

RYE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

**Thursday, April 18, 2019
5:00 p.m. – Rye Town Hall**

Present: Mae Bradshaw, David Choate, Karen Stewart and Tom King

I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Bradshaw called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m. and led the pledge of Allegiance.

II. Approval of Minutes – February 19, 2019

Will be approved at next meeting.

III. Other Business: Design Guideline project

Chair Bradshaw stated that the Exeter plan is much more complicated than what Rye needs because of the amount of commercial area that they have.

Member Choate stated that there is no need for guidelines for Route 1.

Chair Bradshaw agreed; however, pointed out that if the District is expanded, then there are commercial properties on Washington Road.

A review of the Zoning Map shows that the commercially zoned properties include:

- 1247 Washington Road Home Center
- 1000 Washington Road Christine's Crossing
- 919 Washington Road Coffee Shop
- 261 Central Road Outdoor Pride
- 566 Washington Road Tate & Foss
- 500 Washington Road TD Bank Building
- Foyes Corner

Member Choate pointed out that the commercial properties show up in spots. Rye does not have a large scale commercial area in the District.

Chair Bradshaw explained that she used Exeter's as a guide in writing up a draft, in order to make sure she included the main points. She also stated that she used the Town Ordinances and Master Plan.

Member Choate said that it is a good start. He will review it and redact items that are not pertinent to Rye.

Member King agreed and added that there is nothing wrong starting with this, even if it seems like overkill. He suggested that it be streamlined and tailored to Rye's needs. He recommended using it as a template.

The members agreed that the commercial piece will be a valuable part of the project, just on a smaller scale.

Member Stewart reported that her section of the project is self explanatory. She explained the example of bricks; as in these are the different kinds of bricks and here is the history of each of these kinds of bricks. She continued with the different kinds of mortar joint profile types. She stated that it is a lot of information, which is nice to have, but it doesn't seem relevant. Ms. Stewart added that she decided to identify the points that would be important to Rye. She asked how many buildings in the District are not wooden structures.

The discussion lead to that there are brick in all of them, as in some foundations, fireplaces and chimneys. The Library and the Junior High School are the only totally brick structures.

Member Choate stated that he was going to get a copy of the Portsmouth Historic Guideline Document. He has been out of town for two weeks and has not had a chance. He promised to get it done soon. He explained that it will be even more elaborate than Exeter's.

Chair Bradshaw pointed out that Exeter's introduction was 20 pages long and the one that she has drafted is 55 pages. She stated that Rye is not going to have anything even remotely as elaborate as Exeter's. She recommended however, that they at least touch on some of these subjects.

Some of the important points are; windows and doors; landscaping; site elements; solar; archeology and excavation and gravestones and graveyards.

Member King agreed to take on the site element section that former Member Loftus was assigned too.

Member Stewart stated that she will finish her section and type up what she thinks is relevant to Rye. She asked what the tone of the document is. She explained that she felt that it should be more helpful, than this is the rule.

Chair Bradshaw agreed. She pointed out that the introduction section was more informational. She stated that if any of the members review the introduction and have changes and/or suggestions, she would be glad to work on it some more. She recommended that the rest of the document should be educational. She also recommended that the final document emphasizes the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Chair Bradshaw stated that the finished document will be put online and will be sent to all the Real Estate Brokers.

- Member Tegeder was assigned windows and doors.
- Member Hoyt was assigned new construction and additions
- Member Stewart is doing Masonry
- Chair Bradshaw will ask Member Coffey to do exterior woodwork as well as roofing.

Chair Bradshaw suggested that the next meeting, in July, should be enough time for everyone to have their sections drafted up.

Member Stewart agreed that seemed reasonable. She suggested that an email to everyone to let them know what the plan is and what is expected. They could put together a short draft or outline for the next meeting to review.

Chair Bradshaw stated that if everyone sent their section draft to her she would get them out to the members. She recommended setting a July 1st deadline. The goal to get them to the members will be July 8th.

IV. Other Business: Fees

Chair Bradshaw stated that there is currently no fee to an applicant, to process an application for a Historic District Commission review. There is a \$100 fee for the Demolition Committee review fee. She stressed that she felt that is was important because the Commission has to pay for publication of the application. She asked for the opinion of the other Members.

After a short discussion, it was decided that the Commission does not want to burden or discourage people from living in the district. There should not be a penalty because they live in the district. It was also agreed that the homeowners should not be discouraged from coming to the Commission, prior to starting a project on their home. The fee would be just to cover the cost of the advertising and legal notices. Finally, the Commission decided on a flat \$50.00 application fee. Chair Bradshaw will bring this to the attention of the Board of Selectmen.

V. Other Business: Demolition Review Committee

Member Choate reported that the Committee is interested in identifying significant properties outside the Historic District that they have the ability to try to prevent demolition. Mr. Choate also stated that the Committee is going through the ordinance and are planning to present some changes to the Planning Board's Rules and Regulation Committee regarding demolition. He stressed that the timing of the process is extremely restrictive and prohibitive and is one of the things that the Committee is going to address. Mr. Choate also stated that the Committee wants to address the issue that the demolition permit should not be issued until all the other permits are in place. Currently, a person can go into the building office, get a demolition permit, knock the building down and then never get the approval for the project that the demolition was done for and then there stands a vacate lot.

Chair Bradshaw stated that there was a case of that happening on Harbor Road. The person was granted the demolition permit and then was denied the building permit. The person sued the Town and won and was granted the building permit. She stressed that it is a process of expectation. You are allowed to tear your building down with the expectation that you will be allowed to build. Then to find out that you are not going to be allowed to build, you may not have torn the old building down. There is a lost in value.

Member Choate clarified that the new process will be that the home owner could not tear down or demolish the property, until all permits and approvals are in place. He summed up by stating that as the Committee gets further along in this process, he will bring the proposals back to the HDC for their review and input. He pointed out that the objective is to streamline the process and to make it easier for both the applicant and the Committee.

Member Choate reported that the Committee is trying to expedite the process and this is important. He pointed out that they have had success at 388 and 410 South Road. There are two houses on the properties and the Committee was able to convince the developer not to tear them down but to market them with the property. One of the homes is 1725 and the other is 1750. He pointed out that by tearing the home down, the market that wants to rehab a home and does not want to build new is lost. Member Choate reported that from the time of the site walk to the public hearing last night, there was actually a contact on both properties. The couple that are buying them wants to keep one house and rehab it and live in it. The other house will probably be taken down, as they want to do something with the barn on the property. The Committee and the property buyers have agreed to an informal hearing prior to tearing the other house down. Mr. Choate referred to the homes from the 1800 located at the lower end of Washington Road, as he pointing out that as the pressure to develop Rye grows, someone will be looking at the homes there and decided that they should be torn down with a mc-mansion being built. He stressed the importance of expanding the Historic District to that area.

Adjournment

Motion by Tom King to adjourn at 5:56 p.m. Seconded by David Choate. All in favor.

Next Meeting: July 18, 2019 - 5:00 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Dyana F. Ledger