

**MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 4, 2002 HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING  
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
1 JUNKINS AVENUE  
City Council Chambers**

**7:00 p.m.**

**September 4, 2002**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman John Rice, Vice-Chairman David Adams, Rick Becksted, John Golumb, Ellen Fineberg; Paige Roberts; Joanne Grasso; and, Alternates Maija Hibbard and Richard Katz

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**ALSO PRESENT:** Roger Clum, Assistant Building Inspector



**I. OLD BUSINESS**

Let the record reflect that alternate, Ms. Hibbard stepped down from the following application.

**A) Petition for James Russ, owner,** for property located at 392-394 Pleasant Street wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace existing roof with Architectural shingles and install two (2) 30" x 38" skylights on the rear of the structure, one on the southeast facade and one on the northeast facade) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 102 as Lot 063 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic A districts. This application was tabled at the July 10, 2002 meeting to the August 4, 2002 meeting and again to the September 4, 2002.

The motion was made and seconded to take the application off the table and passed unanimously with a 7 – 0 vote.

**SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION**

Mr. Russ, the owner of the property, stated he wanted to withdraw a part of the application for a skylight on the southwest facade; therefore, the only skylight that is being proposed will be the skylight on the southeast facade. The skylight measures 30" x 38" and the window below is 34-1/2" wide. He presented photographs of the structure showing that the skylight will not be seen by any surrounding property owners, especially from Franklin Street.

Mr. Russ then addressed the shingles for the roof and presented a sample of the black shingle that will be used.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the Public Hearing was closed.

**DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

Ms. Fineberg made a motion to accept the application as amended to install one skylight on the rear of the structure on the southeast façade; Vice-Chairman Adams seconded.

The motion passes unanimously with a 6 – 1 vote with Mr. Becksted voting in the negative.



**II. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**1) Petition for Irene Bartholomew, owner**, for property located at 90 Gates Street wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replacement of clapboards on shed kitchen with pine or cedar shingles) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 103 as Lot 074 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic A districts.

**SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION**

Ms. Bartholomew, the owner of the property, stated that she would like to replace the shingles on the shed addition on the back of the house. She explained on the photographs presented that there are many houses in the area having a mix of clapboards and shingles and added that it is quite common.

Vice-Chairman Adams inquired if there would be any changes to the door or window location? Ms. Bartholomew replied “there would not be”.

Ms. Fineberg asked if the shingles would be stained? Ms. Bartholomew replied “no” because this section of the house is not able to receive any sun resulting in a problem with mold.

The Commission asked Ms. Bartholomew what her preference was to use, the cedar or pine shingles. Ms. Bartholomew replied “that her preference was cedar”.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the Public Hearing was closed.

**DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

Mr. Becksted made a motion to approve the application with the clarification that cedar shingles be used; Ms. Grasso seconded. Ms. Grasso stated that she feels the mix of clapboards and cedar shingles will be in character with the neighborhood.

The motion passed unanimously with a 7 – 0 vote.



**2) Petition for Louis Clarizio, owner**, for property located at 880 Middle Street wherein permission is requested to allow three (3) new 22-1/2” x 27-1/2” air conditioning units and relocate two (2) existing units to the right façade of the structure as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 152-048 and lies within the General Residence A and Historic A districts.

### **SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION**

A representative from the James P. D'Alessio Contractor's office, stated that they were proposing that three new condensers be allowed on the side façade as well as relocate two condensers from the other side of the house to this same location for a total of 5 units. All the units are approximately the same size and will not be visible from the street as well as all the required setbacks have been met. Two of the units will be located inside a window well.

The representative stated the reason for this request is because there have been on going renovations being made at the property and there is a new entrance and driveway in place.

Ms. Fineberg asked why larger units could not be used eliminating the need for five units? The representative replied that not all the areas in the house need to be cooled; therefore, to have five small units will allow for a zoned cooling system.

Ms. Fineberg asked what was on the left side of the structure from the window well to the other side of the house? The representative replied that there is another window well; however, if the units were placed in a well, they would be seen from the owner's porch.

### **SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION TO THE PETITION**

Mr. Legg, the direct abutter on the adjacent property at 846 Middle Street and the most affected by the installation of these units, stated these units can be seen from his dining room windows as well as the upstairs bedroom windows and if all five are going at the same time, he asked what the noise level would be? Since the HVAC representative was not present, this question was not answered; however, Mr. Roger Clum, the Assistant Building Inspector, stated the units generate 80 decibels each and the Ordinance will allow 45 decibels during nighttime hours and 55 decibels during the day.

Mr. Legg stated that he feels that other alternatives for the location of the units need to be explored.

Mr. Clum stated he could understand the concern about noise; however, it is difficult make a determination on this issue since we do not know what the actual decibel level will be until the units have been installed. There are many things to take into consideration when making a determination on the noise level such as the foliage, how the building can reflect sound and therefore, becomes a matter for the Inspection Department to monitor.

Mr. Becksted stated it is possible to have one or two larger units to do the job; however, the larger the unit, the higher the decibel level.

Chairman Rice stated that the purview of the Commission is design and not noise level. He stated that under Article X, Scope of Review, it would be hard to justify the application by the noise. We would have to rely on staff review.

Ms. Grasso asked why the units could not be located on the other side of the house. The Contractor's representative replied that the units' lose efficiency as they are moved further away.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the Public Hearing was closed.

### DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Ms. Fineberg made a motion to deny the application as presented; Mr. Becksted seconded. Ms. Fineberg stated there are other locations to place five units on the property and she added that aesthetically, the five units do nothing for the appearance of the property. To place two units in a window well would be terrific and to place two additional units in another window well would be even better since the units would then be hidden from view. Ms. Fineberg stated she was sorry the HVAC representative was not present to discuss other issues. Mr. Becksted stated he seconded because the area is a Single Family Residential district and added that to have five condenser units on one lot would be excessive.

Mr. Becksted then asked the applicant if he would prefer voting up or down on the application or if he would prefer the application be tabled to discuss other options for the placement of the units.

The applicant stated he would like to see the application tabled and come back with other options.

Vice-Chairman Adams made a motion to table the application to the October 2, 2002 meeting to a Work Session/Public Hearing to discuss other possible designs and to have the HVAC representative present to address concerns that the HDC members have. Mr. Golomb seconded and all approved with a 7 – 0 vote.

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Let the record reflect that Mr. Clum left the meeting.

### III. WORK SESSIONS

**A. Work Session requested by Rick Goduti, architect and applicant, The City of Portsmouth, owner, and, The Portsmouth Housing Authority, lessee,** for property located at 1 Junkins Avenue (The Old Cottage Hospital). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 110 as Lot 001 and lies within the Municipal and Historic A districts. It is proposed that the building will be renovated and restored and to construct a new exterior handicap accessible ramp on the west facade of the building.

Mr. Rick Goduti, the architect for the project reviewed the plans with the Historic District Commission as follows:

- **Nineteen Units are being proposed for elderly housing;**
- **Renovate and restore entire building;**
- **Very little will be done to the outside of the building;**
- **Would like the building to have a 30 – 40 year life cycle;**
- **West side of building is very deteriorated;**
- **Leave Portico as is;**
- **Repair stairs in-kind;**
- **Will not use any brickwork that does not match existing;**
- **Roof will be re-shingled in-kind**

- Lead paint removed from windows to meet lead paint requirements;
- Rebuild and repair existing windows;
- Windows that have to be removed will be replaced with windows in-kind;
- Six over six windows will be used to match existing;
- Cupola will be rebuilt as is;
- Existing fire escape will be removed;
- Elevator shaft is not large enough for new elevator;
- A new masonry wall will be built that will be the least imposing and discreet and will be built in-between the existing chimney and the wall;
- Will have an on-sight inspection for the brick and mortar samples;
- Will have plans for the location of mechanicals.
- Will return to the October 2, 2002 meeting for a Work Session/Public Hearing;
- The Commission stated that most of the work being considered is being done in-kind and does not require the Commission's approval; and,
- The Commission members were excited about the plan for the 1895 Building.

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### III. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the Commission acted unanimously with a 7 – 0 vote to adjourn the meeting to the next scheduled meeting on October 2, 2002.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan M. Long  
Secretary

/jml