

FINAL

**LEBANON HERITAGE COMMISSION
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
LEBANONNH.GOV/LIVE
WEDNESDAY MARCH 12, 2025 6:00 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Nicole Ford Burley (Chair and City Historian), Matt Smith (Vice Chair), Devin Wilkie (City Council Rep), Jeremy Rutter (Planning Board Rep.), Claire Geno (alt)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Karen Zook (Alt. Council Rep)

STAFF PRESENT: Catheryn Hembree (Associate Planner, Planning Department),

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ford Burley called the meeting to order at 6:01pm. Ms. Hembree reviewed the City's meeting in-person and REMOTE attendance policies and procedures.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 12, 2025

Amendments: Page 2, Line 21: Delete first "he"
Page 2, Line 35: Edit to read "the project does not fall within the scope of the Commission"
Page 2, Line 45: Add "ongoing" before "permission"
Page 3, Line 8: Add "in another location"
Page 3: Edit name to "Ben Van Vliet" throughout
Page 3, Line 32: Add "former Kendrick-Wood House"
Page 3, Line 42: Change to "Devin"

Chair Ford Burley noted that Ms. Geno was present as a new alternate member of the Commission and would not participate in the voting at the meeting.

A MOTION was made by Jeremy Rutter to approve the February 12, 2025 Meeting Minutes as amended. The MOTION was seconded by Matt Smith.

**** The vote on the MOTION was approved (4-0).***

3. PUBLIC REVIEW

None

4. STUDY ITEMS

A. Dana House Future

Chair Ford Burley said Dana House has been removed from the Public Works budget this year. Mr. Smith said it is unlikely that funding would be restored. He said the group should discuss a possible long-term solution. Ms. Hembree noted there is just under \$2,000 left in the Budget for “Building Improvements” for Dana House, and said City Custodian Rich Adams had several suggestions that the funds could be used for. She explained that these funds are not part of the Dana House Trust funds. Ms. Hembree said some furniture and pieces of the loom were left in Dana House. Chair Ford Burley said all the other artifacts have been removed to the Carter House. The group discussed using the funds to help preserve the loom. Chair Ford Burley said she would try to determine who donated the loom.

Dr. Rutter asked about the status of the negotiations between the SAU 88 (which owns the land) and the City. Ms. Hembree said she would ascertain the status. Chair Ford Burley said the City would probably enter into a land swap with the SAU to swap the land behind Dana House (which is owned by the City) with the land upon which Dana House is located, so (ultimately) the City would own Dana House and the land it sits on.

Chair Ford Burley said she will reconnect with Andrew Cushing of the NH Preservation Alliance to ask him to meet with the Heritage Commission to discuss possibly having a developer take over Dana House as a historic structure, rehabilitate it, and then repurpose it into housing. Mr. Smith said it would be good to have a recommendation about the future of Dana House before budget season.

Mr. Smith asked the group if they felt returning Dana House to a residential home is still the best option. Dr. Rutter said if no developer is willing to take it, he suggested the City get rid of it because it is not doing any good for the City. Chair Ford Burley said the worst-case scenario would be for the City to tear it down and turn the property into City-owned housing. She said she thought public opinion would not be in favor of tearing it down, but that may not translate into financial support.

The group discussed what would happen if Dana House was turned over to a developer. Chair Ford Burley said a preservation easement could put boundaries on what a developer could do to the structure. She also said a 99-year lease is another option.

Chair Ford Burley said she would reach out to Mr. Cushing and ask him to come to a future meeting to speak on what options the Commission may have. Mr. Smith asked her to ask for other examples of 99-year-lease situations so the Commission can see how that might work for Dana House.

B. Master Plan Chapter Update

Chair Ford Burley said she reviewed the 11C - Existing Conditions and Trends Chapter and Historical Organizations sections and suggested some sections could be rearranged. The group discussed the structure of the chapter and what would be most useful to add to the chapter.

The following suggestions were made:

- Separate Historic Inventories and Districts into distinct sections
- Add Districts to the Downtown Revitalization section

The group discussed possible edits to Section 11E – Future Challenges & Opportunities

- Mention that Colburn Park is where two original roads crossed in timeline of City
- Add the historic fires that have occurred in Lebanon
- Add representative structures to timeline
- Look for new historic landmarks to represent the history of the City
- Add sites of past covered bridges or mills to Section 11D4 - Historic Buildings
- Add Kendrick-Wood House to list of buildings in Section 11C4 – Downtown Revitalization
- Cross-reference other sections to refer to maps and other information for context
- Add historic maps directly to the section as opposed to an index at the back of the plan
- Add images of informational signs (ex: proposed signs for the Rail Trail)

Dr. Rutter said he would review and attempt restructuring portions of Sections 11C and 11D. Mr. Wilkie suggested they create categories for each of the subcategories in Section 11D and create subcategories for Existing Conditions and Future Opportunities when appropriate. Mr. Wilkie said he would work on restructuring Historic Districts and pulling that out of the Existing Conditions section.

The group discussed a brief outline of topics:

- I. Sections 11A & 11B would remain as an Introduction
- II. Section 11C History of Lebanon
 - A. Key Events / Areas that have brought City where it is today
 - i. Transportation
 - ii. Fires
 - B. Historic Districts
 - i. Existing Conditions
 - ii. Future Challenges
 - C. Historic Buildings
 - D. Historic Organizations
 - E. Other Historic Elements
 - i. Transportation / Infrastructure
 - ii. Industries
 - iii. Natural Resources
 - F. Recreational Opportunities

Chair Ford Burley suggested the Historic Education, Historic Tools, Programs, Partnerships, Tourism sections could be added as an additional category or absorbed into other sections.

The group discussed the history of the City's recreational opportunities, including the 100 years of the Lebanon Outing Club and the fact that the Opera House shares a structure with City Hall.

Mr. Wilkie suggested the redrafting should be done by October (before budget season). Chair Ford Burley asked the group to think about images that could be added to the Chapter.

G. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Standing Reports from other Commissions/Boards

Dr. Rutter said discussions with the Planning Board about the River Park project continue.

Chair Ford Burley said the project team for the development project at the former Densmore Brickyard has received its demolition permit so the buildings will be coming down. She said the team has documented the project photographically. She said she would be meeting with them to ensure the current site has been satisfactorily documented. Mr. Smith said all the trees have been taken down and access roads are being built.

Ms. Hembree said the Heritage Commission will probably be reviewing a project at 3 Campbell Street where office space is being converted into apartments. She said the project involves changing some exterior windows into egress routes, which will require review by the Commission.

Chair Ford Burley said she was contacted by an architectural historian regarding a quote for an interpretive panel proposed for the Jones Crossing intersection on Mascoma Street.

H. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Future of Dana House
- Continuing Master Plan Rewrite

I. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Ford Burley adjourned the meeting at 7:07pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Paula Roux
Recording Secretary