

FRANKLIN HERITAGE COMMISSION MINUTES

MONDAY, JUNE 13, 2022 at 6:00 P.M.

City Hall - 316 Central Street

- ❑ **Call to Order – 6:01 P.M.**
- ❑ **Salute to the Flag - Led by Tim Stangroom**
- ❑ **Roll Call:** Chairman Glen Feener, Colby Morrill, Tim Stangroom, Bob Lucas, Councilor Paul Trudel, Alternate Leigh Webb, Planning Director Seth Creighton.
- ❑ **Approval of Minutes of the May 9, 2021 Public Meeting of the Board.**

Member Lucas made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Member Stangroom. Member Stangroom asked for a correction on page 2 in reference to the color of the awning for Downtown Crepes being black and white, not back and white. Correction noted. **Motion carried 4-0-1**, with Councilor Trudel abstaining due to absence from that meeting for a City Council meeting.

❑ **Old Business:**

Member Stangroom asked for any updates about the new Cumberland Farms. Director Creighton said he understands they plan to break ground in August as they ran into some hiccups with the soil contamination clean up. Member Lucas asked about the existing Cumberland Farms. Director Creighton said they will remove the tanks, canopy, and signage and board up the windows. Then the property will likely be sold. Member Webb mentioned the old Elks Club has a cellar hole and asked if they will dump any building materials there. Director Creighton was not aware of plans to that effect but there are a number of options.

❑ **New Business:**

Applicant for H22-10 was not in attendance yet so H22-11 was moved up.

H 22-11: “Trestle View Properties, LLC” is seeking approval to install wall art on the plywood window coverings at 446 Central St. The property is located at Map/Lot #117-161-00.

Member Morrill spoke to the application and explained that a mural had previously been approved by the Commission. However, when the cost of a mural became prohibitive, they looked into having artists create canvases for the boarded-up windows. He bought the canvases with his own money and started having artists paint them. Councilor Trudel said he thought this had already been approved and question why it was back before the board. Chairman Feener explained that it had been approved as a single mural and that is not what is there. Member Morrill acknowledged that he should come back to the Commission and apologized but was looking to move forward now.

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Member Webb asked if Member Morrill should recuse himself since he is speaking to the application. Chairman Feener agreed that he should. Member Morrill recused himself to speak to this application. Member Webb was seated in his place for this application. Member Morrill explained that he thought the art all showed outdoor activities and things unique to Franklin. Member Webb made the suggestion that they could look to old postcards for inspiration of subject matter but cautioned that the Board should not be acting as censors. Councilor Trudel agreed that they should not act as censors but felt the art should be within certain standards and subjects.

Chairman Feener reminded the Board their purpose and that changes need to be approved. Councilor Trudel agreed that change need to be approved but felt they should not be micromanaging the artwork. Chairman Feener said the entire purpose of the Commission is to micromanage. Member Lucas felt that they didn't need to do too much checking on it but thought they should show ideas to the Board for approval. Councilor Trudel suggested tabling the discussion until they can create some guidelines for what would be allowed.

Director Creighton gave an overview of some case law that spoke to what can/can not be regulated. There was some more discussion regarding possible subject matter, disallowing names of businesses, and that there are storefronts with brown paper in the windows that have been like that for years and that it should be of more concern than artwork.

Member Webb made a motion to approve what is already there with the provision that future ideas are brought to the Board first. Motion was seconded by Councilor Trudel. A suggestion was made to go and look at the art first as not everyone was familiar with exactly what it looks like. Motion was withdrawn and the discussion tabled to allow the other applicant to present their application.

H 22-10: "Lakes Region E-Bikes", tenant at 419 Central St, is applying to install a wall-mounted blade sign. The property is located at Map/Lot 117-165-00.

Justin and Audry Barriault, owners of Lakes Region eBikes, spoke to their application. They presented the same sign as had previously been approved but had changed it slightly to allow for a blacksmith to create an old-fashioned big-wheel bike frame to hold the sign and mount it as a blade sign. Member Webb questioned the small back wheel being cut in half. Ms. Barriault explained that would be a contact point to hang the sign. Member Lucas asked if the frame could be turned the other way so as to allow for the small wheel to not be cut. Mr. Barriault explained that would only allow one point of contact and did not feel it would be secure.

Chairman Feener opened the discussion to the public. No members of the public were present to speak on it so the hearing was closed and brought back to the Board. Member Stangroom asked Director Creighton to confirm if the sign meets the size limits. Director Creighton confirmed that it does. Councilor Trudel made a motion to approve the sign as presented, seconded by Member Lucas. **Motion carried 5-0-0.**

The Board took a 15-minute recess to walk to view the artwork at Trestle Park to continue the discussion on application **H 22-11**. Meeting was reconvened at 7:13p.m.

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Member Webb made a motion to approve the artwork that is already there with renderings of future ideas to come before the Board. Motion seconded by Councilor Trudel. **Motion carried 5-0-0.**

Member Morrill clarified the process that going forward he could bring renderings of proposed artwork ideas/subjects to the Board but did not have to bring actual canvases as that would cause the artists to risk being denied after spending the time and money to create a piece. It was confirmed that renderings/sketches would be appropriate.

□ **Other Business:**

There was a discussion about all current city projects, vacant storefronts, brown paper in the windows and the kayak planters throughout the city. Chairman Feener brought up the newly painted crosswalks and felt that if the City Council wants the Heritage Commission to exist, they should have come to them first as a professional courtesy. Member Lucas expressed some concerns about the colors/liability issues as they are not standard colors.

Councilor Trudel said he had received numerous emails questioning the legality, and no input from the public, City Council or Heritage Commission. He had also heard concerns about the liability issue. Chairman Feener offered to bring it to the next City Council meeting to share his concerns that it should have come to the Heritage Commission as a courtesy and to allow for public input.

Director Creighton brought up some of the Code Enforcement concerns such as the brown paper in the windows, loose plywood falling off buildings, etc. He expressed that there needs to be a commitment from all the Boards to help improve the image of the city. Member Lucas expressed concerns about junky yards when driving into the city. It was agreed to start the July 11 meeting at 6:30 to allow the Board to speak at the City Council meeting the same night.

- **Adjournment:** Councilor Trudel made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Member Webb. **Motion carried 5-0-0.** Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Bibbins
Planning & Zoning Administrative Assistant