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**Northbridge Historical Commission**

**Minutes of Meeting June 28, 2023 - DRAFT**

**Present:** Ken Warchol, Chairperson, Christine Johnson, Vice-Chairperson, Caryn Gagner, David Blauvelt, Secretary, David Potty, James Lurgio

**Absent:** Mark DeWeerd

1.0 Meeting was called to order at 7 PM by Ken Warchol, Chairperson at 7 PM. He introduced James Lurgio, recently appointed member. James provided a brief bio. The NHC is now full, with 7 members marking the first time in 11 years.

2.0 *Motion by Ken Warchol "To approve the Minutes of May 24, 2023. Seconded by David Potty. Motion carried unanimously.*

3.0 Ken Warchol provides an update on the Cotton Mill Apartments - Window Replacement Project. Each of the contractors has proposed a replacement option using a color matched vinyl product to the existing structure. Ken and Christine met with two of the three possible bidders on site and were comfortable with the design and color match of the vinyl.

*Motion made by Ken Warchol "To grant approval by the Northbridge Historical Commission for the use of a wood or vinyl replacement product for the window replacement at the Cotton Mill Apartment, final selection at the discretion of the Cotton Mill Apartment management"* Seconded by Dave Potty. Motion carried unanimously.

4.0 Christine provided an update on the potential preservation of the Fletcher House and a proposed CPC application. She invited NHC members to participate in the process. The application, which is for the preservation of the Fletcher House will be submitted by the Historical Society and is due to CPC by October 1. The request to access CPC funds will be paid via the Town Warrant process at the spring meeting. Effort will be made to secure matching grants and the overall project may require securing several grants as the process unfolds to complete the preservation.

David Blauvelt provided an outhouse on the removal of the "outhouse" grant the NHS at its last meeting. Several commission members were present along with NHS members to witness and direct the removal and to ensure the retention of three windows and the main door which were identified as potentially historically significant. An archaeology dig of the Fletcher Outhouse footprint is planned for the fall of 2023.

5.0 Christine provided an overview of the June historical events by the NHS in collaboration with the NHC. Two tours were conducted in May/June consisting of a trolley tour of Northbridge and Fletcher House and a first time photographic presentation by Bob Evans at the Town Hall, entitled "A Snapshot in Time". All events were at capacity and we received very

positive feedback. Christine acknowledged the support of the Town Manager's office in accommodating the photo presentation and allowing access to the Town Hall. Plans are underway for additional tours and presentations in the Fall and the possibility of a Cultural Arts combined with Historical Research event to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution and the impact it had on Northbridge. Donations received will go to preserve the Fletcher House.

The NHC will continue to explore the creation of a new tour map of Northbridge which includes all of the villages and the new Riverwalk. Funding for this has been made available to the NHC through ARRPA funds.

6.0 The calendar of meetings for FY 24 was approved and supports in-person and ZOOM formats. All meetings are open to the public. Meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday at 7 PM and scheduled for 9/27/23 (in-person), 11/29/23 (hybrid), 1/24 (hybrid), 3/27/24 (hybrid), 5/29/24 (in-person). Time sensitive matters may require additional meetings.

*Motion made by Dave Poty "To Approve the Northbridge Historical Commission's meeting calendar for FY 24 as proposed" Seconded by Caryn Gagner. Motion carried unanimously.*

7.0 James Lurgio inquired as to the status of the Watson Farm, which was sold to a private buyer last year. Additional discussion took place regarding other potential historical properties in the town such as the Stone School property. Ken informed the NHC that age is not the only qualifier to determine whether a home is historically significant or eligible for preservation grant funding.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM

Respectfully submitted by,

David Blauvelt, NHC Secretary