting.

Gateway Update: Tex gave a report on the ongoing Gateway Project, specifically detailing that the DOT is against the removal of the overhead signage as you cross the bridge.

Hannah made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jessie.

Meeting concluded at 9:05 a.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 7th , 2018 at 7:30 a.m.