

Town of Bedford
Historic District Commission Minutes
February 6, 2024

A meeting of the Bedford Historic District Commission was held on Tuesday, February 6, at the BCTV meeting room at 10 Meetinghouse Road, Bedford. Present were Kelly Tope (Chair), Minn Conant (alternate), Claire Day (alternate), David Clark (member), Michael Strand (Town Council Representative), Steve Clough, (Planning Board liaison), Elaine Tefft (member), Kathleen Ports (Conservation Planner). Absent were Lori Radke (Town Council Representative and Vice Chair) and Lisa Muskat (member).

I. Call to Order and Roll Call and Acceptance of Agenda

Chair Tope called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. She asked the Board members to introduce themselves and appointed Minn Conant and Michael Strand to vote this evening. Ms. Ports reviewed the agenda. Chair Tope asked if anyone would like to approve or amend the agenda.

MOTION: Ms. Tefft moved to accept the agenda. Mr. Clark seconded the motion.
Vote taken: All in Favor – unanimous – Motion carries.

II. Old Business: None

III. New Business:

Chair Tope stated as a note for the record, this is a request for a nonbinding preapplication discussion. So, we will not have a vote tonight. If anyone has any comments, we can make comments from the Commission. Public comments are at our discretion. There's nobody here, but we will take public comment.

1. **Roxo Family Trust, Nathaniel and Megan Roxo, Trustees** - Request for a non-binding, pre-application discussion on the proposed construction of a 40' x 40' garage at 278 Wallace Road, Lot 20-89-01.

Mr. Peter Santerre and Mr. Nathaniel Roxo presented: I'm Peter Santerre. I'm the builder. I'm Nathaniel Roxo. I'm the homeowner. Mr. Santerre said I think it's outlined pretty well in the packet here, but basically, it's just a detached 40 by 40 three-bay garage that will sit pretty close to the existing Briar Street driveway and have some living space above for kind of like a man cave area or a teenage hangout area. We're going to definitely have ½ bath in there and a slop sink in the garage area. So, it will be plumbed, electrical, obviously. Nate works on vehicles, so he needs the space to work on the vehicles that he has as well as his kids getting older and having vehicles and having a safe place to store them. And then the living space, obviously, is also a safe space for the children and to store other things. So that's basically what it is. I mean, that sums it up pretty

well. I don't know if we just want to go to some questions or did you want to add anything? Mr. Roxo replied no, I guess the only other thing is I was at the Department of Public Works and my original plan was I wanted to put it in the back of my lot, but they wouldn't give me another curb cut. So, the space that we're outlining here is really the only feasible space to put it and we're going to meet all setbacks, right? And there shouldn't be any variances associated with it. Mr. Santerre said the other plus, in my opinion, for where we're placing it is, it minimizes any additional asphalt. So there's no extra curb cut or extra driveway. It comes right off of the existing driveway and there's no loss of greenery or anything like that. Which we like.

Chair Tope said OK, we can start then with questions from the Commission. Elaine, would you like to start? We usually start this way and I know you're generally waiting. Ms. Tefft replied thank you. Actually, I do have some questions. And I'm not sure—I'm sort of torn between being very impressed that you have a car collection. How many cars roughly? Ballpark... Mr. Roxo answered currently I've got 7. Ms. Tefft said oh, so that would fit. Mr. Roxo replied that would fit my vehicles, yes. Plus my kids' go carts, my lawnmower, my John Deere. Ms. Tefft said you said he liked to work on cars and there'll be plumbing, wiring and all of that. Are you going to have one of those pits where you can drive the vehicle and you can go... Mr. Roxo said no. Ms. Tefft said I'm not sure what they're called. Mr. Santerre said I think they're just called pits. I don't know.

Ms. Tefft continued I drove by the other day. Is that swimming pool in your yard? Mr. Roxo replied no, that swimming pool was filled in. Ms. Tefft said oh, because there was a fence. I think it was your house. Mr. Roxo said yes mine's got the vinyl fence that goes around it, right? There was a swimming pool. It got filled in at some point. I don't know when. Ms. Tefft said well, I didn't know if you were going to put it there—if you wanted to put the building where that pool was or more forward. Mr. Roxo replied that would be behind my house and right now I've got a small shed there and I've got all my planters that I built during COVID, so I wouldn't want to tear those down. It doesn't make sense for me to build a garage behind the house. It would be easier access for the vehicles.

Ms. Ports said excuse me. Sorry to interrupt. Is there a request over there, you guys? Mr. Clark said yes, for an architectural rendering so we can visualize it. Mr. Santerre replied yes, sorry. Mr. Clark asked can you go back to that last screen? Mr. Santerre replied sure. Mr. Clark said, so what you're saying is that the proposal is for this area right up here? Mr. Santerre replied to the left of that driveway with the black car in it. Mr. Clark asked on the top? Mr. Roxo replied no. Mr. Clark said oh! To the left of that? Mr. Santerre replied yes. So, where that tree is. Mr. Clark asked inside that fence? Mr. Roxo replied you can see the planters in the shed there. So it would be on the on the side of that towards Briar Road. Mr. Santerre said yeah. So we'll have a 35-foot setback from Briar Road. Mr. Clark said OK. Thank you very much. And then on to the architectural rendering? Mr. Santerre said oh, yes.

Ms. Tefft asked do you mind if I finish with my questions, David? Ms. Ports said I just wanted them to have the rendering up. Ms. Tefft said yes, I know. Mr. Clark said I'm very sorry. Go ahead.

Ms. Tefft asked how high is the building going to be in feet? Mr. Santerre replied actually let me see if that's on the drawing. Ms. Tefft added or proposed. Is it going to be higher than the peak of

the house? Mr. Santerre replied yes because the house is a ranch with a very low slope roof. So the width of the garage and the higher pitch to more properly shed snow and stuff, is going to be a little taller. Ms. Tefft said I don't know how tall your house is. So, how tall would you say? Mr. Roxo replied it's not very tall. It's got the two-car garage under right there. Ms. Tefft said 20 by 40 by... Mr. Santerre answered so from this picture here—because there's different levels, right? So the driveway from Wallace is a little bit lower than the driveway from Briar, which is a little lower than the backyard. So there's kind of a multiple levels there, but the elevation we're looking at right now, you're looking at about an 8-foot garage with about an 8-foot main story and maybe 6—so 22 feet from that driveway right there. So, and that's the Wallace side? Mr. Roxo said yes. Mr. Santerre confirmed that's the Wallace side. So from the asphalt of the new garage, we're probably going to be more like 27-28, where that's 22, but it's also on a different type of landscape.

Ms. Tefft said I saw the three doors. Is that going to be on the same plane that those two doors are? It's not going to be like door, door, door, door, door? Mr. Santerre replied no. If we were to imagine this is looking at the house from Wallace, the new structure is going to be in the back left corner of what you're looking at right now. Ms. Tefft asked where those little baby three windows are? Mr. Santerre replied no. Behind the entire house. It's going to be behind the entire house to the left. Ms. Tefft said so we're not going to see it. Mr. Santerre confirmed you're not going to really see it from Wallace, yes. If you were to back away and go to the left, there's nothing in your way. You'd be able to see it. Ms. Tefft said I think one of the things that I'm very concerned about is the size of it because the garage with, you know, something on the 2nd floor. It's going to be about the same square footage as the house. Mr. Santerre replied I'm not familiar with the square footage. Ms. Tefft said well, 40 by 40? Mr. Roxo said yes, it's going to be roughly the same square footage as the house. The house is fairly small. Ms. Tefft said well, allegedly the house is 1,666 square feet. I peeked.

Ms. Ports said I believe the living space is a little bit more than that in the house. Ms. Tefft said and there will be living space on the second floor of the garage. too. Mr. Santerre said yes, but the footprint is roughly... Ms. Tefft said the footprint is what I'm talking about. Because I knew when you were going to have a 27-foot-high ceiling. But cubic feet is different thing than square feet, I'm pretty sure. Mr. Santerre replied yes, so 27 feet or so is to the top of the ridge, like the actual peak of the entire building. So yeah, roughly a similar footprint as the existing house. But again, I mean the existing house is small, hence the necessity for expansion. Oh, and so do we want to get to the actual picture of the...

Ms. Tefft said whoops, wait a minute. Can you spring that down a smidge? Mr. Santerre asked to my contact? I wanted to see the printed part. I don't need your phone numbers but thank you for the offer. Mr. Santerre asked just to this part? So the picture that we were looking at was number... Ms. Tefft said so it's going to be sort of on Briar Road. Mr. Santerre replied yeah. More on Briar, yes. Ms. Tefft said more on Briar than Wallace Road. So the people on Wallace Road aren't going to be affected by it. Mr. Santerre replied not really. It's going to be set quite a quite a bit—I mean that's a very rough estimate, but we're over 100 feet from 110, 130-ish from Wallace. Ms. Tefft said well, there's only a one-acre lot. Mr. Santerre replied yeah. We're not a quarter mile away, but we are definitely on the Briar side. Mr. Roxo said there's a bush on the edge and sometimes people complain that they can't see past to get on to Wallace, so it wouldn't have any effect. Ms. Tefft said so it's set back away from Wallace. Mr. Roxo answered yes. It wouldn't have any

effect. You would be able to see traffic. Ms. Tefft said but it's still basically going to be the size of the existing house. Mr. Santerre replied yeah, I mean even looking at the...

Ms. Tefft said so I think you're going to be challenged to design something that doesn't look like, you know, a box. Mr. Santerre said we were talking about that actually and we're open to a lot of different styles. I'm not a historian—even from the 1950s, but there are a lot of different ways that we can design the exterior of this. Ms. Tefft asked are you an architect? Mr. Santerre replied no, I just build things. I'm not great at design. I can make things look great, but the creative side is not my forte. But we can do barn style, chalet style. There's a lot of different options that we can... Ms. Tefft said I don't think a Swiss chalet would look good. Mr. Santerre replied well, my point is, I was trying to express variety not exactly specifically what we were doing, but yes. So we are very open to styles that you would feel would match the time period a little bit better.

Ms. Tefft asked does it have to be a 40 by 40? Mr. Santerre answered in order to get the three bays, it would be really tight if we went smaller than that. I just did one over in Goffstown. I actually live over in Goffstown. This was kind of roughly what it looked like. Ms. Tefft said if it was half as deep, it wouldn't be 40 by 40. Mr. Santerre answered yes, I was thinking that on my way here actually. If you guys wanted a smaller structure, can we shrink it from the back? We could, but I think it would look funny from the street. Because usually homes are long, the ridgeline wise. If we were to shrink it this way, I think from Briar it would start looking funny. Ms. Tefft said frankly, I had a three-bay garage, and it was not 1600 square feet, but it didn't go all the way back. The three doors were as large as the one on the right-hand side because it was built for large farm equipment. Mr. Santerre asked do you remember what the size was for the... Ms. Tefft asked of the door? Mr. Santerre continued of the whole structure you're talking about? Ms. Tefft said yes, 1,000 square feet, and it's only one story. Mr. Santerre replied OK. Yeah. Ms. Tefft said you can see it. It's still there, except the doors are gone. Mr. Santerre said the only thing that we were—this is just something I did in Goffstown, but with the living space above, we would have windows above that. So it wouldn't be so plain looking from the garage door side. We do have a bump out on the left and the reason I had that was because the... Ms. Tefft asked can you show it on the? Mr. Santerre replied no, no, I'm sorry. So you see how the three garage doors—you see how there's a little bit more siding space on the left than there is on the right. The doors are kind of shifted to the right because we had an access point on the left-hand side. So we do have a couple of feet to play with on that side if we wanted to do like a 38 by 40 or something like that, but I mean. I don't know how much of a difference that really makes, a couple feet.

Ms. Tefft said I think those are my other questions I've thought of before hearing your presentation. Mr. Santerre said I do feel strongly that... Ms. Tefft asked do your neighbors know about this? Not yours, his. Mr. Roxo said I told a couple of them, yes. I haven't really gone around to my neighbors and advertised it. Ms. Tefft said but they know tonight is just for preliminary feedback. Mr. Roxo said yeah, I [inaudible] the meeting tonight, but I know we have to notify abutters and the rest of it. So I will have a chat with them all for sure once I have a better idea whether or not we're going to go forward with this. Ms. Tefft said well, I'm assuming if I need it I can have a second chance at questions, but I think you've answered my questions.

Mr. Clark said I have a couple questions. Forty by 40, which would—if you had a second floor—that 40 by 40 is a pretty large area. And is it a man cave or is there going to be a permanent living

space there? I had an experience with somebody who said they were building a work shed and it turned out to be a house. It was a house, and the workshop was small. Mr. Roxo said no, my intention is just to have an area for the kids to play if we have people over. We have a lot of birthday parties and stuff that we do there so that we can have the parties upstairs there. Get them out of my house. Keep my house clean. Mr. Clark said OK. So your intent was to put a bathroom up there? Mr. Roxo said yes, a bathroom. Mr. Clark asked a kitchen? Mr. Roxo replied no. Mr. Clark said OK, and then in this schematic here, there aren't any windows on the second floor. Mr. Santerre replied no, this was just a quick cut and paste from something I did that kind of inspired the idea of the project. We didn't want to get too involved in tweaking everything until we got your feedback on what we were going to do. Clearly our next meeting we'll have a little bit more specifics: a floor plan for the second floor with specific windows and such. We want to get your feedback first before we develop and spend more money on planning. Mr. Clark said well, that's great. That's good that you're here for that. You know, my comment is that it is a very industrial-looking building, and it looks like a DOT building. This is your rendering, but perhaps involving an architect and I have no idea what design, nor can I refer you to one. But maybe something that looks more like a barn? Because that's what it is. Mr. Roxo said, and my wife would love that too. Mr. Clark said she would? Well, I don't think that adds a lot of cost to it. Mr. Santerre said no, it doesn't. The window style in the gable end there, maybe matching the window style from the main house. There's a lot of board and batten siding, that is a kind of a barn style. But again, I mean, I'm not a historian, so I don't know how appropriate that is, but it looks really good. Mr. Roxo added because the house is just a baby blue like siding right now, and personally I think it's ugly. I prefer to make this not matching the house color, right? A baby blue barn wouldn't look right, but we'd be willing to do like a gray, and then I'd be willing to reside my house that color too, to make it all look aesthetically nice. That's something I'm willing to do, if this is something that would help the approval process, too.

Mr. Clark said OK. On our agenda, we have something we're going to be talking about: trees and tree removal. What size is that tree? Is that a Maple tree? Mr. Roxo replied it is. Now it's a big tree. It's this big. Unfortunately, that's really the only place I can get the garage, and that tree happens to be there. But. I've had those trees looked at by an arborist previously and it's in the notes somewhere, and they're not doing well. I've got big branches that come down constantly there and those trees aren't very healthy. It's something my wife hates—the fact that we have to take it down, and honestly, I feel the same way. But I'd be willing to plant other trees elsewhere on my land, too. Mr. Clark said yeah, we'll get into that because anything over 15 inches in diameter, you have to talk to Kathleen about that. And planting trees to replace the ones that you take down is a great idea. My recommendation would be, if you do decide to go ahead, is to maybe hire an architect who can look at what your house is and at the same time, look at the ambient neighborhood to kind of try to have it blend. And my other concern is that it's got a very big living area upstairs, and I'm sensitive to the ADU all of a sudden thing. Mr. Roxo said well, the living area won't be 1,600 square feet. Mr. Santerre added just a quick point on that. It's not a full second story. That roof pitch coming in greatly reduces the 40 by 40 to much more... Mr. Roxo said it's probably closer to 800 square feet. Mr. Santerre said I don't have the math, but it's an eight pitch so I don't know if we can...

Ms. Ports said the use of the structure is also addressed by the Building Department. Mr. Clark said that's right. But I just want to caution these guys to just be careful. Mr. Santerre said I'm in

the trades. I see that all the time. Yeah, I know exactly what you're talking about. I see it all the time. I've seen guys build whole kitchens and leave a 30-inch space in their cabinets and say they're not going to put a range in. And so it doesn't count as a whatever it counts as. And then—so I see it all the time. I understand the concern, but there's clearly not going to be a kitchen in this area. It's going to be more of an open concept game room, pool table, that kind of thing. Mr. Clark said OK. Well, you're on record as saying that. Mr. Santerre said yeah. Mr. Roxo said we have no intention of having a bedroom or renting that or anything up there. Mr. Santerre said exactly. Mr. Clark said that's all I need.

Mr. Roxo said and as far as the neighborhood goes, I think you need to know, Briar Road is very different styled homes. I mean the house next to me is fluorescent yellow asbestos. And then I've got the one right next door to me on the other side, it's not on Briar but it's exactly the same as mine. You've got some colonials; you've got all sorts of different homes on that street. There's not really one set style on that street, so that's why I think some of this is we're kind of looking for guidance for you guys of what you think would be acceptable. Mr. Santerre added because there is a great variety.

Mr. Strand said that was one objective comment I kind of had which, forgive the ignorance but I was a little bit surprised that that part of Wallace and Briar is historic because it doesn't have the aesthetic feel or uniformity. But maybe this could be an opportunity to make it look a little more historic. Mr. Santerre replied to that point, it's my understanding that there's actually a petition to remove this area from the Historic District because of this specific comment. Yes, we agree that it's kind of weird that it's part of that area. Mr. Roxo added but that's neither here nor there right now. And I didn't start the petition just so you know.

Ms. Day said you talked about a barn, but you do know what a mansard style of roofing is? Mr. Santerre said oh, more like a gambrel type? Ms. Ports said sort of a gambrel, yeah. Mr. Roxo said graduated. Ms. Day said yeah, you see it on barns. Mr. Santerre said yeah, so I know it as gambrel, but there might be other names, yes, yes, I know exactly what you're referencing, yes.

Ms. Ports said, Peter, on the computer there's some photos that you could open. Mr. Santerre said oh, so that's a gambrel style. Ms. Ports asked is that what you're referencing? Ms. Day said yes. Mr. Roxo said it gives you more of that barn look. Mr. Santerre said it does, yeah. Ms. Day said, and I don't know if it might take a little bit of your overhead space upstairs. Mr. Clark said it would give them more. Mr. Santerre agreed, saying it actually gives you more. Yeah, when you open that up, it gives a little bit more space upstairs. Mr. Roxo said more headroom. Mr. Santerre said it's just framed a little bit differently, but it does allow for easier side dormer, windows, and not only do dormers add aesthetic value to the outside, but light for windows and stuff on the inside.

Ms. Ports said this is 30 Church Road, and this was a barn approved by the Historic District. Mr. Roxo asked are there other ones in here? Pictures? Ms. Ports replied that was the only one I could find in the Historic District, specifically other than more historic looking barns. Mr. Roxo said there are other ones down the road and in another place, but they're not in the Historic District. I know, was it 31 Briar I think has a... 42 Briar has a separate two-door garage, standalone, separate structure, but that's probably a few 100 feet past the Historic District line.

Ms. Ports said I picked this one because it's very different than the house and I drove Briar today and a lot of those garages are very compatible to the existing home. And this, I believe, is 28 feet tall. So it's a good example of the height that you're referencing. Mr. Roxo said I'm not against it. I would also want to look ascetically pleasing too. It's my property. It's also going to affect the value of my property as well. I'm open to different ideas, for sure. I'm not stuck on that picture that we have in our presentation.

Ms. Conant said I know you said you'd be willing to maybe update your house's siding to match whatever you go with on the barn. Would you also be willing to maybe amend your existing garage doors to match whatever goes on the new? Mr. Roxo replied I just put those garage doors on. It's not the ones in the picture, though. The ones in the picture I believe are the older. Ms. Conant said they're red. Mr. Roxo said yeah, they're the old red ones. Now I've got the wood grain ones, which are like mahogany looking wood grain. It's obviously vinyl doors, but with glass windows in it. So I'd be willing to do the same doors on the garage for sure. Ms. Conant said I think consistency would be nice. Mr. Roxo replied yeah, I just put those on last year. Ms. Conant said same for windows, I think. Generally speaking, we aim for consistency. Mr. Roxo replied yeah, I would want it to flow. Mr. Santerre added except for the baby blue? Mr. Roxo agreed, except for the baby blue.

Ms. Tefft said I have one more question. What is the timeline you envisioned for getting this project started and underway and finished and all that? Do you have any time set goals? Mr. Roxo replied I'd like to have it done by the end of July, if possible. Ms. Tefft asked of this year? Mr. Roxo replied for this year. And based on what we've talked about previously, it seems feasible as long as we can get this on the docket for the March meeting, and if we get approvals and the ground thaws at the right times and, weather permitting, the rest of it.

Chair Tope asked any other questions, Elaine? Ms. Tefft replied no.

Mr. Clark said excuse me. The footing will be poured cement? Mr. Santerre replied yes, 4-foot frost wall. Mr. Clark said OK, so nothing underneath it? Mr. Santerre answered no, no, just 4-foot frost wall and slab. Mr. Clark said OK. Mr. Roxo said I had looked at that. The cost was going to be unbelievable. It doesn't make sense.

Chair Tope said all right, I don't think anyone has any other questions. I would just note, thank you for coming to us ahead of time. Kathleen?

Ms. Ports asked can you close out of this picture and go back to the street view from Briar? So maybe you could explain how would you modify the fencing? Have you thought through that at all? Mr. Roxo replied I wouldn't touch this fence over here at all. It would start back here and probably we would take down this picket fence except where we would attach it to the garage, basically. So it would still be fully encompassed. I've got a dog. I don't want him running out of the yard. My guess is the garage would probably start somewhere around here, go here, to here, and probably we would just take out this picket fence. That's where the garage doors will be. And we'd leave this little area here with the gate there. and then we'd leave the picket fence on this side, too. Or I might even do the six-foot tall on this side as well, to match this one here.

Ms. Ports said, as you mentioned, the property does increase in slope as you move backwards up Briar and so there's almost at least a 2-foot difference between the driveway and where the fence is. So are you digging in? Are you building up? What is your plan for that? Mr. Santerre replied we've looked at it, and we are going to set the garage back far enough where we can get a manageable slope up to the—but we will—I'm not sure yet. Because we may have maybe like a retaining wall on each side of that slope so that we can dig down and get a nice gradual up into the garage. Or we may be able to just gradually bring that into where the driveway is. We're not 100 percent on that one.

Ms. Ports asked so would the walls be inside the fence probably? Mr. Santerre and Mr. Roxo said yes. Ms. Ports said in my opinion, or my thought is that would help maybe reduce some of the overall height by doing it that way, right? If you're keeping it level with the driveway... Mr. Roxo said I think we're going to have to dig in some, right? And it would reduce the height from the street. It wouldn't look as tall from the street because of that. Mr. Santerre said it's an advantage to us to get it as low as possible so that we don't have such a grade change in the driveway to the doors, obviously. Ms. Ports said there is about a 10-foot change in topography from Wallace Road to the driveway on Briar. So, adding a 28-foot structure on top of that is quite noticeable I would say.

Ms. Conant asked could you confirm that height when you submit your actual application? Mr. Santerre said yeah, we're doing. Mr. Roxo said we're getting a survey. Mr. Santerre said yeah, we won't have it done by the next meeting, though. Mr. Roxo agreed yeah, probably not done by the next meeting. Mr. Santerre said we'll get something.

Mr. Clark said I think what the Board is trying to say is to try to do whatever you can to keep the height down. I mean, I think that would go a long way. Mr. Santerre said yeah, let me take a look at that. Maybe I'm thinking too quickly, but I think if we were to change it—because the issue with bringing the pitch down to make it shorter, the overall structure shorter, is you start losing quickly your upstairs space. But if we're doing a gambrel style where that balloons out, we can kind of bring that whole thing down and still maintain some of that inside space. So, there's another argument for the gambrel style, I guess. Mr. Clark said I mean, I think that house on 30 Church Road is really, really high. Mr. Santerre asked the one that we were just looking at? Mr. Clark said yeah. It's like three stories. Mr. Santerre said it almost looks like it has ½ wall in the second story, and then starts to gambrel and to me, it looks silly because it's skinny. We're going to actually have the width to kind of make it... Mr. Clark said to taper it out, yeah. It looks like a silo. Just so that you understand that. That's, I think, important to this group.

Ms. Ports said I would also suggest that you could come back for another pre-application meeting. Maybe you have one or two designs that you're kind of like not sure about. Or maybe you've just gathered more information and it might be helpful before you get all the way to an application again. I don't know how the Board feels. Mr. Santerre asked do you guys have an April meeting? Chair Tope replied we do have an April meeting. I mean, I think as you continue to develop the plans, it'll be helpful. I think we're generally, at least I guess speaking for myself, generally amenable. It is your property and you're trying to conform with the standard. I know the look from Wallace Road, I think, is important and important from a preservation perspective. And you've

got the tree there kind of blocking sort of the view. And then you've got the fence. In my opinion, you mentioned the house is on the smaller side compared to some. I've seen a lot of houses that are the size of the house and the proposed structure together. So if it's conforming, sort of with the look and feel of your house, I think that's something we're obviously charged with and something we want to discuss here. I remember in the application in the materials, it noted, I think building zoning requires 35 feet as a maximum height, and you guys were under that. I would expect when they would come back next time too, they would have gone through all the building and zoning approval, right? Because I think that answers a lot of our questions about dwelling spaces.

Ms. Ports said they don't require zoning approval, and I don't know that you might submit your building permit applications, or at least get their feedback on what they're going to be looking for or what permits you're going to need. Mr. Roxo said so, like the survey too, for the building department. So we're working on that right now. That's going to be the one. Mr. Santerre said I guess my only thought on that is to go through an architectural drawing of a structure to then submit for a building permit before we have your approval and then find out that something needs to be changed, then we have to go through the whole process again. Mr. Roxo said the cost—we're talking about thousands of dollars before I even know if it's something that's feasible. Mr. Santerre said my thought would be we can have drawings and footprint layout, floor layout and everything, and then can't you guys approve it specific to that drawing so we [inaudible]. Chair Tope replied yeah. And you've heard a lot of the Members' concerns today of what people are interested in with the overall footprint, the height, how it looks from the road, matching windows, making sure the windows and the style of it are similar to the house. I think the point is well taken and distinguishes it from some others that we may look at in the future that the Briar Road properties are quite a bit varied in terms of time they were built, look and feel, and the whole design. I think, in my opinion, that makes it a little bit easier for us then if we were looking at some of the properties from the 1700s or 1800s that had a totally different look and feel to them. Everyone's concerned about just making sure it looks good. And of course you do have the requirement to notify your neighbors. This Commission generally takes public comment as well as if any of your abutters have any—if they want to support you, if they want to object to it, we listen to them both ways and consider those.

Mr. Santerre said I have a quick question on that. Are we responsible for notifying the abutters? Or do you guys send that out? Chair Tope replied yes, Kathleen will help you with that with the application. Ms. Ports said when you submit your application, we'll work with you on an abutters list. We don't do the abutters for just a pre application meeting. Mr. Roxo said so the abutters are the people that share my lot lines? It would include the people across the street, right? Ms. Ports replied yes. It's helpful to talk to people beforehand. Mr. Roxo said yeah, I'm friendly with them also, yeah.

Chair Tope said yeah, that's another suggestion we would give because as citizens of Bedford as well, it makes our job more difficult when you have the abutters objecting, because we're trying to take your needs into consideration as well as theirs. So if you're agreeable, I think it helps make our decision a lot easier. Mr. Roxo said I'll talk to my neighbors, yeah. Mr. Santerre said one other quick question. So maybe I misunderstood, but are you the one, Kathleen, that deals more with the trees and the plantings? Did I hear that right? Mr. Roxo said she's conservation, right?

Ms. Ports said once you guys know kind of what your footprint is, what it is you're doing, and then we can kind of include that into the application. I mean, it's basically just one tree and grass. I don't think there's a restriction against one tree removal, but there's been a culmination of tree removal on the property, so it might make sense to do some screening along the road, or something like that, once you know more about where it's going to go. Mr. Roxo said it will be no problem working with you guys on that. Mr. Santerre said I didn't know if there was something specific that we should include or if we can just say, hey, here's where we would like a couple trees. Do you know what I mean? Ms. Ports said yes, that's fine.

Chair Tope asked does anyone else have any other questions? [There were none]. OK. And we don't have any members of the public here, so there won't be any public comment tonight. OK. Well, thank you then for coming and presenting. I hope we were at least able to pre answer some of your questions. And I'd also direct you to continue to work with Kathleen. She has the application materials, and she can provide you a lot of great guidance as you're putting them together to expedite things in the future. Mr. Roxo and Mr. Santerre both said sounds good. Thank you. Chair Tope said thank you.

IV. Other Business

1. CLG (Certified Local Government) Grant Discussion

Chair Tope said I believe Kathleen had presented us with a couple options for which we may want to pursue funding. And I will ask you, Kathleen, to bring those up for discussion.

Ms. Ports said yes. At our last meeting, I think we might have touched on this our last meeting. I know we ended early because of the snow. But the discussion was that the CLG grant is opening probably February-March, and as an approved community we can apply for funding to assist with a project that would either promote the Historic District or help facilitate public outreach, review our regulations. There's a whole wide range of topics we could cover. And based on the conversations of the last year and the last few meetings, some of the ideas that I put forward were a public outreach program just to raise awareness of both the fact that there's a district and when it's required to come before the Commission, but also maybe to improve our community perception. And then also the other one was we've talked a lot about trees and that's a very difficult issue to navigate. And so having an evaluation of what are the nonstructural features of the district that are important to consider might be kind of a neat idea to help with trees, a tree program of some sort to retain the trees and protect the trees that we have, or any of the walls or other unusual buildings or features of landscaping. And then I think the other one I mentioned was a barn inventory, which is totally unrelated and that is simply just a windshield survey of the different barns and their date, construction style, and that kind of thing. And that could be used in the future as a community event, a guided tour and we could do a little publication—whatever we wanted—maybe even help the property owners with barn easements to protect those barns in perpetuity.

Chair Tope asked and then do we have to pick one of the topics for the grant application? Mr. Ports replied yes, ultimately, if there's a piece of information that you feel like you need before you can make a decision or if you're leaning in one direction versus another but you're not sure, we can talk about that, and I can bring more information to the next meeting. We don't have to

know exactly what we're doing just yet, but soon. Ms. Tope said my opinion, I think, as far as the notification of who's in the district, when do you need to come to us and stuff, I think that's something we could probably handle on our own without a grant. So I think I would lean more toward the trees or the barns. I think the barns sounds like a really good idea, and I would ask other Members what we could do on our own with the tree situation because that is a concern. Elaine?

Ms. Tefft said well, I disagree with you about the barns. I have one and frankly, I don't think it's a good idea to do a barn inventory, measurements, do the history, and that kind of thing. I think that's going beyond what your power should be. Whoever owns the barn has a right to privacy. It's like you can only do the exterior. And I have a problem...

Chair Tope said yeah, I don't think we're saying we would allow people in the barns or anything. We didn't say it wasn't voluntary either.

Ms. Tefft said well, there's no way on God's green earth there's going to be any tour including my barn or anything on my property, OK?

Chair Tope said yeah, I think that would be voluntary. I don't think that would ever be mandatory. Ms. Ports said that's fair.

Ms. Tefft said well, that's how the whole thing starts. Well, you don't have to, and then somebody files a petition. All of a sudden everybody is included and swept into the heat.

Chair Tope asked so what would you like to do? Would you like to apply for a grant?

Ms. Tefft replied I like the idea of making people aware. I think leaving people to the quiet enjoyment of their historic property is a great idea and letting them know when they need to come. Having a resource, possibly. We're not in a position to have books. The library is, however. Making sure that there are architectural books. There are books on historical restoration and styles of windows. I think getting that information is more than just Googling, and I would prefer that we were a resource. We can't do anything to help them for the inside of their historic property.

Chair Tope asked is this a thing we could apply for the grant for books for the library? Is that?

Ms. Ports replied I think that could be part of a public outreach program. Like how do we make people aware that these resources are available?

Chair Tope said I'm just asking because it sounded like that was your suggestion and we're trying to come up with one thing for which to apply for the CLG grant, not like everything that we do, but I was trying to get an answer to her question on the grant.

Ms. Tefft said I think finding a way to reach out to the people who live in it, and some people are actually pleased to be in it—not everybody, but some people are.

Mr. Clark asked Kathleen how much money are we talking about, roughly, dollars and cents available? Ms. Ports said I honestly don't know. Mr. Clark asked \$500, \$1,000, \$2,000? Ms.

Ports said no, I'd say a couple thousand. Mr. Clark said we sat in on that preservation alliance. Zoom call, and they pointed out Wolfeboro as being a really great example of how they've come together as a community to honor the old part of town and the old historic sites. And there are a lot of people there that are really proud of their properties, and they even awarded little plaques to 10 or 12 people that really went out of their way to just really do something special. If you go through there, if you're a tourist and you go through there, it's really a quaint, quaint village, and they've really been able to maintain it. And I think that was kind of the spirit of what that whole meeting was about. And I think that's what we have to look at is what do we do as a community to protect and to bring to light really a special part of Town. Do we do plaques, the 1794, the Riddle House or this was the so and so house. Ms. Tefft said that was done here years ago. They there was something like the DAR, only not the DAR, went around and wanted to put plaques on the various houses and the year they were built. Mr. Clark said yeah, and some of those plaques have fallen down. Ms. Tefft added and some of the plaques never got put up. Mr. Clark said, and some of them never got put up. But I mean that's kind of a cool thing. Oh, look at that. That house is an 1810.

Ms. Ports said that could be a component of an outreach plan. An outreach plan doesn't have to just be letters. It could be sponsoring lectures. It could be having guest workshops. It could be a whole variety of options, and that's what that process would take us through.

Chair Tope said I think that would be helpful. And Mr. Clark asked to know the amount, because I think we were all in favor of outreach and we've even looked at drafts and such of the letters. And I thought we already had funding to be able to do that, to send letters to everybody in the Historic District. Ms. Ports replied oh, we do. We do. Chair Tope said that's why I thought that piece was covered, but if it's part of a greater outreach and we could incorporate some of these other things and if we knew what... Mr. Clark said yeah, there's a History of Bedford book which Freeman Shaw was a big contributor to, and that was 72, I think. Ms. Tefft said there are three histories of Bedford: 1850, 1903 and then the most recent one in the 20th Century. Mr. Clark said OK, yes, so 72. Maybe that would be something people with historic properties, put one of those books in their hands, and it's really an interesting read. And it's like, oh, I know where that house is. Chair Tope said the library has like three of them or something. I've read it. Ms. Ports said it is a fun read. Ms. Tefft said the library has several of the latest ones. Chair Tope said I think they had three when I was there. Ms. Day said the Historical Society sells them, \$40. Ms. Conant said I got mine last week. Mr. Clark said it's a great resource, and it's just kind of creating more public pride in a space that is—it's small enough as it is. We don't want it to get smaller, and we want people to have pride in this neighborhood. Ms. Day said it's a wonderful book. Mr. Clark continued I think anything we can do to encourage that and promote it, be it corridors of trees, signage maybe some signage on the two mills and improve the signage in the pound. People don't even know what the pound is. Your animal runs away and if you found it, you put it in the pound and people would come and claim it. And just stuff like that is very unique, and that's not all over the place. I like the idea of doing corridor tree census, stone walls protected by RSA whatever that law is, they're protected. You cannot take down a stone wall. Ms. Ports said not entirely. Ms. Tefft said well, if it's a marker... Ms. Ports said yeah, if it's a boundary marker, there's some—yeah. It's not a complete prohibition on the disassembly of a wall. Mr. Clark said well, then, letting people know what that line of demarcation is? Ms. Tefft said it depends how good your plow guy is.

Chair Tope asked would you be able to send us a copy of the grant application so we could see what it looks like? I'll let everyone speak and go through, but it seems like if we could get a broad grant for community outreach, then we could, when we figured out how much we had, then we could figure out what we could do with it. If we can bundle multiple things under community outreach, I don't know how much... I don't know how specific information you need from us to be able to apply for the grant.

Ms. Tefft asked is Bedford going to be having a 200th Anniversary? Ms. Ports said a 275th Anniversary is 2025. Mr. Strand said it appears so but work in progress. Ms. Tefft said and over the years, there were real parades in Bedford and the Clydesdales were here, for God's sakes. And none of this from one school to the other. There were big fairs up at the church, and when it got even bigger, they were at Mckelvie, but there were occasions for people to get together. So a Town is allegedly a social thing, but I'm not sure that that still exists. I think we've had too many things go wrong in this country, let alone around here for that to be possible anymore. But I think if you're going to do anything, feel good about the Town, I think you've got to come up with more than a plaque or a list of what you can't do.

Mr. Clark said we could do a 5K road race and that would give you a lot of—we could start it at your barn... Ms. Tefft said what? I'm sorry. I didn't hear what you said. Mr. Clark said I was saying we could start it at your barn. Mr. Strand said no, in the barn. The race would start in the barn. Ms. Tefft said, and they would be led right to right to that three-holer outhouse in my barn, too. Mr. Clark said well that would be a good part of the tour. Something like that, because the Millennium Running would post all the signs. Ms. Tefft said my insurance company would not appreciate anybody trespassing on my property. Mr. Strand said no, we were kidding, Elaine. I think that that's a good idea. Millennium might do something like a historic [inaudible] run. Ms. Tefft said I think it's more than just a thou shalt not. Mr. Strand said in tandem with the anniversary... Mr. Clark said, and they'd do all the signage, so it's free. Mr. Strand said I know that Presbyterian church is planning something, too. Ms. Ports said it might be a good precursor to the whole 275-year celebration as well. Ms. Tefft said it's sort of a hook you can your hat on. Mr. Clark said it's a very good suggestion. Mr. Strand said yeah, that's a good idea to potentially find a way to incorporate historic into that. Ms. Day said because I've had a conversation with Rick, and he said that he was looking... for the 275th, he's looking for ideas from the community. So I don't know, Michael, if you guys have discussed it, but he said no I want people to come to me with ideas and we'll help them. Mr. Strand said the Presbyterian Church came before the council last meeting and presented some preliminary ideas related to signage permission, but it'd be great if we could get some synergy here. Ms. Ports said yeah, the church is turning 275 this year, so they are organizing two community events. There's one in May, and there's one in August. And I believe the idea for the August event is a community-style picnic centered on the Bedford Village Common. That would be an opportunity for us to have a table or run a program or a promotion and the Historic Society, and they're really open and receptive to those ideas. Mr. Strand said I think from a Town perspective, we're just talking about funding, but it seems like there's a consensus. Mr. Clark said plus, they've got the space up there. You have got to have parking. Ms. Day said so am I correct to understand that they want those type of ideas? Mr. Strand said it sounds like yes. The general consensus on the Council is to do something, yeah. Ms. Tefft said, and I think it would be lovely if the elected officials would get into a dunking booth—if the PTA still

has theirs from years ago. Ms. Ports said oh, they do. Mr. Strand said I'd probably be an easy sell on that one, but we'd have to get the other ones, too. Ms. Tefft said I've got a great pitching arm.

Ms. Ports said I'm going to get the application and circulate that; get a better idea of what amount of funding we're talking about. I believe that Jillian had shared an example outreach plan. It was, I think, a historic society, maybe, not a district but I can send that around again as well for you guys to look at.

Chair Tope said and it seems they're generally in favor of outreach, and we'll figure out the specifics of how we're going to do that when we know the funding and the [inaudible]. Ms. Ports said yeah, that's what the grant would do. What is going to be the most effective and interesting, attainable way for us to do that?

2. Residential and Tree Services Mailings

Ms. Ports said I can't remember if you guys looked at the letters and said, yeah, they look great or if there were comments. I think you could e-mail me any comments or edits you would like to see. The tree service letters already went out and David reached out with a couple other news. So they went to the tree companies. I will send those out this week, but if you are driving around Town and you see a tree company that you haven't seen before or that's not on the list, let me know and I'll send them a letter. Mr. Clark asked have you had any responses to those at all? Ms. Ports replied no. Mr. Clark said it's almost getting some sort of acknowledgement from those people that yeah; we didn't just throw it in the circular file. Ms. Tefft said Susan is the only one who writes thank you notes. I'm not naming names.

3. New Application Form

Ms. Ports said the Historic District application has gone through a major overhaul. I'm hoping you guys have had some time since the last meeting to kind of look it over. Again, we can talk about how you want to go about this. We could do a shared document online. If you have some edits you want to just provide verbally now or talk with the rest of the group, what do you guys think? Chair Tope asked can you bring it up on here? I would just quickly note that I like that you put all of the things in there that we consider. I think that's helpful to people and it will lead to fewer surprises when they come here.

Ms. Ports said I did one application that is for any type of project, and you just check the box and then I think what you're referring to is here are the required attachments and it lists some of the questions they might want to answer. Chair Tope asked was it this version or another one? Yes, the review considerations. Ms. Ports said your application should address the following criteria, yeah. And then that's like 3 pages. So I didn't know if people would be like, ah. So, what I did as an alternative, and I'm sorry if I'm jumping around here, but just bear with me. We could lump some categories into a series of applications. So for example, this one is for siding, roofing, windows, chimney changes. So again, attachments and considerations, and then it identifies the criteria that are outlined both in the ordinance and in our regulations so that they have an understanding of what they need to address in the application. That way it's just two pages—not as overwhelming. In some ways maybe the other application will get them thinking about other

things. Ms. Conant suggested maybe we add it as an appendix. I'm inclined to keep it in I think that level of transparency as far as what we're citing and the questions we might be asking is going to be helpful to people. Chair Tope said yeah, I think two versus three [inaudible] is it's not that big of a difference. Ms. Ports said well, it's two versus... I guess it's only four. Chair Tope said I would say I can see it both ways. I see the point of sometimes they're doing these things in conjunction with each other and like if you have to remove a tree or clear land as part of the building. So I like Minn's comment about transparency and showing them everything that we're looking at as well as citing the ordinance and the regulation so they could look it up and then they would have the answers to these questions when we come here too, because I think it's hard for all of us when they come sometimes and then they don't know the answers to the questions that we feel we need answers to. And it's not any ill intent on their part. They just didn't look it up and don't know.

Ms. Tefft said one of the things that I was concerned about was it sounds like such an arduous task to do anything. You have to have so much material and you've got to hire professionals. You can't just do it yourself. And what about just a small project as opposed to a 40 by 40 building or a big project? It's a lot of work and I think we need to not make it more difficult or arduous for them. Again, to be a resource instead of a challenge, and I think that's how I try to think. Chair Tope said the application itself, I think, is more of research. The application itself doesn't require all of these things. Some of those things it asks to include a drawing or such, but a lot of them are just other considerations. And we're not requiring that they do this like even where it says describe the condition of trees, purpose of removal. We don't reject the application without it. I think we ask some of those questions sometimes when it comes up, but what they actually have to fill out to have a complete application doesn't include answering all of these review considerations, right? Ms. Ports replied right.

Ms. Tefft said well, when you've got the description of the project and provide a detailed description of the existing and proposed conditions of the property. Well, details could include rotten wood or a bug infestation or something else. It's just, I don't think I could meet either of those descriptions of a project if I wanted to replace the wooden floor on my porch.

Chair Tope asked so what would you propose instead? Ms. Tefft replied I don't know. I wish I did.

Ms. Ports said well a couple of thoughts, you could have a spreadsheet, if that would be better. I think one of the challenges we have right now is that people fill out the first page and they don't read what's attached. So, recognizing that as I'm looking at this, I'm thinking what if this page was sign off on each line? You either say N/A or you add your initials, so that there is a box that they have to complete. Ms. Tefft asked the site plan or drawing? Ms. Ports replied well, you saw the drawing they gave us tonight. It was chicken scratch. That's fine. But we needed that. It really helped lay out the situation. Ms. Tefft said but a plan or a drawing with compass direction showing dimensions of existing and proposed conditions—it took me three tries to get the dimensions of my stove in case I want to replace it. Ms. Ports said well, we're talking about bulk sized. Mr. Tefft replied yeah, I know. But what I'm saying is you still...

Mr. Clark said I think you're talking about people spending a lot of money to do something, and in order to do that, you have to have a plan. They have to have a plan for the building department. They have to get that approved. So I mean, we're not having people go through unnecessary hoops. And I think in the past, people have come to this Commission to sort of beg for forgiveness as opposed to asking for permission. And frankly I'm tired of that because it puts us in a very unenviable position of being either the bad guy or the good guy. And so I think this will take care of a lot of those people trying to go kind of under the limbo wire.

Ms. Ports suggested we could say hand drawing. Chair Tope said yeah, I think we're really flexible on what we accept, but that question of the specs and how far the setbacks are, the height—those are all questions you asked tonight, and we've asked tonight. If we're going to ask the questions to them when they come here to get approval, then we should document it ahead of time, so they're not blindsided. Because I don't think it does any of us any good if they show up and we start asking all these questions that to them weren't on the application. It doesn't seem fair to them.

Ms. Tefft said but a streetscape elevation on 1/8 scale. Ms. Ports explained that's if you're building a new structure. Ms. Tefft added or an addition, yeah. Ms. Ports said it says that. You're going to have an architect. Ms. Tefft said assuming you have an architect, but not everybody has an architect. I have a tradesman.

Ms. Ports said you know, we work with everyone who comes in the door. Ms. Tefft replied I know you do. I'm not saying you guys don't, but she goes out of her way. Chair Tope said if there's particular things we want to amend, I just want to get rid of the like, 1/8 scale. I think we can handle those on an individual basis, right? Because I don't think we're set on something like it has to be a one eighth scale. We need enough information for us to make a recommendation or approval or denial. So we need to gather the info and it's only fair if they know what questions we're going to ask.

Mr. Clark said we're setting the ground rules. Ms. Tefft asked what about an intro to this saying we need these materials, but we want you to know we're here to work with you. At least get them thinking they're going to get a dish of ice cream. Chair Tope said well, and Kathleen, if you could educate us a little on the process, my understanding was that that's what it was. When they come to Kathleen to get the application and Jillian before her was the same way where they'd layout sort of what we need. Ms. Ports replied yes, so I have this little checklist that I've created, and it's for them as they're completing the application. But typically I will go over this with them when they're coming in to pick up an application, and I generate the abutters list for the residents. We ask the surveyors or the engineers to generate them for commercial properties, but we do it for the residents. But maybe this could have something, an intro to it. I have one that I did for the Zoning Board that really explains that process, because that is a little overwhelming to people for the first time. So I could do something like that as well for this. Chair Tope said yeah, I'm pretty flexible. I just think that... Ms. Ports said people come in, I give them an overview. We give them the schedule. I'll even check their files if there's a previous application on their property, I'll e-mail that to them so they have it. If there's a similar application that I'm aware of, I will e-mail that to them and say, hey, look at this example. This is a good example of the kind of information the Commission is going to want. So we do try to—and I'll tell them to watch a meeting. And I send them the links for how to find certain specific meetings that I think would be beneficial for them.

Chair Tope said I think that's all helpful because I think one thing that would make it a bad experience for them, which is why I'm in favor of providing more information, is if they come here and say, like tonight, the gentleman had his contractor. We've seen people bring architects and others. They take the time out of their day or evening, and they're probably paying that person something to come. If we haven't told them everything we're going to ask about in advance and then we table their motion or their request, and then they have to come back in another month and they have to line those people up again. That's not in their best interest. So I think it's better to let them know ahead of time everything that we can.

Ms. Tefft said but I think we also have to be realistic because it says here, chain link fences are discouraged. Well, if the Town puts up a chain link fence on three sides of your property, I think if you want continuity, you're going to have to agree to a chain link fence. On the other hand, if we could get the Town, instead of putting a chain link fence around people's property, to just continue the oh, I don't know, let's just say the post and rail fence, and continue it on those sides. But I think again, I don't think it's fair to ask people to do things the Town refuses to do.

Ms. Ports said well, that's a different issue. Chair Tope said that's beyond the scope of the application. Ms. Tefft replied I know but you do say chain link fences are discouraged. Ms. Ports replied that was in the regulations, and the Town is apparently not subject to those regulations.

Chair Tope said so in this case, the only thing we could do is strike the part chain link fences are discouraged, and then when they would come and propose a chain link fence, we would tell them it's in the regs. We don't want you to have it, and then they would have to redo their site plan. So we're not helping them by removing that sentence from the application. Ms. Ports said right. Chair Tope continued changing the regs and what the Town does is a different... Ms. Tefft said but I think if they're continuing what's already there, I think it would look worse to have... Chair Tope said in that specific fact pattern. It didn't say they're prohibited. It said they're discouraged. Ms. Tefft replied so you can discourage but not prohibit, okay. Chair Tope said yes, if it was on three sides and they brought an application fourth and then I think people would consider that, right? And it's not prohibited. It's just discouraged. If you're putting a brand-new fence in or trying to replace another type of fence with chain link, I think that's what we're giving them the heads up that we're not going to generally be amenable to.

Mr. Strand said I have a suggestion. Ms. Tefft said if you have an interest in environment, for example, stockade fences are wonderful. They're great for privacy and stuff but they change the wind patterns, and they change the environment. Should there be something in there about if you're going to change the environment, you may want to reconsider?

Mr. Clark asked environmental impact? Ms. Tefft replied environmental impact. Ms. Ports said well, that would be changing the regulations. We could revisit the regulations through a grant process if we wanted to. Ms. Tefft said I was just watching people fantasizing about meeting 90 percent of their goal on environmental problems by 2030. Mr. Clark said well, I've gone through three applications, under your help and your predecessor, and I really appreciated the guidance that I got because I don't know about all these regulations, and I didn't want to do a bunch of stuff and then find out that it was against the regs. So, I really appreciated it and I think that the big

thing we need to do on a lot of these projects is we want to have photographs of before and after. To my fault, I didn't provide you with some after pictures and you asked me for them, and I think that's all part of the plan. And so when somebody comes to you and wants to do something like this barn, here are the rules. Check, check, check, check. And it helps. It helped me, and it was kind of like I grumbled a little bit because it was like, oh, I got to do an architectural rendering. Yikes. OK. But I did, and it helped me do an end product that was in conformity with the rest of my property.

Mr. Strand said I have a simple possible solution in my limited experiences with the Commission. It seems as though the challenge here is that when you're looking at guidelines versus hard requirements, it seems like a lot of this lives in a kind of discursive gray area where it can be subjective a little bit. It would require a little bit more work—or homework—I should say on the part of the Commission and unfortunately by the Town. But what if because every project is so individualized, is going to have different impacts, some which may be deemed acceptable, however varying from guidelines, vice versa. If there was an initial preliminary submittal based on the generic guidelines to which the Commission would respond with a curated checklist of questions or concerns, and that would definitely streamline things when they came in. To get people to streamline the government process a little bit, get them in and out in one meeting, potentially so they knew what was on the radar. And then those asks could be more specific as well, if there were modifications requested by the Commission for the project.

Ms. Ports said yeah, the regulations recommend that every project do a pre application meeting or suggest that that's everyone's right and opportunity. It just delays the process for them. Mr. Strand said I'm just thinking they could even skip the meeting part of it, do the pre application. There could be a customized checklist or questionnaire sent back to them and then you might be able to combine some of those pre meetings with final motions. I don't know—just in the interest of being more user friendly to people. Chair Tope asked we haven't gotten many pre-meeting requests generally? Ms. Ports replied not too many, no. Chair Tope continued they come with the request and, yeah, I think if they ask questions ahead of time, a lot of that they figure out with Kathleen. I don't think the entire Commission here could come up with all of their questions just looking at an application form because I think we really rely on this question-and-answer type forum. Mr. Strand replied gotcha. OK. Chair Tope said I think at this point, right, what we're looking for now is our application form for our existing regulations. So are we leaning more toward the long form where we're inclusive and we're not requiring, we have that list of review considerations? Or do we want to chunk it into different applications for different things that they're doing? And then once we come up with a decision on that, then maybe you'll circulate the form, and we can make edits, or is it? In the interest of time, I don't know that we're going to solve that tonight.

Ms. Ports replied yes. I think what I heard was that you guys were thinking the long form. We have very few commercial properties in the Historic District. So we could consider simplifying the language or being more clear that hand drawings are OK and that you can do this application on your own. You don't have to hire. I have people who do Zoning Board applications on their own. Sometimes you don't need a plot plan and it's a change of use or something and they do it themselves or they get their plot plan and then they do everything else all by themselves. So it's not uncommon for an applicant to do that.

Chair Tope said yes, and I think we have a general interest in transparency and letting them know what we're going to ask and trying to get them in and out in one meeting because we don't want to have to table it and make them hire somebody to come back. And I would rely heavily on your expertise in helping guide that structure as to what's most common and do we need them to—maybe you don't have to initially point, maybe just each section if it applies. Or maybe we need like a yes, no, or not applicable as to the section and look at like the siding versus landscape. Ms. Ports said yes, maybe what you could do is even tie the type of work to the attachments or the review considerations? Ms. Conant replied that sounds like a collating nightmare. Ms. Ports replied well, I guess I was just thinking addition, modification, or new exterior, and then at the end you could say complete section A1, A2, something like that. So, you could number these things and just be a little bit more specific about what they specifically need to do.

Chair Tope said I think your general consensus is we want to make it as painless as possible while gathering the information we need to make a decision in one meeting for them, so they don't have to line everybody up and come back again.

Ms. Day said I like that checklist idea with the boxes, and if it's N/A, N/A. Ms. Ports replied all right. So I guess if you have any more specific comments on wording or you think there's an easier way to say something that's more clear to the general public, if you've been through this process before, then you could send me those. And then I can work on doing the check off on the first couple pages, so that's very clear that I need answers to this and that. And then I can look at does it make sense to sort of number the review considerations and then link them back to that first page. And that doesn't necessarily have to be difficult. Does that sound like a good plan? Ms. The Commission agrees, yes. Ms. Conant said like a guided preparation: you'll need to answer this, this and this. Ms. Ports replied OK. I like that idea.

V. Approval of Minutes: January 9, 2024

Chair Tope asked do we have any changes to the minutes from January 9th? Ms. Tefft replied I have a couple of corrections. On Page 3 there was a phrase dropped 15 lines down—because they can't say anything about the interior. There was prepositional phrase that didn't get put up there. Then on Page 8, it's not Miss Christleaf's, it's Mrs. Christlieb. And instead of down on Meetinghouse Road, it should read house down on Meetinghouse Road. The word house was not put in. And then Mrs. Christlieb on Page 9, the first paragraph. Ms. Ports said yes, good catch.

MOTION: Ms. Tefft moved to accept the Minutes for January 9, 2023 as corrected. Mr. Clark duly seconded the motion. Mr. Strand abstained. Vote Taken: All in Favor – unanimous. Motion carries.

VI. Communications to the Commission

1. Citizens Petition to amend the Historic District boundary

Ms. Ports said The Planning Board reviewed the petition in January and they voted to not support the Petition. It will still appear on the ballot, but it will say that the petition or the amendment is not supported by the Planning Board. Chair Tope said just to clarify, that was the petition to

remove. Ms. Ports said sorry, yes, the properties west of Wallace Road. Mr. Clark said 20-21 properties.

2. Updates on Pending Requests for Certificate of Approvals

Ms. Ports said I put that in just because I wanted to make sure you knew that I was still communicating with Mr. Robertson, and I'm hoping that he will come back to us in March with his final plans.

3. Updates on Administrative Approvals

Ms. Ports said I have done two administrative approvals since I took over this position, and I just thought I probably should be communicating those to you, so you know about them. So I tossed them on here and both were tree removal projects. The first one was a property on Wallace Road and Mr. Luis Salas. He called me and said, hey, I want to do this. The guy has come. He's marked the trees. Can you come and look at them? So it worked out really well, actually. I just went to the property, looked at what he was cutting. It made sense to me. He had a pretty sizeable oak tree and he cut one of the trunks with the realization that the other trunk could fall because they counterweight each other, I guess. But he really didn't want to take it down. So I don't know, it might just fall anyway. And then I gave him some other information about some invasives that I observed on his property when I was there and that he was curious about.

And then our own Member, Mr. Clark, called me out to his property in December, and we drew up a little plan and identified the trees that needed to be removed. I think that Mr. Clark has done a few—some of the larger pines that are between his property line and his neighbor will require the assistance of a tree service. So that's on hold for now but I can bug him to keep me updated. Mr. Clark said, and those trees are without bark, and they are definitely... Ms. Ports said yeah, they were all dead, actually. Same with Mr. Salas. We're seeing a lot of dead ash trees. So he's right up on that big wetland behind the 209 development. So a lot of them were ash trees that were dead. Mr. Clark said but this was a really good trial run because you said tape the trees with blaze, and you came over and we did an inventory. And then when I cut those, I had six that I cut down and I sent you pictures of the trees that had been removed. But it's very important that we have the before and the approval.

VII. Commission Member Comments and Concerns

ANNOUNCEMENT: Ms. Ports asked can I just make one announcement? I apologize, I didn't put it on here. There is a conference at Saint Anselm's College called Old House and Barn Expo and it's right here in Town. It's not expensive to attend, and it's vendors, it's demonstrations it's experts and advice. And so I'm going to plan to attend, and I would just either encourage you to go if you can, or just spread the word. I can send you guys a link. Ms. Tefft asked who is sponsoring it? Ms. Ports replied the Preservation Alliance, I believe, right? Mr. Clark asked oh, is that right? Ms. Ports answered yes, it's March 16th and 17th. Ms. Teft asked Saint Patrick's Day? Ms. Ports said yes. I'll be the little leprechaun [inaudible] around. Ms. Tefft said I always go for Indian food on Saint Patrick's Day. Ms. Ports said we can still do that. Mr. Clark requested can you hit us with an e-mail on this? Ms. Ports said yes, I will. Mr. Clark said that'd be fun to

go, kind of as a group, whoever could go from this Commission. Ms. Ports said yes. [There were no further questions or comments].

VIII. Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn was made by Ms. Tefft at 8:30 pm. Mr. Strand duly seconded the motion. ALL IN FAVOR – unanimous. Motion Carries.

The next meeting of the Bedford Historic District Commission is scheduled for March 5, 2024.

Respectfully submitted by Sue Forcier