

FINAL

**LEBANON HERITAGE COMMISSION
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
LEBANONNH.GOV/LIVE
WEDNESDAY JUNE 10, 2026 6:00 PM**

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Laurel Stavis (Alt.)

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.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. None **

3. PUBLIC REVIEW

A. None

4. STUDY ITEMS

A. Landmark Houses 2025 [Landmark Designation Program FAQ](#)

Chair Ford Burley started this evening's meeting with the topic of the Landmark Designation Program which they had talked about earlier this year. Do they want to do a round of Landmark Designations this year?

Ms. Benzel asked about the Beehive House in West Lebanon. Ms. Hembree said there is a new owner (MM Holdings, Boston, MA) and she will be communicating with them and provide updates to this commission. It is already designated as a Landmark (nominated in 2002, #56 on their master list) and if it is well preserved, this location might be a good candidate for a Preservation Award if they adopt a Preservation Award Program.

Chair Ford Burley asked in terms of historic landmarks, do they want to award any this year? She has not heard of any residents asking about this program. She suggested they invest some energy in some of the existing landmarks, for possible State designations.

Ms. Dittrich said that she is in support of helping people and/or organizations with State designations and putting a hold on City designations for now. She cited the Peck homestead as a possible candidate. The last round the City participated in was 2024.

Ms. Hembree shared the spreadsheet of properties that have Landmark Designations. There are 100 on this list.

Ms. Benzel likes the idea of evaluating those who have expressed interest in recognition, City, State, or National, realizing that they would need to sort through the current data available on these 100 properties.

Chair Ford Burley said that the only State register the City has is the Dana House, which carries local benefits. She is open to the idea of outreach to gauge the interest of property owners but is hesitant for the Heritage Commission to commit to do the work for the applications as it is a big lift and would probably require hiring consultants, which has historically been expensive. This is not an option.

Vice Chair Smith asked if anyone has suggestions or recommendation on properties that should be recognized; they have three plaques available. Most members were not familiar with specific properties. Ms. Benzel suggested the Rail Trail, since these landmarks do not have to be buildings. Vice Chair Smith suggested that in lieu of a plaque for the Rail Trail, a mural would be appropriate and work well for this setting within the tunnel on the Rail Trail. He also understands that it is currently being renovated so perhaps it would be ideal to wait until that is completed.

Vice Chair Smith suggested 29 Fairview Avenue, Lebanon as a great candidate for a Landmark award; it does not need to be “historic” per se. This home has been owned by a local architect since 1984.

The Woolen Mill would be an excellent candidate for an award, but it was agreed that they want to see when and how the work on a long ago proposed project proceeds, if in fact it does.

Chair Ford Burley suggested they all familiarize themselves with the existing Landmark list and then make a decision at their next meeting about whether or not they move forward this year with any or all of the following three possibilities they discussed –

- 29 Fairview Avenue
- The Rail Trail
- The Riverdale Ticket Booth (it was the ticket booth for the Racetrack)

They can also conduct an outreach to property owners and get some Lebanon properties on the State and/or National Register. It was agreed they will continue to discuss these options at their next meeting.

B. Soldiers Memorial Update

Ms. Hembree said that the surveyor is coming tomorrow to begin the survey. There will be an Open House at the Soldiers Memorial on July 2nd and the Heritage Commission will serve as docents on this date; they need at least 3-4 Heritage members during the hours of 4-6PM.

Also, they decided on two additional Open Houses for Thursday, August 6th, and Thursday, September 3rd. Chair Ford Burley can be at both of these and Ms. Benzel is interested as well.

Ms. Hembree will coordinate with City staff so that they will have representation as well.

C. Seven to Save Nominations

This is a public relations campaign by the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance for NH landmark sites in need of serious attention. The applications for any nominations will need to be submitted this summer; the date will be announced soon. The property owner needs to nominate their property. The Dana House, the building that houses Salt Hill (in need of repointing) and Seminary Hill (owned by the School District) and the Whipple block along with The Soldiers Memorial were all posed as candidates.

Chair Ford Burley asked what the end goal would be for the Dana House?

Mr. Achord said that it would be prudent to nominate the Dana House. It would require a lot of funds to restore it but could be worth the effort.

It was agreed that Seminary Hill School is not as pressing as the other locations they are considering, nevertheless they will keep it on their radar for future consideration.

There would be a clear end goal with the Soldiers Memorial which is a wonderful property in our community, with a solid known history and lots of opportunity there. They are in agreement with the Seven to Save program and there was also a consensus that they will pick The Soldiers Memorial for this year.

Vice Chair Smith will be participating in a round table event with the Preservation Alliance in approximately two weeks. He will provide an update after that session.

Chair Ford Burley will keep abreast of when the application window opens.

D. Preservation Awards

This will be discussed in a future meeting and is part of their Master Chapter.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Updates from Other Boards

Ms. Benzel gave an update on the July 4th parade and said they are firming up the last of the planning details. Children on bikes will be participating in the parade featured along with the Gear Shifters, mountain bikers and walkers. They also welcome business owners to promote

their businesses by using banners on their vehicles. They have a plan B in case they get more participants than are currently expected.

- B. Revotes from May 13th, 2026 meeting: Alternate Roxanne Benzel should not have voted in that meeting so today the Heritage Commission revoted on the following:

Ms. Dittrich MOVED to award a Certificate of Approval with the understanding the Heritage Commission will be provided some visualization of the porch design for the fronts of these houses.

Seconded by Mr. Achord

****The MOTION was approved (4-1) Vice Chair Smith opposed based on the design with no windows on one side of the house and the lack of a porch railing.***

Vice Chair Smith MOVED to release \$2,500 to \$3,000 to pay for a survey of the Soldiers Memorial Building.

Seconded by Mr. Ware.

****The MOTION was approved (5-0)***

6. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC - None

7. FUTURE AGENDA

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Ford Burley adjourned the meeting at 7:15PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Cinda Mersel
Recording Secretary

**** Minutes for May 13, 2026 meeting were submitted by Rec Sec on 5/21/26**