

**RYE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MEETING
Wednesday, December 6, 2023 – 5:00 p.m.
Rye Town Hall**

Present: *Chair Kaitlyn Coffey, David Choate, James Tegeder, Selectmen’s Rep Bob McGrath, and Alternate Katherine Brown*

Members not Present: *Lydia Tilsley, Karen Stewart, Mae Bradshaw*

I. Call to Order

Chair Coffey called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Seating of Alternates

Alternate Katherine Brown was seated for Lydia Tilsley.

III. Removal of 70 Central Road from the HDC proposed expansion application

Chair Coffey noted that she and Member Choate have been meeting with the Rules and Regulations Committee to work on the expansion plan, as well as the HDC application updates. She and Member Choate have received more information about the by-laws and what is needed to make a change to the ordinance, which would allow the HDC to have a public meeting, not a public hearing, and allow the applicant to not have to pay the \$100 application fee if they are just making a small change. As they have met with Rules and Regulations, they have reviewed the scope of the properties that were selected for the expansion. The idea has been proposed to cut 70 Central Road off the plan and add the Town Green to the plan. Logistically, the property at 70 Central Road is the only one on that side of the road. Also, there has been some apprehension on the homeowners’ part as well. It seems to be a logical solution. She pointed out that the Commission has to take a vote at this meeting, in order to go back to Rules and Regulations with an amended property list.

Member Choate explained that the Moynahans, who own 70 Central Road, have been very active in opposing this for their property; although, they have no intention of selling. They are connected with a lot of families in Rye. Member Choate pointed out that he thought it would be best to acknowledge the fact that the family is against their property being in the expansion and just take them off the list. There would then be seven properties on the list and there would be a much better chance of getting the ordinance passed. He continued that at the Rules and Regulations Committee meeting, Katy Sherman asked why the Town Green was not included on the list. This is the strip of green space in front of the Town Cemetery. Member Choate noted

that he will be going to the Select Board meeting to discuss this with them; however, the Commission has to vote to add it to the expansion list.

There was a question of whether there are any restrictions on land that is in the Historic District. The Commission will need to research this information before bringing it to the Select Board.

Motion by David Choate to delete the property at 70 Central Road from the originally proposed expansion of the District. Seconded by James Tegeder.

Roll Call: Kaitlyn Coffey – in favor; Bob McGrath – in favor; Katherine Brown – in favor; James Tegeder – in favor; David Choate – in favor

Vote: 5-0

Motion passed

Motion by David Choate to add, if possible, the Town Green to the proposed expanded district. Seconded by James Tegeder.

Roll Call: Kaitlyn Coffey – in favor; Bob McGrath – recused; Katherine Brown – in favor; James Tegeder – in favor; David Choate – in favor

Vote: 4-0-1 Recused: Bob McGrath

Motion passed

IV. Other Business

Chair Coffey noted that she and Member Choate are looking into the by-laws versus the ordinance in order to have an understanding on the Historic District's governing document. There just needs to be further clarity, which will help the HDC in moving forward. She noted that what the Commission has just isn't quite working. When the HDC gets applications, it's not fair when it's not clear to the homeowners. It's important to be sure the HDC process is clear, so there are not people who aren't following the procedure.

Member Choate pointed out that the by-laws allow for a work session; however, the Commission can't vote in a work session.

Chair Coffey explained that for big projects, she thinks it would be very appropriate to have a work session. The homeowner would come to the HDC to show the proposal and materials. The HDC would then ask the homeowner to come back to the Commission the following month for a public meeting or a public hearing. She thinks the Commission just needs to iron out the process. By having a public meeting, the Commission could still have the homeowner come in and it would give the HDC an opportunity to vote on the application if they want to. The homeowner may be asked to return to a future meeting with more information or materials; however, a public meeting is noticed so the Commission can vote to give approval.

It was noted that the application changes may not be ready to go on the ballot for 2024, as further information is needed. The intent is to still move forward with the expansion.

Kent and Lori Damon, 71 Central Road, met with the Commission to find out more information about the proposed expansion and what it would mean for their property.

It was noted by Member Choate that the Damons' house is only twelve years old. The other properties that are historic are really the homes that the HDC would like to have purview over. The purpose of the Historic District is to preserve and promote historic structures. He also noted that HDC has guidelines that he will provide to the Damons. A meeting will be held by the Commission sometime in January to give more information about the expansion to owners of the proposed properties. There will also be a presentation given at the Town's Deliberative Session on Saturday, February 3rd.

- **Next meeting: Wednesday, December 13, 2023**

Adjournment

Motion by David Choate to adjourn at 5:30 p.m. Seconded by James Tegeder. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dyana F. Ledger