

**FRANKLIN HERITAGE COMMISSION MINUTES**

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2022 at 6:00 P.M.**  
**City Hall - 316 Central Street**

- ❑ **Call to Order – 6:00 p.m.**
- ❑ **Salute to the Flag – led by Joya Clark**
- ❑ **Attendance:** Bob Lucas – Acting Chairman, Tim Stangroom, Councilor Paul Trudel, Alternate Leigh Webb (seated for Glen Feener), Alternate Joya Pinkham Clark (seated for Colby Morrill) Absent: Chairman Glen Feener, Colby Morrill. Staff present: Judy Bibbins, Planning and Zoning Administrative Assistant.
- ❑ **Approval of Minutes of the November 14, 2022 Public Meeting of the Board.**  
Member Webb made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Member Stangroom. **Motion carried 4-0-1 with Councilor Trudel abstaining as he was not at the meeting.**
- ❑ **Old Business:**

**H 22-17:** Franklin Home for the Aged Association d/b/a Peabody Place, owner, is applying for approval of two new signs at 24 Peabody Place. Map/lot number is 117-138-00.

Chairman Lucas recused himself as he is Vice President of the Board of Managers for Peabody Place. He appointed Member Stangroom as acting chair for this application. Member Webb disclosed that he is a non-voting corporate member, but did not feel this was a conflict of interest and as such will remain seated.

John Benham spoke on behalf of the application. He expressed his frustration with the need to come back and the suggestions of gooseneck lighting instead of what had been proposed. He sees it as ugly, obsolete technology and not in keeping with the quality of everything they have done with the new building.

Members of the Commission explained that the halo lighting proposed is intrusive, does not keep with the look and feel of the downtown area and is a violation of the ordinance. Member Clark read the ordinance that explains no neon, internally lit or electronic signs. Mr. Benham shared that he feels the gooseneck lighting is inappropriate and more difficult to maintain. He also said it would be harder to see the sign at night and that the Commission could override the ordinance if they see fit.

Members of the Board suggested that there are many styles of gooseneck lighting and all were reluctant to set a precedent of overriding the ordinance. Member Webb suggested adding a trim board to the sign and allowing channel lighting to downcast on the lettering. This is similar to the Opera House marquee sign.

Craig Jacobson, another representative from Peabody Place, spoke and expressed frustration at how late in the year it is getting and weather will make it difficult to wait until January to get an approval if they go back to the sign company for a redesign. Member Webb ask Administrative Assistant Bibbins if it is possible to schedule an off-cycle meeting. Ms. Bibbins confirmed that, since this is a Public Meeting and not a Public Hearing, they only need 24 hours' notice to schedule a meeting.

Acting Chairman Stangroom opened it to public comment. Bob Lucas, speaking as a member of the public, voiced support for the idea of channel lighting. With no further comments, it was brought back to the Board. Councilor Trudel also supported the idea of channel lighting but wasn't sure if that would meet the guidelines either. Mr. Jacobson and Mr. Benham were concerned with how quickly they could get an answer from the sign company but agreed to contact them for options.

Member Webb made a motion to continue the application to a date to be determined, seconded by Councilor Trudel. **Motion carried 4-0-0.**

Member Lucas resumed his seat as Acting Chairman.

□ **New Business:**

**H 22-18:** The City of Franklin and Franklin Business & Industrial Development Corporation (FBIDC), are applying for approval to place an architectural relic at Marceau Park. Map/lot number is 117-152-00.

Jim Aberg from FBIDC spoke to the application. He explained the desire to get more art into the downtown area and that the industrial heritage of Franklin gave rise to the idea of using architectural relics as sculpture. He cited the wheel at Trestle View Park and pieces at Catch Housing as examples.

Member Webb expressed concern as to the authority of the Historic Commission to rule on this type of application. Member Stangroom felt the landscaping clause would give them the authority as they are looking to add sculpture to the mulch bed at Marceau Park.

Members of the Commission had questions about exactly what the piece is and whether it had been used in one of the mills in Franklin. Mr. Aberg explained how the piece in question would have been used in every textile mill of the type in Franklin but could not confirm that it specifically came out of one of the mills here. Acting Chairman Lucas confirmed with Mr. Aberg that he had presented everything he needed to. He then expressed concerns that it looked like junk and was not obvious what it was. Mr. Aberg explained that art is subjective and that there would be a sign explaining what it is and how it would have been used. He also shared some other possible pieces that did come out of a mill here in Franklin. Acting Chairman Lucas expressed concerns about setting a precedent and how many more pieces could be used. Member Webb pointed out that this application is specific to this one item in this one location. Mr. Aberg confirmed that this is just one piece and they have no idea if or when more might be considered.

Mr. Aberg also confirmed that they were not planning to paint or seal it. They feel the natural patina is what gives the piece it's appeal. There was a general discussion about the relevance and how the patina will age in the New Hampshire weather. Mr. Aberg passed around a color copy for the Commission to get a better idea of how it looks. Member Clark suggested using a copy of the patent for the piece as part of the signage if this application is approved.

Councilor Trudel made a motion to table the application pending a site visit by Commission members to view the piece in person. Motion seconded by Member Clark. **Motion carried 3-2-0.**

Administrative Assistant Bibbins confirmed that she will wait to hear from Peabody Place that they have a new sign plan and will schedule another meeting at that time. Members that are interested will arrange a time to travel to see the architectural relic in person prior to the next meeting.

- **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn made by Member Stangroom, seconded by Member Webb. **Motion carried 5-0-0.** Meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Bibbins  
Planning and Zoning Administrative Assistant

APPROVED 02/13/2023