

**Town of Fitzwilliam
Historic District Commission
Meeting Minutes
August 12, 2021**

Members Present: John Fitzwilliam, Chairman; Bill Davis; Pat Deyo; and Ken Beckwith.

Members Absent: Marcia Camden; and Robyn Bates, Selectman's Representative.

Staff Present: Lori Nolan

Others Present: Richard Marshall; Rik Ekstrom; and JEF Craig.

Call To Order The Chairman opened the meeting at 4:08pm.

Master Plan Steering Committee:

Two members from the Master Plan Steering Committee – Richard Marshall and Rik Ekstrom – gave background of a Master Plan. Mr. Marshall discussed how the Steering Committee would like to have conversations with various stakeholders in town on how the 2012 action steps fit within the new 2021 Master Plan. The Steering Committee is interested in the perspective of the Historic District Commission for their vision moving forward. Pat Deyo asked what major themes or areas need work. Mr. Marshall stated that vision and land use are required chapters, then various recommended chapters. The Steering Committee has reviewed the 2012 Master Plan and will include or expand on priorities as they become known, for example Economic Development. Conversations with stakeholders, forums, and surveys will occur to gather opinions and feedback from the community. The LUC discussed how the goal is for the Master Plan to be a living and breathing document. Bill Davis asked about the timeline and how the Historic District Commission can help. Mr. Marshall stated the goal for a completed draft Master Plan is May 2022. Receiving as much community support and input is wanted. The LUC stated the Master Plan is adopted by the Planning Board and does not require town approval. Mr. Marshall stated they will want to have feedback and open conversations with the Historic District Commission. Mr. Davis explained their role on the Historic District Commission is very subjective and can be construed as telling a homeowner how they can use their land.

Mr. Deyo motioned to table Master Plan conversations to allow more time to discuss. Mr. Fitzwilliam seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Yes: 4 [Fitzwilliam; Davis; Deyo; Beckwith]; No: 0; Abstained: 0

Public Hearing: Review of Historic District Design Guidelines:

Mr. Deyo stated his intent of the guidelines edits is from the perspective of a rookie. He has added technical aspects and cleaned up the text and conversation in general. The Commission reviewed the guidelines. The changes made to the guidelines are enclosed.

At this time, Mr. Davis had to leave the meeting.

Mr. Deyo motioned to continue the public hearing on the review of the Historic District Design Guidelines until September 9, 2021. Mr. Fitzwilliam seconded. Motion passed.

Yes: 3 [Fitzwilliam; Deyo; Beckwith]; No: 0; Abstained: 1 [Davis]

Old Business:

The Commission reviewed and signed the thank you note for Earl Schofield for work completed on his road side fence.

Minutes Review:

Mr. Deyo motioned to defer review of the July 8 minutes until September 9, 2021. Mr. Fitzwilliam seconded. Motion passed.

Yes: 3 [Fitzwilliam; Deyo; Beckwith]; No: 0; Abstained: 1 [Davis]

Mr. Deyo motioned to approve the minutes of May 13, 2021 as written. Mr. Fitzwilliam seconded. Motion passed.

Yes: 3 [Fitzwilliam; Deyo; Beckwith]; No: 0; Abstained: 1 [Davis]

With no further business to discuss, **Mr. Deyo motioned to adjourn. Chairman Fitzwilliam seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

Yes: 3 [Fitzwilliam; Deyo; Beckwith]; No: 0; Abstained: 1 [Davis]

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Nolan
Land Use Coordinator

Minutes approved as written on October 14, 2021.

Introduction

The Town of Fitzwilliam is considered by many visitors and journalists to be one of the **most attractive historic villages** in New England. The Fitzwilliam Historic District Commission oversees some 165 properties. This "built environment" represents a resource that is managed and conserved through the cooperation of property owners and town government.

The Fitzwilliam Historic District Commission is an advisory board chartered to give homeowners a set of criteria and support to guide exterior modifications for restorative and new construction in the Historic District.

The purpose of these guidelines is to give homeowners a set of standards to use in judging the appropriateness of proposed exterior modifications or new construction in the Historic District. These guidelines have been established to set some standards of consistency and provide a degree of predictability.

~~Our "heritage tourism" has been a fact of life for years, and the town continues to attract new residents drawn by Fitzwilliam's charms.~~

~~Much of the town's beauty derives from the large stock of antique and historic buildings, which span the 1760's through the early 1900's.~~

~~The following sections are guidelines for appropriate design. Preservation is not about freezing the past, nor bringing everything back to a particular time period. It is about managing change and growth. Because of the individual and unique aspects of any given proposal, the Historic District Commission will work with the property owner in determining appropriateness.~~

~~We recognize the architectural importance of structures from the 1762 settlement through the present day. We believe that even contemporary structures, such as those built within the last 50 years, play an integral part in the architectural landscape of the District and are as worthy of preservation as those structures built during the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries.~~

The Historic District Commission

The Historic District Commission was created under RSA 673:1 and 673:4. Their purpose is to: preserve structures and places of historic and architectural value; preserve a district that reflects elements of the town's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history; conserve property values; foster civic beauty; and maintain the existing architecture of the district.

The five member Commission is appointed by the Board of Selectmen and meets on the second Thursday of the month at 4 PM when a case is scheduled. A list of Commission members, meeting minutes and Historic District Regulations can be found at www.Fitzwilliam-nh.gov/.

Public meetings are posted in the Town Hall and Post Office for the state required number of days prior to the meeting. Historic District Commission meetings are posted two days ahead of the meeting.

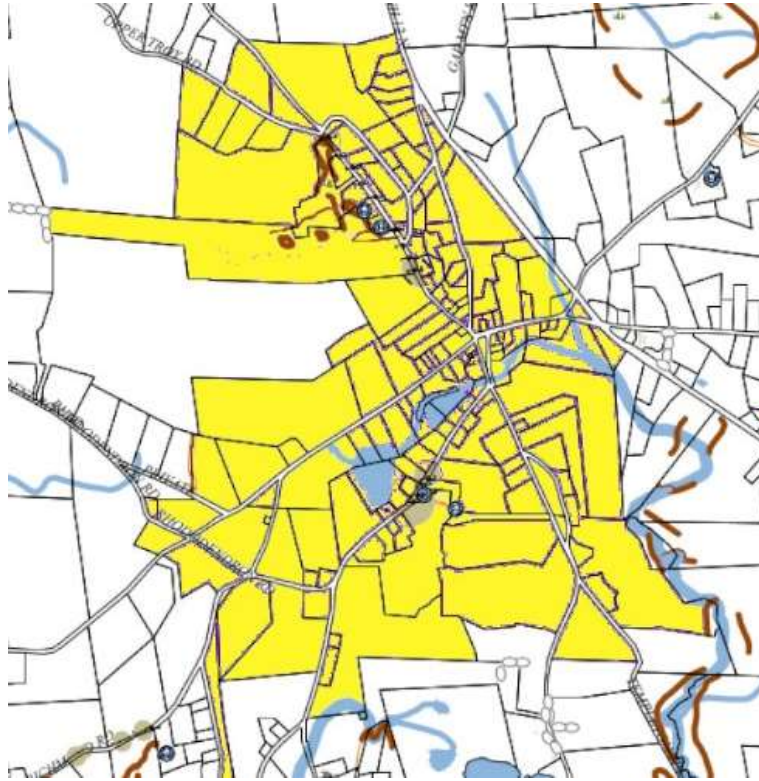
~~If you want to do any exterior construction or alteration work on your property and you live in the Historic District, you must apply to the Historic District Commission. You can get an application at the Land Use Office and schedule a time to meet with the Commission. Your notarized application and any supplementary material must be received in the Land Use Office at least five days before you plan to meet with the Commission to allow time for public notice.~~

~~Following the design guidelines, the Commission will want to know the location, design and materials for your proposed construction, modification, renovation, restoration or addition. The plan should show all boundaries, setbacks, rights of way and type of exterior materials to be used.~~

~~For more information or an application, please call the Land Use Office, Town Hall, 603-585-9119 or email at fitzlanduse@ptenh.net.~~

The Historic District Boundaries

Current boundaries of the Historic District were set at the annual town meeting in March 1992. The boundary lines confine the District primarily to the village center. The boundary extends about five miles West of NH Route 12, and three miles North and South of NH Route 119 West.



Homeowners Process for Historic District Construction

For exterior restoration, construction or alterations to your property:

1. **Obtain** an application at the Land Use Office at the Town Hall;
2. Schedule a meeting with the Commission;
3. Append supplementary documentation to include: building changes or additions, materials boundaries, setbacks, rights-of-way and other relevant information;
4. Provide documents to Land Use Office at least five days before your scheduled meeting.
5. ~~Get your application notarized~~

For more information or an application, please call the Land Use Office, Town Hall, 603-585-9119 or email at fitzlanduse@fitzwilliam-nh.gov.

Preservation Guidelines

A. Principles for Historic Preservation

1. Maintain, repair and or replicate: features, finishes, and materials that characterize the visual look and content of the current property design.
2. Addition(s) or exterior alteration(s) compliment the historic look and materials that characterize the property. The proposed new work shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features.
3. New adjacent construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property is maintained.

Taken from the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

- ~~1. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. Removal of historic materials or alteration of features that characterize a property shall be avoided.~~
- ~~2. Most properties change over time. Those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.~~
- ~~3. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.~~
- ~~4. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.~~

B. Building Exterior

~~Introducing new features such as window or door openings, bays, vents, balconies, or chimneys to character defining exterior walls is only appropriate if they will not compromise the architectural integrity of the building. It is not appropriate to remove or cover any material detail associated with exterior walls, including decorative shingles, panels, brackets and corner boards, unless an accurate restoration requires it.~~

1. **Clapboards.** Repair or replace with wood siding with the same profile and style. Repair historic wooden features using recognized preservation methods for patching, consolidating, splicing and reinforcing. Synthetic siding, such as vinyl or aluminum is not an acceptable substitute for wood clapboards.

~~Resurfacing a wooden building with synthetic siding materials, such as aluminum or vinyl, is usually a short sighted solution to a maintenance problem. In fact, these newer materials may actually hide signs of damage or deterioration, allowing rot to go undetected, thereby preventing timely repair. Synthetic sidings conceal the historic fabric of the building and may remove or destroy the materials and craftsmanship that reflect America's cultural heritage.~~

2. **Decorative wood detail.** Maintain and repair or replace with items that duplicate the original in material, style, size and configuration.
3. **Paint.** Use colors found in a **recognized** 'historic color' palette to complement the age and style of the structure. Look to the village and surrounding buildings for ideas. Color changes require Historic District Commission approval.

~~Painting can make a dramatic improvement to an historic building. Repaint wooden surfaces in colors that are appropriate to the historic district structure. Although an exterior paint job is not an irreversible change to a building it is a highly visible and relatively expensive one, so a careful study of the style of the building, the surrounding streetscape and the region's climatic conditions is needed. Please supply color samples with your application to the Historic District Commission. Paint colors can be found in an 'historic color' palette to complement the age and style of the structure.~~

4. **Porches and Decks.** Maintain the look, character and content of original design. Examples include: keep an unscreened porch open, use traditional materials like cedar, repair/replace columns and railings compatible with the historic character of the houses. Apply for additions or changes to original design.

~~Follow historic porch design. For new construction use a design compatible with historic character of the house. Locate new decks off secondary elevations and paint to match porch and house trim. Enclosing an existing porch is generally inappropriate. Screening in a traditionally open porch requires the prior approval of the Historic District Commission. Materials used to build porch or deck walls starting at the level of the main building floor should be compatible with those of the main building. Use of cedar or redwood lumber is recommended, but whatever wood is used should be finished or painted. Replacement features such as columns and railings should duplicate historic features. Porch steps should have solid risers.~~

5. **Roof.** Repair and maintenance of existing roofing materials, such as slate. When replacement is necessary, the material should complement the structure's age and style. Please submit examples of the roofing material with your application.

~~Changing existing roofing material and/or color requires Commission approval. Where possible, we encourage the repair and maintenance of existing roofing materials, such as slate.~~

6. **Roof features.** Adds or changes to the roof structure that complement the building historical look and feel may be permitted when approved by the town boards.

~~It is not appropriate to introduce new roof features such as skylights, dormers or vents if they will compromise the historic roof design, or damage character-defining roof materials or the character of the historic district. It is not appropriate to install air conditioners, solar collectors, antennas, skylights or mechanical equipment in locations that alter character-defining roofs or on roof slopes prominently visible from the street. Any satellite dish, antenna or mast no longer in use must be removed.~~

7. **Roof used for non-Historical items.** Ideally, all historical building roofs are free of air conditioners, solar collectors, antennas, skylights, windmills, electric boxes, signage and or other sundry items. Exceptions and considerations may be approved when one or more criteria are met **and reviewed by the Historic District Commission.**

- Not visible from street view **and/or abutters;**
- Designed to blend into the surroundings (e.g. Tesla Solar shingles);
- Inconspicuous in size (e.g. Satellite under 36 inches);
- Approved variance by the Zoning Board of Adjustment;