

**Minutes from the February 4, 2004 HDC Meeting**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
1 JUNKINS AVENUE  
City Council Chambers**

7:00 p.m.

February 4, 2004

**PLEASE NOTE: Due to the length of the Agenda, Old Business, Public Hearings and Work Sessions A through C will be heard at the February 4, 2004 meeting; however, Work Sessions D through G will be heard on the following Wednesday, February 11, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.**

**January 31, 2004 – 9:30 a.m. - Site Walk – 133 Islington Street**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman John Rice, Vice-Chairman David Adams, Members Rick Becksted, Ellen Fineberg, City Council Representative Joanne Grasso; Planning Board Representative Paige Roberts; Alternates, Richard Katz and Sandra Dika

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** John Golomb and Roger Clum, Assistant Building Inspector

**ALSO PRESENT:** David M. Holden, Planning Director

**I. OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Becksted made a motion to take the application off the table; Ms. Grasso seconded and was approved with a 7 – 0 vote.

**A) Work Session/Public Hearing of petition for Antonios Tzortzakis, owner, and Robert Cannon, applicant,** for property located at 413-415 Islington Street wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (a one-story 165 s.f. addition being 11' x 15' in size and windows to match existing) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 144 as Lot 33 and lies within the Mixed Residential Business and Historic A districts. This application was tabled at the reconvened meeting of January 14, 2004 to the February 4, 2004 meeting .

Mr. Becksted made a motion to take the application off the table; Ms. Grasso seconded and was approved with a 7 – 0 vote.

**SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION**

Mr. Cannon, the contractor for the project reviewed his revised plans with for the application with the Commission members showing that vinyl siding was in place on the structure. The windows are wood. We are planning to construct a 15' x 10' addition onto the side of the house

to allow for additional living space. We are going to re-use the windows that will be removed for the addition and place them in the new addition.

There being no further speakers, the Public Hearing was closed.

**DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

Vice-Chairman Adams made a motion to approve revised plans for the application as presented; Mr. Becksted seconded and was approved with a 7 – 0 vote.

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Vice-Chairman Adams made a motion to take the application off the table; Ms. Grasso seconded and was approved with a 7 –0 vote.

**B) Work Session/Public Hearing of petition for Brina Lampert, owner,** for property located at 202 Islington Street wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (approval for installation front door as well as side door on building that have been installed and that the issue of the installed internally illuminated sign be removed) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 137 as lot 021 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts. Since there was no one present to speak to the application, the Commission tabled the petition at the reconvened meeting of January 14, 2004 to the February 4, 2004 meeting.

**SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION**

Mr. Yong Lu, the applicant, presented drawings of the glass front door. He addition that Mr. Clum, the assistant Building Inspector indicated that the sign could remain as long there be no electrical connection/feeds to the sign.

There being no further speakers, the Public Hearing was closed.

**DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

Vice-Chairman Adams made a motion to approve the application as presented with the **stipulation** that there be no electrical connection/feeds to the sign; Ms. Fineberg seconded. Vice-Chairman Adams stated that what has been done is very much the spirit with what the contractor had said and he has no difficulty with voting in favor of the application.

The motion was approved with a 7 – 0 vote.

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**C) An Amendment to an application that was previously approved on November 5, 2003 for property owned by Ocean National Bank requested by JSA Architects, Inc.** to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (add two new windows on second floor that will match existing windows on Fleet Street façade and revise glass type (glazing to have spandrel glass) on State Street vestibule) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 116 as Lot 1, 6 and 7 lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts.

**SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION**

Mr. Wallinga, of JSA Architects and representing the owners, stated that an amendment to the original approval was being requested to allow two windows on the second story of the Fleet Street façade to be added. He stated that as the project progressed, we realized that two windows were needed to allow the space to be used for office use. The glazing will match the existing windows.

Mr. Wallinga stated that on the State Street façade, a vestibule is proposed for an ATM space. For security reasons we are proposing to use a spandrel glass. He presented photograph of other properties using the same type of glass.

There being no further speakers, the Public Hearing was closed.

**DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

Ms. Grasso made a motion to **approve** as presented with the **stipulation** that the door be placed on the building as presented on Plan A2.01 submitted at the meeting; Mr. Katz seconded. Ms. Grasso stated he liked the two windows that are being added on Fleet Street.

Vice-Chairman Adams stated he also agreed; however he was puzzled by what kind of impact this glass will have during the daytime hours as well as nighttime hours. Will it be reflective or opaque. He would like to hear comments from other Commission members.

Chair Rice stated that he feels there will no big impact on the application.

Ms. Dika stated she would like to see the different type glass.

Mr. Becksted stated this bank does have a need; however, he feels the spandrel glass will give it an institutional design. He added he does not have any problem with it

Mr. Becksted made a motion to approve the application with the stipulation that the door be placed on the building as shown on the plan (SA2.01); Ms. Grasso seconded. The motion passed with a 6 – 1 vote with Vice-Chairman Adams voting in the negative.

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**II. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**1) Petition for Joan Sanborn, owner**, for property located at 191 South Street wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (seeking approval for a squirrel proof chimney cap that was installed in March of 2002) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 111 as Lot 039 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic A districts.

**SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION**

Ms. Sanborn, the owner of the property, stated that she had no idea that Historic District approval was needed for the chimney cap. She added that the cap has been in place since March of 2002 and took many photographs of other chimneys have the same cap in the South End. The reason she put the cap on was because squirrels, birds and other animals were getting into her house and it was very annoying.

Chairman Rice stated that the Commission has not approved this kind of chimney during his time on the Board; however, at this time he would prefer not asking her to remove the cap; however, there comes a time when you have to balance the picture.

Mr. Becksted stated he wondered how many of these caps have been installed and not approved.

**FURTHER SPEAKING TO THE PETITION**

Ms. Joyce Zabarsky, an abutter, stated she was flabbergasted that Ms. Sanborn had to come before the Commission for approval. She stated there are thousand of squirrels in the area and most of the home owners in the area are having trouble with them.

There being no further speakers, the Public Hearing was closed.

**DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

Vice-Chairman Adams made a motion to approve the application as submitted; Ms. Roberts seconded and was approved with a 7 – 0 vote.



**2) Petition for Worth Development Corporation, owner**, for property located at 147-151 Congress Street wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (seeking approval for an acrylic canvas awning being 16' wide with a 4' drop and a 5' projection that was erected in December 2003 on the Maplewood Avenue façade) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 126 as Lot 004 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts.

**SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION**

Attorney Robert Shaines, the owner of the property, stated the Commission members have photographs of the building in heir packets. He stated that there is an existing office in the basement that has a stairwell and fills up with water running into the basement area every time it rains. We have tried to use sub pumps and when the temperatures gets below freezing, they do not work. This causes a safety hazard on the property.

Attorney Shaines stated the idea of using an awning came up in trying to solve the safety problem. There are similar canopies in the back of the building. The purpose of the awning is not to keep the sun out but to keep the area from icing up.

Chairman Rice stated the Commission has reviewed numerous awnings in the past and have come to the conclusion that awnings should not be fixed. An awning should have some character to it so that it can be rolled up or down and not a permanent part of the building. This particular building is very institutional looking.

Ms. Dika stated she had no problem with the awning just that it is a fixed awning and is rigid and looks plastic. A retractable awning could not withstand the inclement weather in this area during the winter months.

There being no further speakers, the Public Hearing was closed.

**DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

Vice-Chairman Adams made a motion to approve the application for the purposes of discussion; Ms. Roberts seconded. Ms. Roberts stated this awning is not for pedestrians being on the side of the building. Vice-Chairman Adams stated he will support the application and agreed that because this awning is the best compromise to solve this situation.

Mr. Grasso stated she will support the motion because it is an institutional building in the Historic District and the awning is needed for safety reasons. The Commission advised the applicant to contact the Inspection Department to determine if Historic District Commission approval was required before making any exterior changes.

The motion passed with a 7 – 0 vote.



**3) Petition for Olde Port Development, owner, and Stephen Kelm applicant,** for property located at 126 State Street wherein permission is requested to allow renovations and addition to an existing structure and to allow new construction of approximately 25’ x 20’ 3-story addition attached to an existing structure at rear of building for conversion into residential and commercial uses (as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 107 as Lot 057 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts.

**SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION**

Mr. Larry Young of DeStefano Architects and representing the applicant, stated there were no major changes from what was discussed at the work session held previously. He walked through the set of plans presented to the Commission members page by page. He added that the property is the Old Starlight Lounge. The applicant is asked to build a 25’ x 20’ three-story addition to be attached to the existing structure at the rear of the building for the conversion into residential and commercial uses

Ms. Michelle Nurvant, an abutter, stated she was concerned where the drainage would be located; there are no gutters;

Chairman Rice stated these were issues that will be addressed Site Review.

Mr. Patrick Hyer, an abutter on State Street, stated the project makes the area look cleaner and nicer.

Mr. Doug an abutter at 116 Court Street was inquiring about the empty lot and added he feels the whole proposal will be an improvement and an enhancement to the area.

Mr. Peter Merk, an abutter also at 116 State Street, agreed that the project will be a big improvement to the area.

Ms. Joan Jones of the Bow Street Inn, stated she was in favor of the proposal because it would enhance the area to see the building renovated.

There being no further speakers, the Public Hearing was closed.

**DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

Vice-Chairman Adams made a motion to approve the application as presented; Mr. Becksted seconded. Vice-Chairman Adams stated that much of what we have been looking at will be covered over by other buildings. There will always be issues raised by abutters and some that we don't even know about. Mr. Becksted stated he would like to make a clarification to the motion that the motion be amended as follows: that the Building Permit reflects four residential and one commercial use on the property.

The motion passed with a 7 – 0 vote. Please note that this has been reflected.



**4) Work Session/Public Hearing for the petition for Tom and Kim Hitchcock, owners, and Roe G Cole, III, applicant,** for property located at 50 South School Street #5 wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (add one additional Velux, Model #308 30-5/8" wide x 55" long skylight to front left façade of building that will match the skylights approved at the August 6, 2003 meeting) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 101 as Lot 060-5 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic A districts.

**SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION**

There being no further speakers, the Public Hearing was closed.

**DECISION OF THE COMMISSION**

Voted to **table the application to the reconvened meeting on February 11, 2004** to discuss solar tubing be used rather than skylights since it would less obtrusive to the area.



**III. WORK SESSIONS**

**A) Work Session requested by DeStefano Architects for property owned by Parade Mall** and located at 195 Hanover Street (corner of High Street and Hanover Street). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 001 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts. (Construct a 116,000 s.f. mixed use building for hotel, residential and retail uses.)

- Ms. DeStefano presented three different renderings of the project for the Commission members to review for property located at 195 Hanover Street;
- Ms. DeStefano presented photographs of the area looking up Hanover Street from partway up the street from Market Street that shows the relationship of the parking garage across the street;
- The height and size of the building is relative to other engineered elevations of other hotels in the area;
- The materials used will be metal, brick, slate and composition bays;
- The scale is being broken down on the walls by introducing a pattern in the brick as well as patterns within the glass in differentiating some of bays.

- The top is being pulled out flush to the face of the main building or the red brick building, but we are trying to keep a lighter cap at the top and introduce a flat roof and brackets that would still be the hotel rooms at the top;
- A corner piece is on the angle that is on the corner of Hanover and High streets which she feels is a good way to gain attention without having a hard edge on the corner;
- Rendering #2 – Ms. DeStefano stated that they played more with the rhythm and size to Bow Street as well as Market Street (across from 100 Market Street).
- Different size bays were used to break down the scale as well as produce much more color;
- Different window patterns, sizes, pieces stepping back differently along the streetscape that we feel will create an interesting walkway as work is being done up and down Hanover Street;
- Have a unique entry form;
- There will be a break between the residential wing and the main hotel building to allow a separation between the different uses of the building.
- Mr. Young addressed the proposed materials to be used and brick is the most common material; however, there are no fixed ideas being proposed as of yet; metal painted brick in color, or slate or a composition of new material that is like wood similar to what is on the Porter Street townhouses;
- The third rendering is a development of the previous rendering. The building is five stories and has a heavy base as well as awnings to allow for protection for pedestrians when walking on Hanover Street and for future activity;
- The building is proposed to cascade more down to The Hill;
- The materials on this rendering are proposed to be brick and copper and pre-cast, but that is still being developed;
- Ms. Fineberg asked that the residential part of the project be discussed further;
- Ms. DeStefano stated that in the third rendering, a completely different look was being looked into – such as in the Boston Back Bay with a raised stoop. The separation of the two uses start with the glass store front, the heavy brick building that would turn the corner as well as retail space;
- Ms. DeStefano requested that the Commission members discuss the rendering that would be most desirable for the location or a combination of certain renderings;
- Ms. Roberts asked about the corner entryway at Hanover and High Streets on rendering #1;
- Ms. DeStefano replied it will be curved on one side with the doorway notched into it at a 45 degree angle and will also create an outdoor gathering space;
- Ms. Grasso stated that she could not choose which rendering she preferred, but she could eliminate #3 because it is the least appealing;
- Mr. Katz stated he felt #1 was the least appealing because of the upper story cap and feels it is too similar but not as extreme as 100 Market Street; however, he feels the safest rendering is #2 – would like to see a model on it. He is intrigued by rendering #3 simply because it could be similar to an old mill building; but can understand why people would be a little bit weary of this rendering;
- Vice-Chairman Adams stated he feels rendering #3 is honest, has a rhythm to it, has a roof; however, there is a problem with a single massive building on a slopping site where storefronts either get smaller or larger. On 100 Market Street, it did both.
- Rendering #1 has masonry with windows and being broken up into pieces, it allow the storefront to walk down the slope so that it will have a more pedestrian friendly feel to it.

- Concerned about rendering #2 in that some of the modules are narrower than typical store fronts or the downtown jumbled buildings;
- Vice-Chairman Adams is concerned about rendering #1 because of the capped roof (thing on the roof) because it looks like it gets larger as it goes up and would rather see more roof;
- Rendering #3 has solid building integrity and is valuable;
- Ms. Dika likes rendering #1 since it is more graceful than the other two renderings and because the cap ties it together in good rhythm. The #1 rendering – she likes the subtlety of the brick working against the brick rather than the more reddish brick tone.
- Mr. Becksted stated he liked #2 rendering, but there was something that just did not settle right with him – like the width element of some of the elements and should have other options;
- Ms. Fineberg stated she liked rendering #1 the best because the rhythm is right; however, she doesn't like the residential component or maybe it is the glass on the bottom. She likes that the facades are broken up and not all the same. The roof needs some work. #3 rendering remind her of Lincoln Center in New York to the sense of the shape and rhythm of it reminding her of a very large and institutional high school. #2 rendering has too many things going on;
- Ms. Roberts stated she agreed with what fellow Commissioner members have stated; however, she found rendering #2 to be visually fragmented because there were two many different pieces, but she did like the articulation of the residential piece on rendering #3. Rendering #1 does have good potential.
- Ms. Grasso stated she liked part of rendering #2 especially the façade on the street because the design makes it less massive; liked the appearance on the bottom and the way the building gives a little more pedestrian feel and will encourage people to walk down High Street which would be a good thing;
- Chairman Rice stated he liked rendering #2 the most because it has larger and smaller units and picks up that this is the way the neighborhood is. There is rhythm so this building breaks up a little bit in this regard. Rendering #3 is monolithic and liked the residential component. Liked the interesting entryways for rendering #2 and added, he did not like the balconies. Rendering #1 he did not like the penthouse and is a reflection of 100 Market Street and is repeating a form that does not need to be repeated. This rendering looks rather institutional and gives you no direction at all.
- Chairman Rice stated that based on Commission members remarks, rendering #3 has been eliminated.
- An abutter at 62 Deer Street asked if anyone had thought of using a different material on the residential units than what is on the Hotel to give it the building a different feel. He also suggested that possibly pitched roofs be added to the building to mimic buildings in the surrounding neighborhood.
- An abutter, who owns two properties on The Hill asked if a rendering could be drawn up to show how the Hotel would like from The Hill. Ms. DeStefano stated that these views would likely be unveiled at the next work session. The abutter was concerned with the brick color that was discussed. Ms. DeStefano stated a brick selection has not yet been made at this time since it is too early in the project.
- Chairman Rice stated he did not have a great desire to have a different material on the residential area vs. the Hotel.
- Ms. Fineberg would like to have a more a traditional storefront on the first floor to look different than the floor above and is basically the reason she does not like rendering #2;



- Mr. Katz feels that to make the residential entity subtly differentiated may not be a bad thing, but if it is made into a separate entity, the differences in scale and mass would make it look very awkward, and could possibly look like an afterthought.
  - DeStefano Architects implied they would be back for another work session next month.
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**B) Work Session requested by Mary and Erik Maurer, owners,** for property located at 65 Rogers Street. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 115 as Lot 002 and lies within the Mixed Residential Office and Historic A districts. (Change house from a duplex to a single family; demolish a neglected barn and replace with a barn on same footprint; attach barn to house and move southerly 4' away from property line); add a half story walk-up; raise existing roof to 5'6" to accommodate for headroom; and renovate existing three-season porch.)

- Frank Hyer, the architect for the project, stated that since the last work session, we have scaled the project down for the dormers and presented plans to reflect the changes;
  - The windows have been changed to bring the fenestration in line with a 1880 New England style dormer;
  - The windows in the kitchen will be removed on the inside to allow for counter space; however, there will be windows on the outside to keep the house in symmetry;
  - Chairman Rice thanked the applicant for making the changes to his application that the Commission members suggested at the last work session;
  - Vice-Chairman Adams is very comfortable with all the changes and design of the addition as well;
  - Mr. Hyer stated that he would be back for a Public Hearing at the next meeting in March 2004.
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**C) Work Session requested by Anne Whitney, Architect for property owned by Kathleen Beauchamp** located at 21 Blossom Street. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 110 as Lot 003 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic A districts. (Remove existing one-story garage and replace with a one-1/2 story garage; build a one-story addition between existing residence and new garage that will include an entry porch.)

- Anne Whitney, the architect for the project, stated they had made changes since the last work session. They had lowered the height of the garage; reduce window fenestration to a single window;
- The addition is definitely smaller ;
- The front door can still be seen;
- Presented a view of the corner as you drive by and the tree that was an issue last meeting can still be seen;
- When driving by the structure, the proposed changes will not be seen;
- Ms. Whitney presented a photograph.
- Ms. Fineberg stated she was happy that the scale of the addition will be scaled down;
- Ms. Roberts stated she agreed that the scale is a big improvement.
- Mr. Becksted stated he also agreed and was happy the tree was still on the property;
- Vice-Chairman Adams stated he feels the addition is just too much and too large for this small cape.

