

**CITY OF BEVERLY
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

COMMISSION: Historic District Commission
DATE: March 01, 2023
LOCATION: Beverly City Hall, Virtual
MEMBERS PRESENT: William Finch (Chair), Suzanne LaMont (Vice Chair), Caroline Baird Mason, John Leahy, Wendy Pearl, Gregory Howard
MEMBERS ABSENT:
STAFF PRESENT: Victoria Healey, Associate Planner
OTHERS PRESENT:
RECORDER: Michael Ciulla

Call to Order

Chair Finch calls the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

Healey reads a statement for the record that the meeting is being conducted remotely in consistent with Governor Baker's executive order of March 12, 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This executive order allows public bodies to meet remotely with adequately afforded alternative public access.

1. Public Hearing: Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCDs) Letter

Chair Finch describes the letter's purpose as intended for the City Solicitor to re-review the Neighborhood Conservation District enabling ordinance for the establishment of districts in Beverly. Chair Finch asks each member for their thoughts on the letter. Mason thinks it was well written. LaMont notes that the process was started earlier at previous meetings in January 2022. Leahy likes the letter. Chair Finch notes that he thinks the letter's introduction should be clarified to ensure the letter is understood to be an enabling ordinance for setting up the process to establish Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCDs) and is not intended to establish any particular NCDs.

Chair Finch shares his redlines to the letter's beginning section. Mason notes that the goals and purposes of an NCD if enacted are detailed in the letter and that it is a proposal for adopting NCDs in general, not any specific NCDs. Chair Finch and Pearl further clarify that the NCD letter will be sent to the City Solicitor. Pearl notes the broader goals of the enabling ordinance include raising awareness and increasing public education for the City of Beverly's variety of unique and distinctive neighborhoods and areas.

Chair Finch and Pearl propose changes to the letter's introduction to remedy any confusion between what an actual NCD does and what the overarching enabling ordinance does. Mason remarks her desire to keep the purposes section in the letter to explain the philosophy behind enabling NCDs.

Pearl edits the letter to include the following sentence as a precursor to the four purposes of establishing NCDs: "As stated in the ordinance draft provided to your office on [date], the NCD enabling ordinance does not create a district, but instead serves to do the following:".

Pearl notes she will send the edited copy to Healey for her to send to the City Solicitor. The proposed edits from Chair Finch are repeated and confirmed to be present in the amended copy. The commission recalls the first instances of discussing enabling ordinance for NCDs was Fall 2021. Pearl edits the letter to include this time frame and Healey will look up the date it was first received by the City Solicitor. Pearl notes the commission is inviting the City Solicitor to the next HDC meeting on March 22nd, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Pearl asks who the signees of the letter will be aside from the members of the HDC commission and Councilor Estelle Rand, Ward 2 City Councilor. Chair Finch notes Scott Hausman has been informally involved but does not represent Ward 2 which this enabling ordinance mostly affects. LaMont notes Councilor Rand was part of the committee that spearheaded the initiative. Mason asks for the letter to be sent to the City Solicitor to avoid further delays. The commission members agree they feel secure with the edits made. Pearl notes she is going to send the amended letter to Healey.

There being no further comments or questions regarding the matter:

Motion: Mason moves to send the letter as amended to the City Solicitor. Chair Finch seconds. Motion carries unanimous, 6-0.

2. New/Other Business - Gruppe Mural Update

Chair Finch provides a brief update on the Gruppe mural. Chair Finch notes in conversations with Maggie from the conservators in Williamstown and Mike Collins, a joint conclusion has been reached to divide it into 3 equal pieces instead of 4 pieces to avoid cutting the middle span of the bridge portion of the mural. Additionally, Chair Finch remarks it is unknown yet if the mural is going to be hung will all pieces joined together or separated which would impact the framing. Chair Finch further describes requirements for framing dimensions so as to not cover the face of the painting. Chair Finch notes more details will be provided at the next meeting on March 22nd, 2023.

LaMont asks if a written recommendation from the commission will be required regarding the mural and Finch confirms that would be acceptable. Chair Finch notes a decision on the mural is targeted for the end of March 2023. Chair Finch says renders will be available at the next meeting. Chair Finch details the framing dimensions of the mural and describes its construction will include the sheet rock itself along with an aluminum honeycomb along the back. Chair Finch also notes work on the frame will include custom coloring and sizing.

There being no further comments or questions regarding the matter:

3. Adjournment

Motion: Leahy moves to adjourn. LaMont seconds. The motion carries 6-0.

Meeting adjourned 6:30 p.m. Next meeting scheduled 03/22/23.