**SANBORNTON HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**MINUTES-July 16, 2019- 7:00 P.M.**

**TOWN OFFICES- 573 SANBORN ROAD, SANBORNTON, NH**

The Meeting was called to order by the Chair, Franz Vail at 7:00 P.M.

The following members were in attendance: Franz Vail, Nina Gardner, Stuart Dyment, Jim Dick and alternate Sam Swartz. Sam Swartz was appointed to serve in the absence of Tim Cline. Not attending the meeting were Tim Clineand Selectman Tom Salatiello.

Nina Gardner agreed to compile the Minutes with note taking assistance from Jim Dick and Sam Swartz.

Minutes from the May 14, 2019 meeting were reviewed. On a Motion made by Jim Dick, seconded by Sam Swartz, the Minutes of the May 14, 2019 meeting were approved as submitted. The vote was Unanimous.

Minutes from the June 11, 2019 meeting were also reviewed. On a Motion made by Sam Swartz, seconded by Jim Dick, the Minutes of the June 11, 2019 meeting were approved as submitted. The vote was in the affirmative, with Jim Dick abstaining.

Since the Public Hearing was noticed for 7:15 P.M., the chairman moved to Old Business. The CLG Grant. Franz stated that he had sought comment on the proposed RFP from both the Town Administrator and Amy Dixon at the Division of Historical Resources. The Town Administrator provided no comment and Ms. Dixon suggested including the requirement that the historic preservation consultant be qualified under 26 CFR 61. Franz stated he had added that requirement to the RFP.

He also mentioned that Jim Dick had also provided comment on the RFP to include language that the $3500 is a not to exceed amount. He also suggested that rather than a post mark deadline, that submission should be by 4:00 P.M. on the required day. Both of these suggestions had also been incorporated into the RFP document.

The Commission discussed the distribution of the RFP. The DHR had provided a list of

firms/individuals that were likely to bid. It was agreed that if it was possible, the Chair would

get the RFP issued this week by mailing to the list of consultants identified and also getting it

posted on the Town website.

Stuart Dyment raised the issue of the district’s northern boundary. He wanted to know what was expected of the consultant regarding this piece of the RFP. He pointed out that the ordinance defines the boundary by what is drawn on the map. He asked, do we want the consultant to put the map on the ground, or survey the land? He noted that a survey would probably cost at least $6000 which is well beyond the budget. Franz stated that the intent of the grant is to make certain that there is enough detail for the northern boundary so that it can be used to determine when a project falls within the district.

Stuart asked what happens if the work we request in the RFP exceeds the budget. Franz stated that should be reflected in the bids, and the issues would have to be resolved during the review/interview process.

The Chair convened the scheduled Public Hearing at 7:15 P.M. This was an application review for the Sanbornton Congregational Church (UCC) for a new sign. Franz stated that the applicants would be allowed to present their proposal, the Commission would ask any questions, then the hearing would be opened for Public Comment, especially from any abutters present. At this time Sam Swartz recused himself from participating on the Commission as he is an abutter to the proposed project.

David Henderson and Cliff Mills from the Sanbornton Congregational Church were presenters of the proposal. David Henderson explained that the sign was designed by a committee within the church and had gone through many revisions. He said that he had done a lot of research into the history of church signs, both in New England and around the country. The church believes the design they were presenting is in keeping with historical signage. David explained that in 3 years the church would be celebrating its sesquicentennial (250 years old), and that they would like the new sign in place for that. They would like to replace the existing sandwich board sign that has been in use for many years. Nina Gardner mentioned coincidently, the sandwich sign does not comply with the town ordinance.

Continuing, Mr. Henderson stated that the sign meets all of the zoning requirements for size and set back. As proposed, the sign would be 60 x 24, although only 48 inches between the sign posts. It is 6 feet tall to the top. The top of the sign would be permanent with the name of the church across the top. The bottom of the sign is for letting to announce church events. The sign would be placed in the grassy area between Meetinghouse Hill Road and the Church’s driveway, aligned so that the sign was readable from the road. It would be aligned to the center of the church, centered between the two doors. The plan calls for a 2 foot stone foundation which would also be used as a planter for flowers.

Stuart Dyment asked if there was an historical basis for the stone base. Nina Gardner commented that there did not have to be an historical basis for everything, but what is done needs to fit within the character of what is in the district. David Henderson stated that there was not an historical basis, but the intent was to use old field stone so that it would blend with the rest of the architecture.

Franz Vail asked about the lighting on the sign, and whether it would be left on or only on during events. David Henderson stated that they planned to have it on a timer to turn off every night at 9 PM or 10PM. Stuart Dyment stated he would prefer to see downward, rather than upward, illumination so that it would cut down on glare and light pollution.

Stuart Dyment also raised the issue of the sign lettering, stating he would prefer it to be black on a white background, not as the proposed black background with white lettering. Both Franz Vail and Nina Gardner agreed that black lettering on a white background would be more in keeping with the other signage in the District. David Henderson stated he would bring that request back to the design committee.

Stuart Dyment also asked about the plan for preserving the sign. David Henderson stated that they planned to paint it, although there had been discussion about using plastic sheathing on the posts to reduce maintenance. Stuart felt this would not be acceptable and other members agreed. Continuing, Stuart Dyment said the posts should be trimmed out with pine and painted, rather than just painting the pressure-treated 4 X 4 posts. David Henderson agreed they could make these adjustments to the trim.

At the point, the Chairman asked for comments from the abutters present. Sam Swartz and his wife Linda live at 22 Meetinghouse Hill Road, directly across from the church. He noted that the parking lot, shared with the Town Hall and the Church and Library, is an area of frequent activity at night. He felt it was important that his property maintains a clear view of the area to be aware of what activity was taking place. He stated that he and his wife had two concerns about the proposed sign.

Mr. Swartz said the first concern was with the size of the sign, it will be roughly 4 feet wide and 8 feet tall, including the proposed stone base. They were concerned that it would block their view of parking lot activity as well as the buildings themselves. He also provided pictorial examples of several church signs, most from larger communities than Sanbornton, which were significantly smaller than that being proposed.

His second concern was over the lighting. Mr. Henderson had stated that the message portion of the sign would be covered with glass or plexi-glass to prevent anyone from tampering with the messages. Sam Swartz stated that would create significant glare. He noted that the glare could be reduced with the right style of lighting (deep parabolic reflector) that would reduce the scatter. He also stated that he thought the lights should be turned off when the church was not being used, and that 10 PM was too late.

Jim Dick noted that the Zoning Ordinance (Article 4 Section C- Advertising Signs) states that “Signs, may be illuminated only during working hours for the respective business of professional enterprise.” David Henderson agreed that the Church would abide by whatever the Zoning Ordinance requires.

Carol Raymond and Paula Grassie representing the Library Board of Trustees were also present. They stated that the Library is an abutter to the project and that the Trustee have no issue with the proposed sign.

There was no further public comment.

Nina Gardner inquired of Mr. Henderson how important was the stone base to the project? To which he replied it would be nice to have, but he did not believe it was a “deal breaker.” Nina Gardner suggested that eliminating the base could help address some of the size concerns by eliminating 2 feet from the total height. She noted that the proposed site is sloping and that the stone base would be as much as 4 feet high on the lowest point of the sloping site. It would be a pretty massive stone foundation for the sign adding to its overall size. Nina Gardner commented the sign reminded her to the “Welcome to Franconia State Park” signage and as proposed was pretty massive for the site.

The Chair asked if the Commission was ready to approve the project with conditions or that it be tabled for further discussion. Jim Dick commented that with all of the changes that had been discussed and proposed, it would probably be best if the Church were given a chance to go back and update the plan. That way, there would be no confusion about what the final plan looked like. The Commission members agreed.

On a Motion made by Nina Gardner, and seconded by Jim Dick, the hearing on the proposed sign for the Congregational Church was continued to August 13 at 7:15 P.M. for a review of proposed changes as discussed with the applicant. The vote was Unanimous. The hearing was closed.

At this time, Sam Swartz returned to participation as a member of the Commission.

The Chair next recognized Diane and Dave Dumais and their son Tyler Dumais for a consultation for their 44 Pound Road Property. The property is owned by Tyler Dumais and Emily Cann.

For reference this is the second house built by Don Kent in town. It is located across from the town offices and on Pound Road, not visible in any way from the road. It sits on a 12 acre parcel, the house was built in 2001. The applicant seeks to build a second garage on the property. There is a single car garage there now. Mrs. Dumais had some sketches of a proposed two car garage for the property. She also had photos of the existing home and existing single car garage to help the Commission know what was already on the lot. Mrs. Dumais explained that the intent was to have the new garage match the existing house and the same type of siding would be used. Nina Gardner advised the applicant to update the application to include all of the abutters’ information so that a hearing can be properly noticed and so the application would be complete and hearing can be scheduled.

Several questions were asked about the design of the garage, but ultimately, there did not seem to be any issues that concerned the Commission about the proposed structure. The Chair provided them with a copy of the Tax Map which showed that there were 13 abutters who would have to be notified. They intend to submit the application as soon as possible. Review of their application was tentatively scheduled for 7:45 P.M. on August 13 pending receipt of a completed application to the Town Planner. Once received, the public hearing will be notified.

Returning to the discussion of the RFP for the preservation grant, the Chair indicated he would talk with the Town Administrator to see if he could get the RFP out this week. If this could not be done before Friday when the Chair goes on vacation, it would have to be delayed another week. On a Motion made by Jim Dick, seconded by Sam Swartz, the Chair was authorized to adjust the final date of submission for the RFP, based upon his discussions with the Town Administrator, as may be necessary. The Vote was Unanimous.

With no further business to come before the Commission, a Motion was made by Sam Swartz, seconded by Jim Dick, to adjourn the meeting. The vote was Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Nina Gardner, Acting Secretary

With note assistance provided by Jim Dick and Sam Swartz