

**Historic District Commission**  
Meeting Minutes  
September 19, 2024  
Eureka Community Center, 6:00pm

Meeting called to order 6:00 pm

**I. Establish a quorum**

Quorum established

**II. In attendance**

Present

Lois Kilby-Chesley, Chair  
Emily Alexander, Secretary  
David McLellan  
Candace DeCsipkes  
Sandra Hilton, Alternate

Guests

None

Absent

Paula Erdmann-Purdy

**III. Approve Minutes**

- a. Approve meeting minutes from June 13, 2024

Motion to approve minutes

Seconded

All in favor

**IV. Information and Reports (no vote necessary)**

- a. DHDC was on the Select Board Agenda for August 27th
- b. Met with Select Board on August 13th ( Lois Kilby-Chesley, Emily Alexander, David McLellan and Sandra Hilton)
- c. Planning Board had DHDC on meeting agenda for September 4th but they did not discuss

Motion made to commit one hour of the DHDC meetings for the next three months to vision planning. Focusing on DHDC goals for improving relationship with Select Board and to improve historic preservation in the town of Durham.

Seconded

**Discussion:**

Friendly amendment to motion do two hours total over the next 2 months to vision planning.  
Accepted

**Discussion:**

This vision development would be an internal discussion for commissioner's reference and direction only. Outcome would be clear points for success in the existing environment. Not specifically the result of the development of actionable steps.

4 yay

1 nay

**V. Continuing Business**

- a. August 13th meeting review:
  1. Format changed from proposed workshop
  2. Only DHDC Chair was allowed to speak on behalf of the DHDC
  3. Clear lack of support and understanding
  4. Select Board expressed concerns over the credentials and qualifications of DHDC commissioners

1 & 2 was a clear disconnect in communication and misunderstanding in expectations of meeting which reduced productivity of the meeting.

3. Lack of comprehension about the purpose of the DHDC
4. Select Board should reevaluate their qualification process

Motion to accept the language of 'discussed takeaways'

1. The format changed from what we were told and what was published on the Agenda
2. Only the chair was allowed to speak (despite it being touted as a "workshop")
3. It is clear there was a lack of Support for the continuation of the Commission and for protecting historic sites
4. Although our credentials were reviewed and approved by past and present Select Board members for membership on the Commission they continue to refer to us as "unqualified". (And what are the qualifications for being elected to the Select Board, thus being put in decision-making positions of town-wide importance?)

Seconded

All in favor

b. Suggestions for next steps:

1. 2 month workshop for total of 2 hours dedicated to internal vision planning for the DHDC

2. Invite Select Board member/s to attend as an observer
3. Present the 'I Believe' statement to Select Board signed off by all commissioners
4. One voice

Motion

Seconded

All in Favor

c. Central Maine Power Line, Durham Auburn Road, Historic Site mentioned in April 2024 minutes from Planning Board.

- An inquiry was made to which historical site the Planning Board referenced. information released through a FOIA (private citizen request) revealed it to be an archeology site: foundation for barn, house and a well on the northeast side. Leith Smith Maine Historic Preservation Commission was the contact.

d. Archeological Survey

Maine Historic Preservation (Micheal) was contacted about the town requesting the commission conduct a building survey. Procedures, response were given to DHDC and Select Board in email format.

Questions remain and field to Select Board:

- What type of architectural survey does the Select Board intend to conduct?
- What is their budget?

Budget needs to be defined. Clarification on what problem the Select Board is looking to solve through a survey would be helpful. Explanation from the Select Board on what outcome they are seeking to achieve. Should the DHDC budget for an architectural survey that adheres to standards and best practices? Is the Select Board looking for quotes for a certified historian? The DHDC cannot conduct an RFP.

CIP, Community Improvement Projects, due in October as of this meeting there has been no response from the Select Board to email correspondence from DHDC Chair with a list of questions concerning the architectural survey .

George Theborge, Durham Town Planner, has the documents and records from the previously conducted survey done at least 5 years ago. He received them several months ago when Candy gave them to him. Lois made a copy of the work for the benefit of the DHDC. However, no professional, formal archived survey of Durham's buildings exists.

Based on Historic building survey with intent for historic preservation, conference in May buildings go back 50 years. Best practices in historic preservation.

Motion to inquiry with the Select Board "May the DHDC seek bids for an architectural historian to conduct the requested architectural survey?"

Second

No discussion

1 nay

4 yay

e. DHDC Activities

- Public Hearing volunteers to lead discussion if we are allowed to speak.  
David McLellan volunteers
- Who would like to sit at the elections table?  
Volunteers are Paula Erdmann-Purdy and Sandra Hilton
- Who is responsible for demonstration board  
David McLellan volunteers but requires images  
Lois Kilby-Chesley inquires with the town on budget for the project

Vote called to work for signs marking Durham's historic district:

3 signs needed one on route 9 coming from Lisbon falls, sign along the Congregational Church, and a sign near the Get 'n' Go

All in favor

Ghost tours in conjunction with Historical Society, does not seem feasible this year

Reach out to Shiloh, Paula Erdmann-Purdy

Reach out DCS, Historical Society doing their field trip

Historic District Walk (no possible due to traffic)

## **VI. New Business**

None

## **VII. Final decision summary.**

1. Contact Select Board for question and budget on Election Day table and tri-fold. Estimated \$120 needed for tri-fold board reimbursement

Motion for materials for use at election and future use

Second

All in favor

2. Chair to send inquiry to the Select Board: "May the DHDC seek bids for an architectural historian to conduct the requested architectural survey?"
3. Chair to get permission from the Select Board for the release of \$120 funds for the DHDC Election Day tri-fold

## **VIII. Future topics for the next meeting**

- First of the one hour vision planning to take place at October DHDC meeting
- If we hear back from Select Board, get bids for Architectural Survey
- Do budget for DHDC

October 10th next meeting, 2nd Thursday of the month remains for DHDC meetings, booking Eureka Community

## **IX. Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn  
Seconded