

Newington Historic District Commission

Working Session

June 19, 2019, 10:00 a.m. – 11:40 a.m.

Town Offices

Members	<p>Ted Connors Member (2020)</p> <p>✓ Christopher Cross Member (2020)</p> <p>✓ NellAnn Hiatt Alternate (2020)</p> <p>John Lamson Member (2021)</p> <p>✓ Lulu Pickering Member (2020)</p> <p>Maxine Mintz Pottier Member (2020)</p> <p>Alan Wilson Member (2022) – stopped by the next day</p>
Maxine 2019 projects (by email)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify historic resources that do not reside in the current historic district. These include, but are not limited to, homes, trees, stone walls, waterways, gardens and burial sites. Research and solicit information pertaining to history and current ownership of these resources. Start building an electronic database/map that can be viewed by public with information obtained and discuss internally best method to physically identify our historic resources. <p><i>Perhaps leave the burial sites to Alan and the stone walls to Chris.</i></p>
Chris 2019 projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stone walls Church land, new road, prayer circle, new parking.
NellAnn 2019 projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perhaps help Maxine on some of the inventory. Others to be decided.
Response to Selectmen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Began discussion on advice to give to the selectmen in response to their June 3, 2019 letter (preliminary response attached).

Lulu Pickering
HDC Member
July 17, 2019

Attached
Response to Selectmen Request

HDC Partial Response to Selectmen's Letter of June 3, 2019

Old Town Center Historic District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The old town center is Newington's primary historic district and is under the purview of the HDC. Most of the buildings and properties are in good shape with the exception of the Old Stone School (OSS), which has been mothballed. Though not the best approach, at least maintaining the integrity of the OSS against the weather and critter invasion will stabilize it until a rehabilitation plan is decided.
Bloody Point Historic District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Bloody Point is Newington's only other historic district and is under the purview of the HDC. It is currently owned by the State. The building has been mothballed but additional maintenance is required to keep out the critters, such as replacing the eaves and some of the plywood panels on the windows. The landscape is in sore need of attention. Discussions with the State are ongoing about the fate of this property, which will remain in limbo until something is decided, hopefully in 2019.
Historic Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many other historic resources exist in Newington that are privately- or town-owned and are not in a historic district. Some are listed on a state or national register, most are not. The HDC is tasked with overseeing these resources, keeping an inventory, and helping owners in their historic preservation goals because of Newington's status as a Certified Local Government (CLG). The HDC can only give <i>non-binding advice</i> to these property owners about historic preservation; the town's historic zoning regulations do not apply to these properties.
Properties in town without a historic resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many properties in town fall outside the purview of the HDC because they are not in a historic district and/or have no associated historic resource (e.g., barn, carriage shed, stone wall, etc.). The HDC has no standing to give advice on these properties.

Given the above guidelines, the members of the HDC have the following advice and comments to share with the selectmen on enforcing zoning ordinances:

1. Enforcement is a landmine. It cannot be selective (i.e., targeted at a specific property owner because someone complains). If there is an aspect of the zoning that the selectmen wish to enforce, they have to consider all properties in town, make a list of those that are not in compliance, and meet with all the people to discuss the issues. The last time this was done, it created a huge uproar and the selectman behind the enforcement actions was not reelected the following March. So, tread carefully; is the non-compliance so egregious that causing a town-wide uproar and spending many meetings working through the aftermath a wise investment of your time and efforts?
2. New Hampshire is the Live Free or Die State and people should be allowed to live the way they want on their own property. That junk car may be a reminder of happier times or a status symbol of youth and past accomplishments. To some it may be junk, to others it is a prized possession.

3. Some in Newington pride themselves on living in a rural community but do not seem to appreciate that rural encompasses good and bad. Older farms and properties have always had a ragtag assortment of buildings for different purposes and in different states of repair. Collections of vehicles, implements, and the stuff that comes from living in one place for generations have always been a part of this town.
4. Not everyone loves a McMansion with its manicured lawns and stateliness. Many neighbors identify more with the pre-development look and feel of the town.

.... To be continued at the next HDC meeting.

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