

Minutes from the Historic District Commission Meeting on January 5, 2005

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

6:15 p.m. – Non-Public Meeting with Counsel in Conference Room “A”

7:00 p.m.

January 5, 2005

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

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Ken Smith, Planning Board Representative

ALSO PRESENT: Roger Clum, Assistant Building Inspector

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Since Mr. Smith was not present for the meeting, first alternate Mr. Katz sat in.

I. OLD BUSINESS

A) Election of Officers

Mr. Katz nominated Mr. Rice as Chairman; Ms. Fineberg seconded. Mr. Rice accepted the nomination and the nomination passed with a 9 – 0 vote.

Mr. Golumb nominated Mr. Adams as Vice-Chairman; Mr. Becksted seconded. Mr. Adams accepted the nomination and the nomination passed with a 9 – 0 vote.

Congratulations to both Chairman Rice and Vice-Chairman Adams.

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B) Petition for Barbara Theodore, owner, and Olde Port Properties, applicant, for property located at 121 Bow Street, Unit #C wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (erect three fixed awnings on the Bow Street façade) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 105 as Lot 059 and lies within the Central Business A and the Historic A districts. This application was tabled at the December 1, 2004 meeting to the January 5, 2005 meeting

The motion was made and seconded to remove the application from the table and passed with a 7 – 0 vote.

The applicant has requested to table the application to the February 2, 2005 meeting. Mr. Becksted made a motion to table the application to the February 2, 2005 meeting and was seconded and all agreed with a 7 – 0 vote.

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C) Amendment to original approval given on January 7, 2004 for Smith, Minch, Frost, owner and Sumner Davis, Architect for property located at 159-165 State Street to allow the substitution of three-lite basement sash for either a three over six or six over six basement sash on exterior elevations; and to erect two utility screening fences as shown on drawing as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 107 as Lot 046-3 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Mr. Kelly Davis, the Architect for the project and representing the owners, stated the owner's are planning to substitute windows on the basement level. The owners have changed the arrangements of the basement units into one-bedroom units and need an egress window. We would like to put back a 3-light window. On the front we would like to make all the basement windows three-pane. There is one window that the owner would like to replace with a 4-light sash that would be square shaped to gain as much light as possible. We are also requesting the screening for the gas meters and presented a plan for the screening.

Mr. Davis presented a cut-sheet of the hardware for the screening that will be used.

Mr. Golumb feels that the window looks out of character for the building.

Vice-Chairman Adams asked how the foundation materials would have to be filled in. Mr. Davis stated on the side, it will be brick used from the existing site and would therefore match, On the front, the windows have been approved previously. There will be no change in sash.

FURTHER SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. George Dodge, a direct abutter to the property, stated he had no problem with the application but he did want to clarify the fact that the three over three windows being used in place of the six over six windows. The sash on the side does not match the other windows.

There being no further speakers, the public hearing was closed.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Vice-Chairman Adams made a motion to approve with the changes as presented and adjusted during the commentary amending to three over three windows rather than six over six windows; Ms. Grasso seconded and was approved with a 7 – 0 vote.



D) Amendment to original approval given on May 5, 2004 for Parade Office, LLC and DeStefano Architects for property located at 100 High Street, previously known as 195 Hanover Street, to allow decorative screening to be placed around electrical switch; the location of gas meters and related fencing on lot 1 to benefit Lot 2, the addition of a canopy roof on lot 1 to benefit the egress door on lot 2, the installation of retaining walls on lot 1 to benefit lot 2, and balconies on lot 1 to benefit lot 2 as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 1 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts.

Ms. Fineberg asked if it would be possible for the Commission to take Old Business items D and E together since they are for the same application. Chairman Rice replied that he would prefer hearing these applications together and the Commission members all agreed with a 7 – 0 vote..

E) Amendment to original approval given on May 5, 2004 for Parade Office, LLC and DeStefano Architects for property located at 77 Hanover Street, previously known as 195 Hanover Street, to allow the enlargement of all balconies by 4" and the installation of retaining walls as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 1 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Mr. Dennis Macarone of DeStefano Architects, stated there are some changes needed for this property and reviewed the plans submitted page by page showing the changes with the Commission members.

Mr. Macarone indicated on the plans that the Commission members had where the decorative screening will be placed around the electrical switch as well as the location of the screening. The screening will be 6' high by 12' wide and also showed on the plans where the gas meters would be located. The meters will not be visible from the street. The proposed canopy will be 6-1/2' wide with an 8' radius. The Juliet balconies are proposed to extend 1'4" out from the building rather than 1' and will be enough room for a person to stand on the balcony, but not any furniture. The materials for the decks were previously approved. There will be double doors on the front and will be made of cedar. There will be a raised bed and retaining wall up front. The windows will be half size so it will not interfere with the retaining wall screening facing the back of The Hill. The other view will be blocked by the dumpsters.

Mr. Macarone went on to show there is an existing site plan and highlighted the area. There will be a canopy placed over the stairs and both gas meters. Page 3 of the plans show where the proposed gas meters will be located. The materials will not be seen from the street .

Vice-Chairman Adams stated we will assume this was previously approved and the 4" extension on the deck this is just an extension.

Mr. Macarone stated we are also proposing sidewalks and will be located on the outside. There will be a planting bed between the retaining wall and the sidewalk. The thickness of the blue stone cap will be 1-1/2". Plan #3 shows detailing of the railing system.

Vice-Chairman Adams stated we will assume the Juliet balconies were previously approved and this is just a 4" extension.

There being no further speakers, the public hearing was closed.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Becksted stated that for the purposes of discussion he will make a motion to approve both amendments. Vice-Chairman Adams seconded. Mr. Becksted stated that both himself and Vice-Chairman Adams are bothered by the balconies; however, it is a duplicate of all the designs with the exception of stretching it 4"; therefore, this request can be granted. He added

that he feels the design looks a little amateurish since we have all worked so hard on this project.

Mr. Becksted stated the Commission has given the applicant approval for the original application.

Mr. Dennis Macarone stated the detail is not the same, originally it was a natural panel. The landscaping blocks will be on the court yard level not wrapped around the whole building. This will not have completely hidden glass and added that was put on Planning Board review. The retaining wall has so much pitch and will be a 2' retaining wall. The wall will be horizontal and will be plumb.

Vice-Chairman Adams stated he would like to amend application E to approve as amended with the stipulation the "c-channel" structure be wrapped in smooth metal as previously detailed. Mr. Becksted seconded and all approved with a 7 – 0 vote.



II PUBLIC HEARINGS

1) Petition for Cragie Street Associates and Jay McSharry, applicant, for property located at 150 Congress Street, d/b/a Jumpin Jay's to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace the door and adjacent wood panels located at the Raw Bar with a picture window that will match existing windows) as per plans on file in the Planning Department Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 126 as Lot 011 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Mr. James McSharry, the owner of the restaurant, stated he would like to remove the door and replace with a new window that will match the existing windows.

Mr. Golumb inquired about the exterior wood panel between Bailey Works and the Raw Bar? Mr. McSharry replied it would remain in place.

There being no further speakers, the public hearing was closed.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Becksted made a motion to approve the application as presented; Ms. Grasso seconded and was approved with a 7 – 0 vote.



Ms. Fineberg feels the following application should be moved to a work session; Mr. Golumb seconded and all approved with a 7 – 0 vote.

2) Petition for Melissa Bicchieri, owner and Sonny Iannacone, applicant, for property located at 206 Northwest Street wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace all existing windows; replace roof shingles; and, to construct three front dormers as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is

shown on Assessor Plan 122 as Lot 006 and lies within the General Residence A and Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Mr. Iannacone stated that Marvin true divided light windows will be used to match the existing size and type windows that are below; however, we are planning to construct three front dormers placing the windows below the roofline.

Vice-Chairman Adams stated the Commission would understand a plan to make this into a full two story structure and have dog house dormers. This would accomplish what you are trying to do; however, we would need to see the drawings.

Chairman Rice feels this application should be tabled to the February 2, 2005 meeting. He added that usually in the Historic District area that the first floor windows are large and as the windows go to the second or third floor they are shorter and narrower.

Mr. Iannacone stated we are planning to re-roof the structure since there has been so much water damage. Vice-Chairman Adams stated that if you are replacing anything in kind, this does not require Historic District Commission approval.

Vice-Chairman Adams made a motion to table the application to a work session/public hearing at the February 2, 2005 meeting; Mr. Golumb seconded and all approved with a 7 – 0 vote.

Vice-Chairman Adams stated the Commission would understand a plan to make this structure into a two-story building and to use doghouse dormers would accomplish more for what you are intending to do

Mr. Katz stated we would need to see the drawings. There is room for molding that we want to maintain.

Mr. Iannacone stated we are removing the chimney on the rear façade of the house that has water damage. Chairman Rice reminded the applicant that anything can be replaced in kind; however, anything that is not will require HDC approval.

The motion to table the application to the February 2, 2005 meeting passed with a 7 – 0 vote.



3) Work Session/Public Hearing for petition for Sheila Ghamami, owner, for property located at 369 – 371 Islington Street to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace four entry doors; vinyl siding and trim, cover two non-working entry doors on first floor; and complete entry way improvements; as well as bring the building up to code as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 144 as Lot 022 and lies within the Mixed Residential Business and the Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Ms. Ghamami, the owner of the property, stated she had purchased the property recently; however, in the past it was used as a religious store and two apartment units. At this time it is an eyesore and a dump. She presented photographs of the property as it exists as well as

surrounding properties that show vinyl siding has been used on many of the homes in the area. Ms. Ghamami stated that this property is adjacent to the Getty gas station and there are residential apartments and a retail unit.

Ms. Ghamami stated that we have done a lot of work on the interior, but have decided the exterior renovations will be minimal. The vinyl siding we are proposing, will have vinyl corners; the rake and the fascia boards will be aluminum. Three solid steel panel doors are being proposed and presented a cut sheet to show to the members. All windows will remain and shutters will be removed; the molding will remain wood; the trim will be repainted around the fixtures; and, new handrails will be used. The house is proposed to being brought up to code.

Chairman Rice stated that originally this part of Islington Street was not in the Historic District Commission area; however, after 1995 a new Ordinance was written and this particular area became part of the HDC area which was approximately eight to nine years ago.

Mr. Becksted stated there are a number of fiber glass doors that look identical to wood and you have to tap them to be sure of the material. Mr. Becksted added there is some fine craftsmanship in this building and to cover it up with aluminum will never do it justice.

Ms. Ghamami stated that financially she cannot afford to do the building with wood clapboards and stated she would rather paint over the asbestos. She suggested that the rear of the building could be clapboard and then each year or so renovate another side of the structure and clapboard another facade.

The Commission members agreed that this would be fine.

Mr. Katz inquired if the corner trim boards would be wood over the vinyl siding. Ms. Ghamami replied that would be possible. Mr. Katz stated that the three vinyl doors on the front could be approved and the wood trim on the corner boards; hand rails on the landing and the two step landing. Ms. Ghamami stated there are two non-functioning doors in the rear and that maybe stairs should be built.

Mr. Golumb stated it was a commendable undertaking. He added that at first he did not like the vinyl siding; however, it will be a big improvement to this structure.

At this point the work session was closed and the public hearing was opened.

Chairman Rice went through the items that are up for approved:

- The railings in front;
- The cedar clapboards on the rear with a 4" reveal to match existing;
- The trim board elements be $\frac{3}{4}$ x $\frac{3}{4}$ " on the outside;
- Four fiberglass doors (three in front and one in the rear)

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Becksted made a motion to approve the application with the following modifications and was seconded:

- That a 4" reveal on the cedar siding on rear façade be used;
- That 1" x 1" corner trim boards be used on the inside corner;

- That 1" x 5" corner trim boards be used on the outside corner;
- That three (3) fiberglass doors on front façade and one (1) fiberglass door on rear façade;
- All doors to be 6-panel to mimic existing doors;
- Rebuild front steps and hand railings.

The motion passed with a 7 – 0 vote.

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III. WORK SESSIONS

A) Work Session requested by McHenry Architecture for property owned by Daniel McKenna located at 74 Congress Street. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 117 as Lot 043 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts. (demolish existing structure and replace with a three-story mixed-use building).

- Steve McHenry, the Architect for the project stated this is the first work session for this project and was hoping to obtain some feedback from the Commission members on the proposed design of the new building;
- The existing building is being torn down;
- The lot size is 20' x 108' and has a 0' setback;
- He presented plans that showed different options to use on the lot;
- The existing building has been on the lot since the 1870's;
- The proposed building may have to go through the 106 process;
- Mr. Grossman from the Portsmouth Advocates stated he has completed research on the building and it could have been on the lot since as early as 1853;
- Vice-Chairman Adams stated the building does have a history; however, he added that serious work will have to be done especially concerning code issues;
- Mr. McHenry stated he would like some feedback on the massing of the proposed building and is anticipating another work session next month with some very different images.
- Mr. McHenry does not want the roof lines to be similar to the buildings on either side of this lot;
- Chairman Rice stated he felt the building looks a little sterile;
- Ms. Fineberg stated she did not like the building façade on the first rendering shown; however, she is not having any problem with the massing;
- Vice-Chairman Adams stated that usually wide buildings are tall and narrow buildings are short. He added that he was not sure how he felt about the roof plane.
- Ms. Fineberg stated the building is totally non-conforming and the applicant is now trying to make it conforming;
- With a brick front on the building, it appears that it belongs in Market Square;
- Mr. McHenry stated that different materials will be used on different facades;
- Mr. Becksted stated he was a traditional guy and liked the idea of using brick and mortar;
- Ms. Fineberg liked the idea of using different materials and what The Pesce Blue has done with their façade is great;
- Mr. Becksted stated that people do not come to Portsmouth to look at how The Pesce Blue is decorated on the exterior and added that he felt this restaurant was totally out of character for Portsmouth;

- Ms. McHenry stated he wanted to be proud of the proposed building and added that he will be using desirable materials;
- There are many older buildings that have worn well and many that have not;
- Mr. Golumb stated the Victory Gardens building is different;
- Mr. McHenry stated he would like to make sure the building is safe;
- Mr. McHenry stated that another work session will be scheduled next month and will have other ideas.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Commission voted to approve the minutes from the meeting of 12-01-04 with a 7 – 0 vote with Mr. Becksted abstaining from the vote.

V. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, at 10:00 p.m. the motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting and approved with a 7 – 0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan M. Long
Secretary, Planning Department

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