

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
1 JUNKINS AVENUE
City Council Chambers**

7:00 p.m.

April 6, 2005

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Planning Board Representative, Ken Smith

ALSO PRESENT: Roger Clum, Assistant Building Inspector

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I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chair, Mr. Adams noted the correction to be made to the February 2, 2005 minutes that it was Mr. Smith who voted in the negative not Ms. Smith.

Vice Chair Mr. Adams made way of a motion to approve the February 2, 2005 minutes; Mr. Becksted seconded.

Chairman Rice asked the commission for all those in favor. The Commission then voted on the motion to approve the February 2, 2005 minutes and the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

Vice Chair Mr. Adams made way of a motion to approve the February 9, 2005 minutes; Mr. Becksted seconded.

Chairman Rice asked the commission for all those in favor. The Commission then voted on the motion to approve the February 9, 2005 minutes and the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

Vice Chair Mr. Adams made way of a motion to approve the March 2, 2005 minutes; Mr. Becksted seconded.

Chairman Rice asked the commission for all those in favor. The Commission then voted on the motion to approve the March 2, 2005 minutes and the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

Vice Chair Mr. Adams noted the correction to be made to the March 9, 2005 minutes, that on page 8, Mr. Becksted said configuration not figuration.

Vice Chair Mr. Adams made way of a motion to approve the March 9, 2005 minutes; Mr. Becksted seconded.

Chairman Rice asked the commission for all those in favor. The Commission then voted on the motion to approve the March 9, 2005 minutes and the motion passed with a 7–0 vote.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A) Work Session/Public Hearing Petition for Rockingham House

Condominium Association, owner, for property located at 401 State Street wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing building (repair brownstone using Comproco) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 116, Lot 003 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts. This application was tabled at the March 9, 2005 meeting to the April 6, 2005 meeting.

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

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Lisa DeStefano spoke in favor of the petition and presented Chris Brown, the owner of Comproco. Company. They have locations in Bow and Dover, NH and have been in business for over 30 years. Most of the materials they manufacture are brownstone, limestone, and sandstone. They use trained applicators to apply their products. Chris Brown noted the product's durability, that when a repair is done properly it should last as long as the building. The material proposed is a repair mortar mixed onsite that is placed on the prepared area and finished onsite in order to replicate the architectural detail and achieve proper color match. The characteristics of the repair mortar are very similar or compatible with the existing material they would be repairing.

Ms. Fineberg asked how the preparation of the brownstone is performed before the application of the new material.

Chris directed the question to the mason assigned to the project.

Vice Chairman Adams asked if the colors were mixed in the factory.

Chris Brown reiterated that the color would be mixed on site; He noted that the color process is iron-oxide pigment, and once the color is cured, in about 3 days it will be the final color and will not fade.

Mr. Becksted asked if there had to be a removal of several layers/inches of the brownstone before the application of the repair mortar.

Chris stated that there is a lot of deterioration on the building and that there had to be an onsite evaluation performed before the application in order to know the level of deterioration.

Eric Donea, the mason assigned to the project, explained the process of the preparation of the brownstone before the application of the new material. He stated that they would remove any bad or rotten, deteriorated stone until solid stone is met for product to be applied to. They use stainless

steele pins for anchoring and adhering the product to the existing stone.

Chairman Rice asked if it would look like patchwork.

Eric stated that they would square off the edges to make it look finished.

Mr. Becksted asked how they deal with larger patches.

Eric stated that the larger patches have to be built out in several stages.

Mr. Golumb asked if this type of work has been performed in metropolitan areas.

Mr. Donea answered worldwide.

Mr. Golumb asked what would happen if they found the entire stone to be bad.

Mr. Donea replied that if it were a structural problem then a pre-cast stone material would be used.

Vice Chairman Adams asked what was their process with the finish, as there is a pre-existing finish on the building.

Mr. Donea stated they would try to find areas in good shape, not in need of repair and try to match the finish on those existing pieces.

Vice Chairman Adams asked if they would match color stone by stone or one particular color altogether.

Mr. Donea stated that they would try to find a universal color for the brownstone.

Mr. Donea stated that they want to make the building watertight.

He noted that they would harvest mortar samples from different locations on the building, power wash the building, starting at the parafait and work their way down.

Vice Chairman Adams asked if the cleaning was to achieve a more permanent color.

Mr. Donea stated that the cleaning was something that was requested of them to perform.

Lisa DeStefano passed out to the Board photos of the process along with details on the restoration process and information on the company performing the work.

Mr. Becksted inquired about a couple of past jobs the company had performed, namely, the trinity church and the crane estate.

Chris Brown replied that he did not recall the trinity church job but that the work performed on the crane estate was balusters.

Mr. Becksted noted that from the handouts, he felt that the company contracted to do this work was

more than qualified for this project.
There being no further speakers, the Public Hearing was closed.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Ms. Fineberg made a motion to approve the application, to allow the repair of the brownstone using the Comproco product, with the stipulation that at least two HDC members approve the materials on site.

Vice Chairman Adams seconded.

Chairman Rice asked the commission for all those in favor. The Commission then voted on the application and the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

B) Public Hearing Petition for Lawrence P. McManus, owner and Classic Signs, Inc., applicant, for property located at 40 Pleasant Street wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing building (add eleven (11) retractable canvas awnings along State and Pleasant Street) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 107 as Lot 81 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts. This application was tabled at the March 9, 2005 meeting to the April 6, 2005 meeting.

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

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Linda Connell, attorney for the owner, presented further evidence that had been requested at the prior meeting. She asked if any member of the Board needed to be excused due to a conflict of interest since the proposed property is a real estate business.

Ms. Dika stated she was not voting and Chairman Rice stated that he could remain impartial.

Ms. Connell continued and stated that what was proposed were window awnings and were consistent with other previously installed awnings in the past on the same building. She pointed out the Japanese restaurant, Sakura, next door, have green awnings. She felt that the requested color for the proposed awnings, being blue, would work with Sakura's existing green awnings. She stated that they would be retractable canvas awnings and would not be permanently affixed to the building. She gave examples and pictures of awnings on businesses in the surrounding area, Marple and James, State Street Saloon, Bank of America, Serendipity, etc. She made the comment that the awnings would dress-up and distinguish this new business and that they easily come down and would not damage the building.

Vice Chairman Adams asked if there would be any other changes to the exterior of the building.

Mr. Macnamara stated that there would not and would use the existing holes from the past awnings installed.

Vice Chairman Adams asked how they would be installed.

Mr. Macnamara explained that across the top there is a ½ inch round bar attached to 2 brackets that would be installed using the existing holes on the building and then a 4 ft bar down on the side with 2 more brackets where it would pivot to retract.

Vice Chairman asked what type of material the brackets were made of.

Mr. Macnamara answered stainless steel.

Mr. Golumb asked them to pass out the photos they had taken of surrounding businesses.

Ms. Fineberg asked how far down the building the awnings would go on Pleasant Street.

Linda Connell stated that it would be the whole front façade.

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

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Vice Chairman Adams asked to approve the application as presented; Mr. Becksted seconded.

Chairman Rice asked the commission for all those in favor. The Commission then voted on the application and the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Petition for Joseph A. Capobianco, owner for property located at 199 Gates Street wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing building (amend previous application approved on October 6, 2004 to move skylight to a different location than previously approved by HDC) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 103 as Lot 7 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Anne Whitney, the architect on this project, spoke in favor of the petition on behalf of the owner. She stated the reason for moving the original approved location of the skylight was due to a clear view of the North Church and the owners wanted to change that and instead, move the skylight to the other side of the house and align it over the existing windows.

Vice Chairman Adams made the comment that it was a perfect location for the new skylight because it made it less visible and obvious.

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

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Vice Chairman Adams moved to approve the revision as presented; Ms. Fineberg seconded.

Chairman Rice asked the commission for all those in favor. The Commission then voted on the application and the motion passed with a 7–0 vote.

2. Petition for Eric Spear, owner for property located at 49 Mt. Vernon Street wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing building (bump out front door to make flush with the house, replace windows with walls and white siding to match the first story of the house for the breezeway and replace the door with the original exterior door) as per plans on file with the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 111 as Lot 31 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Eric Spear spoke in favor of the petition and reiterated the proposed project to the Board. He said that he would use the same door but bump it out to make it flush with the house and remove the front deck. He said that the purpose of this was to insulate the breezeway by replacing the large existing windows with walls and the existing door with another door. He wanted to do the front of the house with tongue and groove paneling and use the Dutch door as the exterior door.

Mr. Becksted asked what the material would be used for the siding.

Mr. Spear replied that the first floor was wide pine planks and would use the same.

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

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Becksted moved to approve the application as presented; Vice Chairman Adams seconded.

Chairman Rice asked the commission for all those in favor. The Commission then voted on the application and the motion passed with a 7–0 vote.

3. Petition for Rachel Connell and Bruce McEldowney, owners for property located at 434 Marcy Street wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing building on the rear (construct a shed dormer at rear of roof between the two existing chimneys) as per plans on file with the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 102 as Lot 041 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Robert Rodier spoke in favor of the petition on behalf of the owners. He passed out the 3-

dimensional model of the house with the proposed shed dormer to the Board. He went over the plans submitted. They wanted to take the window trim off the existing windows and replicate it on the three new windows as depicted on the model. The second to last sheet was the roof plan. Robert noted that they had two options for windows, the first option was to use double-hung windows, which were their preference, and the second was casement windows, which mimic a double-hung window.

Bruce McEldowney read aloud a letter of support for their project from their neighbors, the Manfolds of 2 South Street.

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

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Vice Chairman Adams moved to approve the application as presented; Councilor Grasso seconded.

The Board remarked that the architect and the owners had done a very nice job on both the presentation and the application.

Chairman Rice asked the commission for all those in favor. The Commission then voted on the application and the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

4. Petition for Strawberry Banke, Inc., owner for property located at O Marcy Street (Dunaway Store) wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing building (replacement of entry door with new door and fixed panel) as per plans on file with the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 104 as Lot 7 and lies within the Mixed Residential Office and Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Julie McDonald on behalf of Strawberry Banke, Inc., the owner, spoke in favor of the petition. She stated that they would replace the single door with a large double door in order to make the entrance handicap accessible. She went over sheets 3 and 4, the existing and proposed door and sheet 5 showing the existing and proposed design. She noted that there would be hardware on the inside and their goal was to make it match as close as possible.

Vice Chairman Adams asked what type of material would be used on the door as well as the hardware.

Ms. McDonald replied that the strapping and the hardware would be the same as the existing as pictured on sheets three and five and the door would be painted wood.

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

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Becksted moved for approval of the application as amended and presented; Councilor Grasso seconded.

Vice Chairman Adams made the comment that he did not like the proposed design because he did not like the uncharacteristic panel design; that it did not fit within the character of the building and surrounding buildings.

Ms. Fineberg did not agree and made the comment that she did not feel that it added or detracted from the other surrounding buildings or the current proposed building.

Chairman Rice asked the commission for all those in favor. The Commission then voted on the application and the motion passed with a 6-1 vote; Vice Chairman Adams voted in the opposition.

5. Petition for 6-16 Congress Street, LLC, owners for property located at 6-16 Congress Street wherein permission is requested to allow modifications to an existing approval (amend previous application approved by HDC on August 11, 2004; add single window dormer, alter elevator housing and egress door, lower one storefront entry, add exit door, widen garage entry, and move door/window assembly at deck) as per plans on file with the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 117 as Lots 37, 38 and 39 and lies within the Central Business A and the Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Steven McHenry spoke on behalf of the petition and in support thereof, he noted that there were six different items they were proposing. He went over the first sheet depicting the lower retail space level. He said that the elevation slopes slightly downward, so they had to drop it down a foot and that all of the details would remain the same with the exception of the windows being a bit higher. On the 2nd sheet, they had added an exit door, which was not required by code but that the tenant had requested it. He noted that the new exit door would require stairs and rails but that they would come back for that approval and were not currently applying for the detail now. Steven noted the rear elevation where they originally had two broad dormers with the elevator housing in the center in which they had added a single dormer due to the earlier design having two elevators and now there would be only one and there was the addition of two new windows that match the others on the front side of the building and not a door which was originally proposed. The next sheet of the packet was detail on the widening of the opening for the garage entry and he noted that it has been widened due to the previous design being too narrow. The last item noted the relocation of the door assembly on the roof deck to be shifted 16 inches to the right for structural means and balance to align with the roof deck of the building.

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

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Vice Chairman Adams moved to approve the amended application as presented; Mr. Becksted seconded.

Chairman Rice asked the commission for all those in favor. The Commission then voted on the application and the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

6. Petition for Strawberry Banke, Inc., owner for property located at 95 Jefferson Street wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing building (addition of a wire mesh spark arrester to the top of the existing chimney) as per plans on file with the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 104 as Lot 7 and lies within the Mixed Residential Office and the Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Rodney Roland, the VP of Strawberry Banke, Inc. spoke on behalf of the petition. He noted the proposed spark arrester was to be installed on the Wheelwright House. He went over the plans they had submitted to the Board. He noted a cooking program that they wanted to bring back but they needed to install the spark arrester to minimize fire possibilities due to a past fire from the same program. Merry Sweepe Chimney Service, Inc. offered their services to install said arrester free of charge to the museum. Rodney noted that the arrester would be a 5/8" mesh, black painted, and 12" deep by 8" high. In addition, he noted that it would be out of sight; not visible.

Ms. Dika noted that they the arrester is not as unattractive as she first thought as well as it not that visible.

Mr. Becksted stated that the alternatives would be too modern

Mr. Clum made the comment that insurance companies are currently making owners that have wood burning chimneys carry this sort of thing and that they would not insure if it was not installed.

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

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Councilor Grasso moved to approve the application as presented; Mr. Katz seconded.

Ms. Fineberg noted a letter submitted in favor of both Strawberry Banke's applications.

Chairman Rice asked the commission for all those in favor. The Commission then voted on the application and the motion passed with a 6-1 vote; Vice Chairman Adams voted in opposition.

7. Petition for North Congregational Church, owner for property located at 2 Congress Street wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing building (repoint the brick, repair the brownstone, install new railing at entry ramp, modify entry doors, install new storm windows, renovate existing steeple and repair the roof) as per plans on file with the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 107 as Lot 83 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A districts.

SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF THE PETITION

Chairman Rice recused himself from his post due to a conflict of interest with his help on fund raising efforts with the Church.

Kevin Kraft spoke in favor of the petition on behalf of the owners and just reiterated what they were applying for. He stated that the restoration would be done by hand not power tools. They would repair the brownstone using the Comproco product as previously approved by the HDC to be used on the restoration of the Rockingham Condos. There would be an installation of an entry ramp with a 42-inch high guardrail and a 36 handrail with balusters. Kevin noted that the anchorage would be the same location on the building as the current rail. They would use a metal, wrought iron rail painted black to match the existing rails. There would be a modification of the existing entry doors in order to make it more handicap accessible by making the right hand side door 3 ft wide but keep the doors looking semetrical. They would recreate the existing materials and hardware and match the existing color. He noted that the reason for changing the existing door was that it currently blocks the ramp when opened and is not easily maneuverable for those handicapped. They would be replacing the existing storm windows with aluminum clad windows using a darker color to compliment the brownstone and the existing plexi-glass windows would be replaced with glass. He provided samples of the same.

Frank Lemay, the construction manager, spoke on the restoration plans for the steeple. He noted that they would totally restore the steeple in-kind or that their intent was to restore it exactly in-kind. He also spoke about the roof repair. The consultant they hired to look at the condition of the roof and recommended an asphalt shingle due to the current weight problems and structural restrictions of the current roof. He stated that currently the roof is a slate roof and that slate is too heavy. He noted that half of the roof is in fair condition and that the other half is in poor condition. He added that the building is over-stressed.

Mr. Becksted asked if there were any consideration of using the fake slate that is out on the market.

Mr. Lemay remarked no, but that they could recommend the suggestion to the owner.

Mr. Becksted asked them to withdraw the proposal to reshingle the roof from the current application and to return later with that request.

Mr. Lemay agreed.

John Grossman asked what would happen to the clock when they repair the steeple; if they would use the same clock.

Mr. Lemay answered yes, that the clock would be totally restored.

Steve McHenry addressed Mr. Clum and asked him if there had to be a guardrail.

Mr. Clum stated no, maybe a handrail but not baluster rails.

Bill Scott on behalf of the church, noted that there would be a number of people who would benefit from the assistance of a rail being there.

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

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Becksted moved that the application be approved as amended; Mr. Golumb seconded.

Chairman Adams asked the commission for all those in favor. The Commission then voted on the application and the motion passed with a 6–0 vote.

IV. WORK SESSIONS

A) Work Session for Melissa Bicchieri, owner and Sonny Iannacone, applicant, for property located at 206 Northwest Street wherein permission is requested to allow exterior renovation to an existing structure (construct two new additions (front side and rear) on house and replace all existing windows and roof shingles) 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. This application was tabled at the February 9, 2005 meeting.

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

- Wendy Welton, the architect, spoke on behalf of the owners
 - The house was built in 1893 and currently consists of 900 sq. ft
 - The reason for additions and such is to increase total living space because the owners are to be married and want to start a family
 - Extend house to the left and most of addition on will be on the back/rear of house
 - They want to replace the existing siding, wood siding
 - The addition on the front/side of the house would be flush and meet the existing line of the house
 - Chairman Rice stated that the front elevation looked grey and awkward, a lot of clapboard and the windows anchored on one side and made the suggestion to recess it about a foot and create a shadow line
 - Vice Chairman Adams suggested if it was recessed 6 inches then they could with the exterior corner board and he asked if that would kick the roof
 - Wendy noted that in rear keep roof pane flush so there would be a slight lowering of the ridge and the pitch would stay the same
 - Chairman Rice said the Board would have problems with the rear elevation
 - Vice Chairman Adams asked why the windows weren't balanced; he felt there needed to be another little window to make it more symmetrical
 - Ms. Fineberg agreed with Mr. Adams in that the house needs a couple extra windows on top of new addition on front of the house
 - Garage will have some changes, remove the barn door and change the windows to convert into home office
 - Mr. Becksted rhetorically stated that the garage will not be a garage anymore
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- Wendy agreed but corrected him in that it is not a garage currently, more like a shed and it is not functional
 - They looked at the left elevation and Mr. Adams liked the back door and thought it was appropriate
 - Mr. Adams asked if they were proposing to put vanier on the foundation
 - Wendy agreed
 - Chairman Rice noted that there is a lot of glass on the rear elevation of the new proposed additions; he noted that he understood why they want to have so many windows but that it would not be appropriate for a home built in 1893 and situated in the Historic District
 - Chairman Rice also stated that they would like to accommodate the applicant's desire to see the view but at the same time make it work so it fits within the character/time period of the house as well as it being situate in the Historic District
 - Wendy says the back faces the north mill pond and any views from the house are at quite a distance and she asked the Board where they can get the light and the views that they need in order to satisfy both parties
 - Chairman Rice suggested maybe 4 windows along the rear side of the house and that would clean up that space a bit
 - Chairman Rice also noted that the Board does not normally approve two windows clumped together like they have laid out on the plan
 - Rice Becksted thought maybe mulling the windows in three sets; which would give a little more wall space around the window openings
 - Vice Chairman Adams asked if the windows were mulled together in three sets what type of effect that would have on the palladium and the gable end
 - Wendy remarked it would work fine for their plan
 - Councilor Grasso noted that even the window plan is set on the rear of the house, if it would happen to be a sunny day, the sun would reflect off of those windows and create a huge glare across the pond; it's a lot of glass
 - Vice Chairman Adams noted that it's the areas that the Board would expect to have clapboards have been diminished and believed that has taken away the balance of the windows
 - Wendy asked in the place of windows facing the patio were replaced with two sets of patio doors separated by clapboards
 - She noted that the owners really want to be able to enjoy as much of the view as possible
 - There will be a patio that you step down to and there won't be a deck with railings
 - Vice Chairman Adams wanted to see a drawing so that he could physically see what that suggestion would look like
 - Wendy said the purpose of this was for them to get some insight as to the Board's opinion on the massing of the project
 - Mr. Becksted said besides the change on the front, the recessing, the rest of the size would be fine
 - Vice Chairman Adams felt that a certain part of the house was missing a vestigial corner board and that it was not an uncommon tradition in town to see that and it would imply balance and even though the windows may come up right against it, that is the quirky type of thing that you see in houses from that period of time
 - Wendy agreed
 - Chairman Rice said that they need more clapboard
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- Ms. Fineberg noted to keep the windows height similar
 - Chairman Rice thought that they have done some tremendous progress
 - Ms. Fineberg asked if they had given them enough input or if they need anything else
 - Wendy said no, that they have plenty to work with and a good idea of what to present next
 - The Board recommended another work session with additional drawings
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V. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:00 PM, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved with a 7-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina V. Staples
HDC Secretary

/Cs