

Newington Historic District Commission – FINAL MINUTES

Tuesday March 20, 2018

3:30 p.m.

Town Offices

Members	<div> <div>Ted Connors</div> <div>Member (2020)</div> <div>Selectmen representative</div> </div> <div> <div>✓ Christopher Cross</div> <div>Member (2020)</div> </div> <div> <div>Elaina D’Orto</div> <div>Member (2018)</div> </div> <div> <div>✓ John Lamson</div> <div>Member (2018)</div> </div> <div> <div>Paul Pelletier</div> <div>Member (2019)</div> </div> <div> <div>✓ Lulu Pickering</div> <div>Member (2020)</div> </div> <div> <div>✓ Maxine Mintz Pottier</div> <div>Member (2020)</div> </div> <div> <div>NellAnn Hiatt</div> <div>Alternate (2020)</div> </div> <div> <div>Victoria Eversman</div> <div>Alternate (2020)</div> </div>
Guests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Administrator Martha Roy
Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved minutes of last meeting with no corrections.
Final budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Martha Roy reported that no HDC funds were encumbered in the HDC budget for amounts that were not spent last year. She said funds from the 2018 Selectmen’s budget could be used for the canon-painting project in the Veterans Memorial area. The budget passed at the March 17, 2018 Town Meeting contains \$300 for operating expenses and \$3,000 for special projects for the HDC.
External	<p>General Sullivan Bridge (GSB)</p> <p>The State of New Hampshire received funds needed from the Federal Government for the expansion of the Spaulding Turnpike project that has been taking place over the last decade. Various historical resources in both Dover and Newington were negatively impacted by this project. The general understanding from the beginning was that the GSB would be rehabilitated for continued pedestrian, bicycle, and recreational uses. The State of New Hampshire (NH Department of Transportation) now wants to look at other alternatives to rehabilitating the GSB and has begun work on a State Environmental Impact Study.</p>

	<p>The Newington Historic District is concerned that funds could be used for other purposes, which would be detrimental not only to the GSB, but to the other historic resources that were negatively impacted by this project.</p> <p>The Newington Historic District is also concerned that the intent of Section 106 could be circumvented in long-duration projects if historic mitigation is left until the end of the project, thereby allowing a resource, such as the GSB, to rust and crumble in place, and then arguing that the resource was too far gone and too expensive to rehabilitate and no more Federal funds are available to spend on it.</p> <p>Two Motions were made and approved as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion #1 – The Newington HDC recommends that historic mitigation funds for the Spaulding Turnpike project should be used for projects in Newington and Dover, and not be used elsewhere by the State (motion made by John Lamson, seconded by Chris Cross, unanimous approval). • Motion #2 – The Newington HDC recommends that the General Sullivan Bridge should be rehabilitated as the NH Department of Historic Resources, the City of Dover, and others have argued since the beginning of the Spaulding Turnpike Expansion project (motion made by Lulu Pickering, seconded by John Lamson, motion approved with Chris Cross dissenting).
External	<p>Congregational Church-owned property in the Newington Center Historic District</p> <p>The HDC has become aware of the fact that the Newington Congregational Church is wrestling with long-term financial planning that could impact the property the Church owns in the old town center. Differences exist in the Town Tax Maps and in two National Register filings about the property owned by the Church and its size. As it currently stands based on deeds at the Rockingham County Register, it looks like the Church owns the New Parsonage lot (1.1 acres, not 4.5 acres) and owns the lot (4.5 acres) between the Cross lot and the Old Parsonage lot (see attached survey section).</p> <p>The HDC is concerned that a sale of Church-owned land for new house development or the possible demolition of the New Parsonage by a new owner would have a deleterious impact on the Old Town Center and change the character of this small, but precious part of historic Newington.</p> <p>The HDC would like to work with the Selectmen and Building Inspector to better understand the authority the Town has as a Certified Local Government or the HDC has to preserve historic buildings in the Historic District.</p>

<p>2018 Projects</p> <p>Beautification of the Historic District</p>	<p>Preliminary Discussions</p> <p>Townsfolk love Fox Point for its rural environment, scenic views, and historic/agricultural ambience. Our goal is to make the old Town Center a more people-friendly place with natural areas for people to sit, hike, and enjoy themselves. The area under discussion is the town-owned property shown inside the rectangle on the attached map (excluding the private property).</p> <p>Parking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The map shows that there is already a significant amount of asphalt-covered land (red ovals) by the Church, Library, Old Town Hall, and Town Garage. The HDC favors keeping the existing green spaces and not expanding existing parking lots or adding more lots. • The most intense parking in the old town center occurs in the fall when recreational soccer is active (see attached soccer parking photos). A hundred or more people come to the games and practices and park in the parking areas or along Nimble Hill Road by the Old Town Hall, Old Parsonage, Old Stone School, and Library (see attached photos). The HDC favors widening the shoulder(s) along the road using gravel or other pervious material so cars can more easily park on a level surface. When events are not occurring the wider shoulders will make it safer for pedestrians, dogs, kids, etc. • If more parking is needed, the HDC favors adding more gravel as needed to the circular driveway that surrounds the Old Stone School and leveling it so cars can park around it. • The large rocks by the Old Town Hall keep vehicles off the grassy area. More rocks should be added so cars do not pull right up to the right wall of the Old Town Hall to park on the grass there. <p>Lighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A “Main Street” concept is intriguing for the section of Nimble Hill Road in the Historic District (e.g., the Old Parade). The roadway could be lined with historic lights to add ambience and light the way for evening events. • Consistent lighting patterns, fixtures, and color across the various parking lots and roadway would provide the same “look and feel” no matter where you are, and would tie the public properties together.
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Trees:

- All of the tall pine trees on the west side of Nimble Hill Road should be removed. They add nothing to the beauty of the area and pose a hazard to buildings during a storm.
- Once the tall pines are removed, it should be possible to see which of the remaining hardwood trees should be saved for branching out and growing. Oaks and maple will add beautiful fall color and help create a park-like environment. Flowering trees could also be planted.
- Selective pine tree cutting should also be done around the Old Parsonage and Old Stone School. Getting circulating air around the north side of the Old Parsonage will help with the moisture/mold problem.
- The border with Pease/Arboretum Drive is a problem. Trees do need to be thinned out so the remaining ones can bush out. At the same time, a visual buffer needs to exist to block the Pease Airport District from the Old Town Center. Suggestions on quick growing hedges, arboretum trees, rhododendrons, etc. are needed to see which will survive the deer and become effective screens.

Stonewalls:

- The West and South sides of the rectangle in the map surrounding the Old Town Center should be marked, preferably with a stonewall that adds an historic feature. Old stones still exist behind the library. The area should be walked to investigate.
- Alternatively, a granite post and chain fence already exists in the south part of the cemetery and something similar could be used.

Visual Elements:

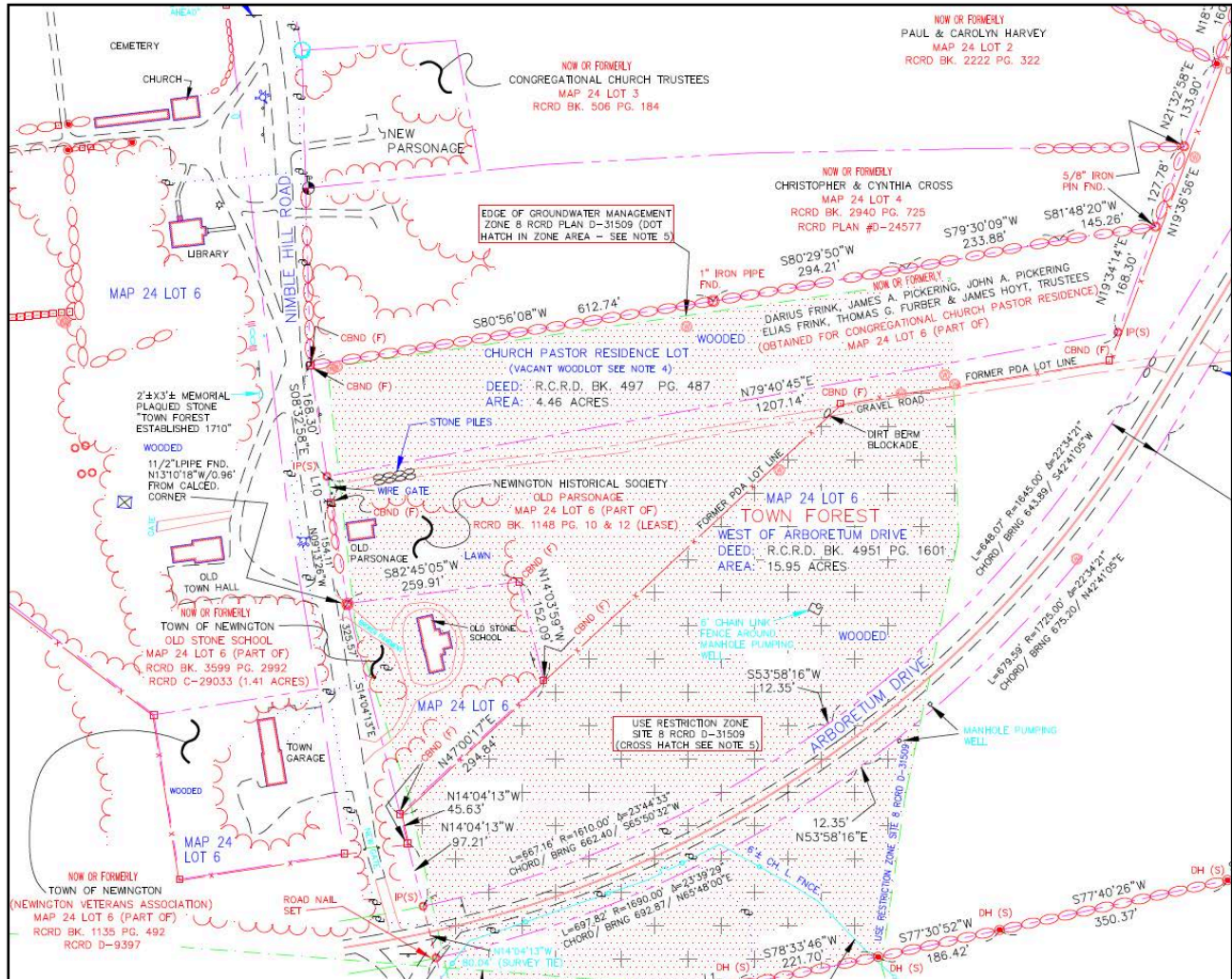
- Currently, the bright summer sun and few places to sit limit outside activities. Visual features need to be added and people spaces designed with seating to encourage spending time outside.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The intent is to beautify the Old Town Center to make it more accessible and people friendly. At the same time, though, the intent is also that the Town will maintain the new areas, including any planted trees, bushes, flower gardens, etc.
Old Town Forest	<p>As an aside, the HDC discussed the Old Town Forest.</p> <p>The ongoing Site 8 Fire Training area clean up by the US Air Force has resulted in numerous wells and piping being installed in the Old Town Forest.</p> <p>The HDC would like the Selectmen to send a letter to the USAF and/or the Pease Restoration Advisory Board to see what the removal plan is for this added infrastructure.</p> <p>Already, it seems that pipes have been abandoned and left in place to rust. Defunct piping should be removed (not just cut off at the surface) as soon as possible, as opposed to decades from now.</p>

Lulu Pickering
HDC Member
April 15, 2018, finalized June 19, 2018

Old Town Center Survey

A section from the 2009 survey map (D-36275) done by David Hislop entitled "Newington Town Forest Boundary Plan & adjoining property showing Plan of Congregational Church Pastor Residence Property"



Historic Old Town Center

Meetinghouse	New Parsonage
Langdon Library	Chris Cross
Old Town Hall	Undeveloped land
Town Garage	Old Parsonage and Old Stone School

Nimble Hill Road down the center with Arboretum Drive at the bottom

North



South

Soccer Parking Photos in Old Town Center



Soccer Parking Photos (continued)

