

FINAL

**LEBANON HERITAGE COMMISSION
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
LEBANONNH.GOV/LIVE
WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 11, 2026 6:00 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Nicole Ford Burley (Chair and City Historian), Matt Smith (Vice Chair), Brian Ware, Nicole Dittrich, Roxanne Benzel (REMOTE), Wes Achord (Planning Board Representative)

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 6:00pm. Ms. Hembree reviewed the City's meeting in-person and REMOTE attendance policies and procedures.

Chair Ford Burley said

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 14, 2026

Amendment: Remove Wes Achord from attendees and add his name to Members Absent.

A MOTION was made by Roxanne Benzel to approve the January 14, 2026 Meeting Minutes as amended. The MOTION was seconded by Matt Smith.

** The MOTION was approved (5-0 with Achord abstaining).*

3. PUBLIC REVIEW - None

4. STUDY ITEMS

Chair Ford Burley said they would discuss **Item 4D (Dana House Update)** and **Item 5B Soldiers Memorial Building** first, which is out of the order of the agenda.

D. Standing Dana House Update

City Custodian Rich Adams reported that the power was turned back on in Dana House earlier this month. He said ground water had been seeping into the annex. He said the dehumidifiers have not been turned on. He noted that the basement is dry and not retaining water.

Mr. Adams said minor damage is evident to the exterior of the property. The group discussed the state of the Dana House and what maintenance might be done once the weather gets warmer. Chair Ford Burley gave an overview of the land swap that has been proposed between the City and the SAU88 School District. The group discussed whether lead paint testing had been done on the Dana House.

5B Soldiers Memorial Building

Mr. Adams said the City does not have a ramp and the restrooms/staircases are not accessible. He said a plan is underway to make the Soldiers Memorial Building accessible to persons with mobility issues. Chair Ford Burley said Ms. Rebecca Owens (who writes grants for the City) had said the project may be eligible for the Moose Plate grant funds. She said the funds are not enough to make the building fully accessible but might be enough to build a ramp. Chair FB said the Dana House is not eligible for the National Registry of Historic Places (because it has not been on its location for 50 or more years), but the Soldiers Memorial Building is part of the Historic District.

Mr. Ware said he talked to the Marine Reserve group, who is using the building for monthly meetings. He suggested perhaps a member of the Marine Reserve could be at the next Open House to provide visitors with more information about the artifacts in the building. The group discussed other SMEs who could be present at the Open Houses.

The group discussed how many people needed to be present as guardians or docents when visitors were present at the Soldiers Memorial Building. Chair Ford Burley said the Guardian is looking for a Deputy Guardian who can help open the building to visitors. Chair Ford Burley suggested the Commission speak with the Guardian about having additional hosts/docents at the facility.

Ms. Hembree said she would forward a document from Ms. Owens that outlines the funding that has already been spent on the building.

B. Historic District Highway Signs

Chair Ford Burley gave an overview of the process to apply for a sign, which could commemorate a person, a place, or a structure, for educational purposes. Chair Ford Burley asked members to continue to think of locations to be discussed at a future meeting.

C. 250th Anniversary

Ms. Benzel said the committee is meeting tomorrow at noon to discuss plans.

A. Barn Tax Incentive Program (RSA 79D)

Ms. Dittrich said she crafted a flyer to describe the program. She said she would send it to all the members. She asked Commission members to provide their input/comments. The group discussed whether the information could be out in time for people to apply for the program to meet the April 15, 2026 deadline for applications. The group discussed whether this year could be a year to inform barn owners in preparation for application for next year. The group agreed to publicize the fact that information about the program is available (and provide contact information for interested parties) and plan to mail the flyer to barn owners next year.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Master Plan Chapter with Planning Board Meeting Rescheduled

Chair Ford Burley said the proposed revised Historic Master Plan chapter will be discussed at the February 23, 2026 Planning Board meeting.

C. Public School Engagement

Mr. Smith and Ms. Dittrich said they did not have an update on this item at this time. The group discussed whether a local history program could be presented at one or more of the area summer camps.

D. Master Plan Action Items

Chair FB noted the Master Plan Action Items that have already been discussed at this meeting and suggested several other items could be discussed during future meetings.

E. Pattern Zones

Ms. Hembree said a property owner is presenting a design for pattern housing for a vacant lot on Maple Street in West Lebanon. She asked the members to review the Zoning Board ordinance and familiarize themselves with what the Heritage Commission is responsible for related to Pattern Zoning (exterior/architectural review). Chair Ford Burley said there is a study of the Maple Street neighborhood online.

Mr. Achord discussed the recent Planning Board discussion about preservation of the smokestack at the Woolen Mill project in Lebanon. He suggested the Heritage Commission could provide recommendations to the Planning Board similar to what was provided for the Brickyard Project / kiln preservation last year.

A MOTION was made by Matt Smith to extend the meeting to 7:40pm. The MOTION was seconded by Wes Achord.

**** The MOTION was approved (6-0).***

Mr. Achord read the language for the condition of approval for the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the kiln preservation for the Brickyard project as an example of what the Commission could provide for the Woolen Mill project / smokestack preservation:

“The Heritage Commission recommended that the applicant shall adequately document the structure and the current condition of the kilns, the applicant and subsequent property owner shall make reasonable efforts to maintain the structural integrity of the kilns...in perpetuity. The applicant and any subsequent property owner shall allow and maintain pedestrian access to the kiln area. In collaboration with the City, the applicant shall produce interpretive materials to document the history of the site and educate the public.”

Mr. Achord said the Planning Board also requested the applicant of the Woolen Mill project to include signage to indicate the areas of the site that are open to the public. He said this is another opportunity to provide information to the public about the historic aspects of the site.

A MOTION was made by Roxanne Benzel that the Heritage Commission recommends to the Lebanon Planning Board that a condition of approval be added to the Woolen Mill project that the applicant shall adequately document the structure and the current condition of the smokestack. The applicant and subsequent property owner shall make reasonable efforts to maintain the structural integrity of the smokestack in perpetuity. The applicant and any subsequent property owner shall allow and maintain pedestrian access to the area. In collaboration with the City, the applicant shall produce signage to educate the public.

The MOTION was seconded by Matt Smith

**** The MOTION was approved (5-0 with Ware abstaining).***

Roxanne Benzel said she is traveling on business and that is why she is attending remotely.

6. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC – None

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Ford Burley adjourned the meeting at 7:47pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Paula Roux
Recording Secretary