

**APPROVED
SEPTEMBER 2, 2021
HDC MEETING**

Members Present: Chair Rodney Rowland, Vice Chair Irene Bush, Tom Maher, Kate Murray, Judy Groppa and Ruth Zikaras.

Absent: Elaine Nollet

The meeting was held in the Recreation Room. Chair Rowland called the meeting of the New Castle Historic District Commission to order at 7:00 pm. Rowland stated there was one hearing on the agenda and advised that the application had been published, fees paid and abutters notified. The Chair, Vice Chair, Maher, Murray, and Groppa will be voting.

1. Public Hearing for Julia Thomas, 15 Atkinson St., Map 18 Lot 10, to install a wooden fence with a gate on the north side of the home.

Guest: Julia Thomas

Thomas stated there is a matching fence on the south side of the home which is good at keeping the dogs in, and the north side has a temporary metal fence and she would like to replace it with a fence that matches the fence on the south of the property. Thomas provided a mock-up of the fence and also showed a picture of the fence on the south side.

Judy Groppa asked why Thomas wants a short fence and was advised that the fence connects from her neighbor's fence and she didn't want to block the view of the gardens as she has a pretty yard. Thomas is not looking for privacy, only to keep the dogs in the yard. The fence on the left and right sides are the same height. Groppa stated the other side looks appropriate because the fence is the height of the stone wall.

Kate Murray asked Thomas if there is anyone on Atkinson Street not doing home improvements this year and the applicant responded there are three houses having significant work done and it's been quite fun helping each other on projects to improve their homes.

The Chair did not open the meeting to the public as there was no one present.

Kate Murray motioned to approve the Thomas application as submitted; Irene Bush seconded. All in favor including the Chair.

2. Approve Minutes from August 5, 2021

Tom Maher motioned to approve the minutes of August 5, 2021 as amended; Kate Murray seconded. All in favor including the Chair.

3. Any New Business (Area Form Survey)

Rowland had sent an email to the commission which he received from Lynn Monroe of The Preservation Company with a draft report of the survey to identify architecturally important areas, however the link expired after 7 days and is no longer available. Rowland asked the commission if it thought the survey information would be appropriate as a tool for the HDC website. Groppa stated she read the report and the descriptions were wonderful, adding it was very well done. However, she stated it was difficult to really absorb and asked if Rowland could get printed copies made. The Chair stated he can get copies using the HDC budget and will also send an active link to Maher to give to the IT person to upload to the town's HDC page. Irene Bush asked if a copy could be printed out for the commission. There are hundreds of photos which are referenced in the document, but the photos were provided in a separate document in the link. Groppa stated the photos were separate from the text and it would be great to combine them. The report would be a great resource for the HDC to introduce each project.

The report was a draft as a "Final submission" will be done with photographs and a review of the addresses to be sure they are correct. This report is Phase I of a two phase project. Phase II will be more specific as to any house in the historic district, providing date built, what is original, etc. If an applicant comes before the commission and wants to tear something down, it will be very good information to have.

Jim Cerny's house is not in the historic district as the historic district stops at the school and then shoots down River Road; at some point the district crosses over Rte. 1B at Oliver Street. You can almost draw a line coming out of Oliver Street. Jane Finn's house is in the district.

Someone asked if the designation of the historic district was political. The designation of the historic district happened in two phases, the first being just Main Street and Piscataqua Street; it then was expanded down Oliver Street and River Road. Murray was looking in the ordinances for a pull out showing the historic district in the HDC, as it used to contain a map of the district.

Jim Cerny wrote to Lynn Monroe lamenting about all the tear downs in town, which is why it is good to have a record or inventory of historic homes. Monroe mourns the teardown of 149 Wild Rose Lane which has been studied and archived with the State and the commission will have access to that. The Chair will follow up with Monroe to get the link and send it out to commission members.

Judy Groppa asked if the town needs to apply for the grant for the next phase and when is the appropriate time to do that. Chair Rowland stated he received an invite for a zoom meeting for 2022 for the CLG grant round and he will try to

attend that meeting. Maher asked the Chair if he would again explain to taxpayers that the town is not paying for the survey, that it will be grant funded, and an important resource tool for the HDC and historical society.

Maier advised commission members that Darcy Horgan, Chair of the Planning Board, is assembling all members of all boards and entities that will have a voice on the town's Master Plan, for a meeting on September 16. The sincere hope is to draft a Master Plan that is forward looking instead of rear view mirror looking. Maier encouraged all members to be there.

Kate Murray suggested the town prepare two documents of the Master Plan as one goes to Rockingham County Planning and they take out much pertinent information and provide a stenciled version. Murray suggested it may be a good idea for the town to keep a copy of the original plan for its own internal use which documents all conversations of what was discussed in putting together the plan, before it gets all cut up by Rockingham County Planning. Maier stated if there are things that really matter to the HDC, the commission should do its best to have it included in the Master Plan. Maier stated there are a lot of things to address, such as resiliency, sea level rise, safety regarding pedestrians and bicycles, and this could be a real crossroads for the HDC.

Irene Bush asked if there was any chance of increasing the historic district and the Chair asked which direction would you go. Bush pointed out the house being torn down on Wild Rose Lane and the Chair stated it is the only house on Wild Rose Lane worth saving and you cannot micro-zone.

Maier stated after the August HDC hearing with Tanguay regarding the request for a single line of solar panels on the North side of the house, that he walked the neighborhood and around the house a couple of times. Tanguay had referenced Todd Baker's house and Maier walked it from different angles and believes there's a tremendous disparity between the lots as the Baker house is high and the Tanguay house sits lower. If the commission is using the Schwab test, then the Tanguay solar would be right there at eye level. Maier stated he doesn't think it ends the Tanguay's solar project but a single line of panels on that side does not fall within what the commission guidelines attempt to accomplish. Maier stated the roofline is very visible and there's no vegetation blocking the view. Rowland commented that every time the commission looks at solar, it's a compromise.

Tanguay thought Baker's solar panels would be visible, however the Chair didn't get the sense Baker's panels would be visible from the road because it is higher and the angle is wrong. Tanguay's roof is only one story up, and is right there and in clear view. Maier stated that looking at the Bakers as you are walking toward town hall, as you look up, you get a fleeting glimpse of the roofline at the back of the home but there's more obstructions and it's higher up.

The Chair stated he would be in touch with the Tanguays and advise them to revise their application and come before the HDC for another hearing.

Tom Maher voted to adjourn; Kate Murray seconded. All in favor.

Adjourned 7:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane L. Cooley, Recording Secretary