

**SANBORNTON HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
FINAL MINUTES-June 13, 2023 at 7:30 P.M.  
Old Town Hall, Meeting House Hill Road  
Sanbornton, New Hampshire 03269**

I. The Meeting was called to order by the Chair Franz Vail, at 7:12 P.M.

II. Members present: Franz Vail, Nina Gardner, Brandon Deacon, Select Board representative and Alternate Barbara Whetstone was also present.

III. Nina Gardner agreed to take Minutes of the Meeting.

Prior to the onset of the meeting's agenda, Chair Franz Vail noted that his prior term had lapsed and that since then he has been reappointed by the Board of Selectmen. Nina Gardner noted that the current roster of members on the Town's website for the Historic District Commission is out of date and lists members who are no longer on the Commission. Selectman Brandon Deacon also mentioned that Kyle Orde, who is the Planning Board representative on the Commission, had been absent from recent Planning Board meetings in addition to tonight's HDC meeting, and recommended checking in with him to discuss his continued interest and intent with serving on the Commission.

In the absence of Sam Swartz, the Chair designated Barbara Whetstone (Alternate) as a voting member for the meeting.

IV. Vote New Chair.

On a Motion made by Nina Gardner, seconded by Brandon Deacon, Franz Vail was nominated as Chair of the Historic District Commission. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative with Brandon Deacon, Nina Gardner and Barbara Whetstone voting. Franz Vail abstained from the vote.

V. Review/approval of September 15, 2022 and October 3, 2022 Minutes.

Following a review of each set of Minutes, a Motion was made by Barbara Whetstone, seconded by Brandon Deacon, to approve the Minutes of the September 15, 2022 meeting. The vote was unanimous with the following members voting in the affirmative: Barbara Whetstone, Franz Vail, Brandon Deacon and Nina Gardner.

A Motion was made by Brandon Deacon, seconded by Barbara Whetstone, to approve the minutes of the October 3, 2023 meeting. The vote was unanimous with the following voting in the affirmative: Brandon Deacon, Barbara Whetstone and Nina Gardner. Franz Vail did not vote as he was not present at the October meeting.

VI. Discussion Items.

a. 509 Sanborn Road "Junk"

The Chair referenced a letter that was written by Mark Ledgard, Zoning Enforcement Officer, dated February 13, 2023 entitled "Notice of Violation and Required Corrective Actions Thurston

Property, Tax Map 26, Lot 55. The letter makes note of the numerous pieces of used vehicles, machinery and other materials referenced as “junk” that are being accumulated and stored outside on the property which are in violation of the Town’s Zoning Ordinance.

The Chair then read a forwarded copy of correspondence between the Zoning Enforcement Officer and Jonathan Thurston, son of owner Mark Thurston, explaining his role in working to alleviate and eliminate the visual eyesore and junk stored on the property. Jonathan Thurston proposed a schedule with initial work beginning on June 9, 2023 and having the property back in full compliance by August 1, 2023.

As communicated back to Jonathan Thurston, Mr. Ledgard reported that he had accepted the proposed reclamation schedule as acceptable to the Town.

b. Abbott Solar Planting.

Minutes of the prior meetings in September and October 2022 were reviewed for reference regarding what the final requirements were for green-scaping and creating a visual barrier for the solar array. There was discussion as to what was required as part of the final approval. From the Minutes it was noted that he was to plant Ninebark shrubs that would be spaced 3-6 feet apart and that these would be adjusted to align with the array (4 trees on one side and 5 on the backside). Mr. Abbott did comment that cost was a potential factor in purchasing the Ninebark shrubs. He also proposed that Christmas trees would form the visual barrier on the south side end and would extend to the lawn’s edge away from the array. Nina Gardner shared a concept drawing that Chris Abbott had provided as part of his proposal.

Members described what they had noticed from their “drives” past the property and questions were raised as to whether all the agreed upon plantings had been established. No members felt that it was appropriate for them to step onto the property for further verification. Particular concern exists as to whether plantings were made on the south side end as these were not easily seen from the road.

The Chair was authorized to send an email to Chris Abbott checking into the status of the plantings which were part of the approval of the ground mounted solar panel installation on this property.

c. Historic District Zoning Ordinance.

The Chair mentioned again that this has been on the list of issues that the Commission needs to address but that he has not had the time to do so and other members also noted that they had various commitments that had precluded them from doing so. It was noted that former member Tim Cline had done some research into other Historic District Zoning Ordinances, and Nina Gardner mentioned that she thought Sam Swartz had also done some research. The section of the Sanbornton Zoning Ordinance describing the Historic District is a very minimal. Currently lacking the bandwidth amongst members of the Commission, this item was placed on hold at the present time.

d. Property line setbacks in Historic District.

The Chair mentioned that he had received correspondence from Mark Ledgard, Zoning Enforcement Officer, indicating that he had noted the absence of any setback requirements in the zoning ordinance for properties in the Historic District. This being a much smaller task, the

Chair felt that it should be a priority for the Commission to review setbacks in the other sections of the ordinance so that an amendment might be proposed to the ordinance. This would need to go to the planning board for their consideration. The timing of the zoning amendment process was discussed. With that in mind, it was suggested that members review the zoning ordinance to review setbacks, and maybe other items he described as “other big holes” that might be considered. The Chair will forward the relevant sections of the ordinance and asked that suggested revisions be sent to him by next Tuesday (June 20, 2023).

e. HDC Files/filing.

Franz said that he had been up to the Town Offices to see what our filing storage situation is. He reported that it is his intent to go through everything he has at home and make sure that all the appropriate records are in our board files. He was given a box of records when Liz Merry left her role on the HDC. Nina Gardner mentioned that she has her own files based on meeting information and the fact that she has been doing the Minutes for the past several years. The next meeting of the Commission will be for the purpose of completing this file materials review in much the same fashion we did when packing up the files for the move to the new office space.

f. CLG Grant Application.

The Chair indicated that he has interest in applying for another CLG grant, but the timing of the grant cycle this year was delayed, and we were not ready to make an application. He has spoken with people at the Historic Preservation Office in Concord and they have indicated their interest in having us revisit the 1980's historic study of homes in town to provide further documentation and updates. This would be a great project to have Mae Williams involved with, but Franz indicated that he has not had time to reach out to her to even get a preliminary sense of what a project such as this might entail. Ms. Williams has been extremely busy with other projects she has been contracted to complete. It is also important that we build such a grant proposal into our town budget request even though such studies usually do not entail a town funding commitment. We would have to front the cost, subject to reimbursement.

7. New Business.

Nina Gardner mentioned that in early spring before the trees leafed out was a good time to get a sense of things happening in the district. There was a brief conversation about work that might have been undertaken. No action was taken.

8. Next Meeting date.

The next scheduled meeting was set for Tuesday, July 11 at 7:00 P.M. This was set as a work session for the Commission to work on organizing its records and files.

9. Adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 P.M.

Minutes prepared from notes taken by Nina Gardner. (with minor edits by Franz Vail)  
Respectfully submitted by Nina Gardner, Acting Secretary  
Revised 7/14/2023 by FKV to incorporate changes voted on at 7/11/23 meeting



