

NEWPORT CITY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
November 3rd, 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT: Charles Elliott, Robert Currier, Clark Curtis, Woodman Page, and Dan Ross.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Pam Ladds and Brian McNeal.

7:47 p.m. Chair Charles Elliott called the meeting to order. Minutes for the July 1, 2014 meeting were presented with Woodman Page moving to approve the minutes. Dan Ross seconded the motion. Robert Currier abstained since he had not been appointed to the Historic Preservation Commission at that time. **APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION.** Minutes for the March 10th, 2015 minutes were presented with Chair Charles Elliott noting one change: from "Charles Elliott" to "they" in the second paragraph, line 17 under 7:19 p.m. Clark Curtis then moved to approve the minutes with the change noted with Woodman Page seconding the motion. Robert Currier abstained due to the previous reason along with Dan Ross who was absent from the meeting. **APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION.**

7:52 p.m. DISCUSSION OF ACTIVITIES INVOLVING HISTORIC SITES OR BUILDINGS IN THE COMMUNITY. Chair Charles Elliott turned the discussion over to Brian McNeal who began by stating how disappointed he is in the loss of Newport's historical buildings. Mr. McNeal listed a number of buildings and concluded with the most recent one that he had originally looked into preserving which was the Daly Home; but within two weeks of his investigations, the building was demolished. Mr. McNeal is now concerned that the same fate may occur to the Orleans County Jail. Brian McNeal stated that there have been discussions by council members about the Municipal Building and how it doesn't have enough room for the offices that it currently holds. Some council members would have the city offices moved to a new building located somewhere on Union Street. Brian McNeal inquired why the police station couldn't use the jail in some capacity. Other questions raised were what age must a building have to be before it can become eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historical Places; what types of grants are available; and who makes the determination of a building to be listed on the register. Woodman Page suggested that the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation be contacted. Clark Curtis added that the listing of a building for preservation was determined by the owner and provided an example of St. Marys and how it is not on the register since it is up to the church to make that determination. Dan Ross also stated that once a building is on the register that it must be maintained by strict standards.

Dan Ross then began a conversation related to the Municipal Building and how the city along with the Vermont Guard had originally combined forces and funding to build it. Dan Ross noted that the building is central to the community which every one on the commission agreed. Charles Elliott added that he sees the building being used everyday

for different events such as: the preschool, pickle ball competition, basketball games, senior activities as well as the city's business. The building is more than just a city hall, but also a community center that is centrally located.

Charles Elliott and Clark Curtis recommended that Brian McNeal contact the county assistant judges regarding the jail. Chair Elliott stated that the county would have to take the lead but the Historical Commission would support the grant applications for preserving the jail. Mr. McNeil stated that he would look further into the issue.

8:26 p.m. OTHER BUSINESS. Pam Ladds was asked by Clark Curtis if she ever submitted a letter of interest in serving the Historic Preservation Commission. Pam Ladd stated that she had submitted a letter to former City Manager John Ward. Chair Elliott replied that he never received it. Clark Curtis advised Pam Ladds that if she was still interested that she needed to submit her letter directly to Zoning Administrator Elliott. Pam Ladds stated that she would resubmit her letter of interest.

Clark Curtis stated that since the commission members are doing the city's business that its members should have their own city email addresses. Chair Elliott added this item to his list of things to do.

Pam Ladds provided information on Gardner Park that she had recently been informed about. Apparently the city may be receiving additional monies than had previously been expected due to the grand stand bleachers having a historical significance. If the information is correct then this will mean that more can be done to beautify the park. Chair Elliott mentioned the City Barn on Coventry Street may be restored and Clark Curtis reminded everyone of a former plan to move the barn to Gardner Park to be used by the local farmers market.

8:36 p.m. Woodman Page made a motion to adjourn. This was seconded by Clark Curtis. **APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS DECISION.**

Minutes taken and transcribed by Woodman Page

Approved: Charles Elliott Date: 2-16-16