

CITY OF LACONIA - CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
Government Operations & Ordinances Subcommittee
June 17, 2019
7:00 P.M.

6/17/2019 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bownes called the meeting to order at the above date and time.

2. RECORDING SECRETARY

Cheryl Hebert, City Clerk

3. ROLL CALL

Chairman Bownes noted for the record Councilor Cheney and Councilor Hosmer were both present.

4. STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Scott Myers, City Manager

Glenn Smith, Finance Director

5. GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ORDINANCES (Bownes, Hosmer, Cheney)

5.A. Discussion of Historic Overlay District

Chairman Bownes asked Director Trefethen to explain his concerns that were sent via email to the committee today. Director Trefethen explained some of his concerns which included suggesting the number of members to form the committee be a set odd number, identifying the Historic District needs to add the adjoining lot at Veterans Square so it avoids the concept of spot zoning, and he corrected the lot number 325-44-1 should be 425-44-1. He spoke about including the tavern building, Post Office, City Hall, the two mill buildings, the Masonic building, and the other two churches that front Veteran's Square. Director Trefethen expressed his concern with some items listed are already occurring at the train station such as a patio, bbq pit, and extra activities that happen over the year and part of the train station has already been altered, which under the current proposal wouldn't be allowed.

Chairman Bownes questioned if a Historic Overlay District will have any affect on the Performance District? Director Trefethen explained he doesn't think it will affect it at all but it could have a very minor affect on certain buildings.

Councilor Cheney would like to spend more time to review the changes and is concerned with some of the details being too specific.

Chairman Bownes explained this process still needs to go to the Planning Board and/or City Council.

Councilor Hosmer appreciates Director Trefethen's concerns. He did express this is a work in progress and does not want to disrupt some private property owners and this is a reason to slow the process down. Councilor Hosmer does agree to go from seven down to three members for a Historic District Commission. Councilor Hosmer recommends sending this to the Planning Committee.

Chairman Bownes just wants to be thorough when putting this Ordinance together.

City Manager Myers questioned if it is at the committee's will to include the correction to the tax lot number and to include the small parcel in Veterans Square, plus all the included color changes to the final document. The committee agreed.

Councilor Cheney asked if the City Manager could check with the Solicitor to view the original Deed of St. Josephs Church to see if any restrictions were included in the Deed.

City Manager Myers explained there are opportunities for amendments to be made by the Council before sending it to the Planning Board.

Tara Shore, Ward 4 - Worked with Assessing and she did not mean to exclude the small parcel at Veterans Square. T. Shore spoke with a representative from Exeter regarding their Historic District. The representative stated they have not had any issues regarding business growth. T. Shore suggested to the committee to reach out to the NH Preservation Alliance and NH Division of Historical Resources. If there was a Historic District put in place years ago, the Colonial Theatre may not have been allowed to be in the condition it is now. T. Shore questioned when would a Historic Commission be appointed? City Manager Myers explained the Historic District would need to be passed first then the Commission would be appointed after.

Jane Whitehead - She senses certain fears that this Historic Overlay District may be an entrapment. She compared it to putting a public face on buildings and protects it. She also stated that if you have a building with little to no value in between two buildings with value, those buildings gives the lesser one value.

Paulette Loughlin - Is in favor the Historic District but also agree's with Councilor Cheney regarding being too specific with certain items.

Susan Fountain - Is very supportive of the Historic District. She stated when she travels she is looking for town's or cities with character and preservation. S. Fountain stated what the district is trying to do is preserve the integrity of the City.

Chairman Bownes thanked the audience for their commitment to this topic and to the City of Laconia.

Councilor Hosmer moved to refer this to the City Council for further consideration with the comments from the City Planner and legal counsel with possible recommendation to the Planning Board, seconded by Councilor Cheney; the ***motion passed with all in favor.***

5.B. **Short-term Rental Proposal**

For the record Councilor Bownes addressed this topic first.

Dean Trefethen, Planning Director, reviewed the Short Term Rental proposal that incorporates feedback from legal counsel dated May 17, 2019. Most of the discussion included the safety of the properties that are being proposed for short term rentals. Discussion was had regarding the notification of the abutters. Councilor Hosmer is concerned with notifying abutters after the applicant has already been approved. Director Trefethen is concerned with how to keep track of the number of rentals per year and the enforcement of the number of rentals. This is a policy decision that will need to be made. Councilor Cheney thought the Weirs would be excluded. Director Trefethen explained the SFR and CFR districts allow Short-Term Rentals and with this proposal it would allow in all zones within the City. Chairman Bownes stated the SFR and CFR zones could be carved out. Director Trefethen feels this is ready to move forward to the Council and Planning Board.

Paulette Loughlin - Stated there are Air BnB's in her neighborhood and she is not happy about it. Chairman Bownes explained the process in which this topic could be adopted and the steps it will

take. Chairman Bownes explained as of right now short term rentals are not allowed in residential neighborhoods and that is why this is being discussed.

Chairman Bownes suggests to take the proposal with Director Trefethen's and Councilor Cheney's concerns, legal counsel's feedback with the exception of the SFR and CFR zones and send this proposal to the City Council.

Councilor Cheney moved to send the proposal submitted with Director Trefethen's concerns, excluding the SFR and CFR Zones, seconded by Councilor Hosmer; the ***motion passed with all in favor.***

6. **Any other business that may come before the Council**

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the committee and hearing no objection, Chairman Bownes adjourned the meeting at 8:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted

David Bownes