

**RECONVENED MEETING OF THE
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
1 JUNKINS AVENUE**

Conference Room A

7:00 p.m.

**September 20, 2006
Reconvened from September 13, 2006**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman John Rice, Vice-Chairman David Adams, Members Richard Katz, John Golumb, Ellen Fineberg; and Alternates Sandra Dika and John Wyckoff

MEMBERS ABSENT: City Council Representative Ned Reynolds, Planning Board Representative Jerry Hetjmanek

ALSO PRESENT: Roger Clum, Assistant Building Inspector

Two site walks were held prior to the meeting. The first one was at 2 Congress Street at 6:15 p.m. and the other was at 213 Pleasant Street at 6:30 p.m.

I. OLD BUSINESS

Approval of minutes – December 7, 2005
Approval of minutes – December 14, 2005
Approval of minutes – August 2, 2006

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to approve the minutes as presented.

6. Petition of **213 Pleasant Street Holdings, LLC, owner**, for property located at **213 Pleasant Street** wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (new two story house with attached garage) as per plans on file with the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 108 as Lot 16 and lies within the Mixed Residential Office and Historic A District.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Tom Emerson, architect for the project, spoke to the petition. He presented a copy of the new detailed elevations. He said that he tried to address some of the issues that came up in the last session. They have lowered the eave line by six inches, they have introduced a frieze board, added head casings above the second floor windows, added sills at all of the windows and they will align the clapboard with the trim that was requested at the last meeting.

Chairman Rice asked if there were any questions for the applicant.

Mr. Adams asked for clarification about the introduction of sills on all of the double hung windows. He asked if there were any windows that were not double hung. Mr. Emerson said that there were round windows in the garage and a semicircle transom.

Mr. Wyckoff asked Mr. Emerson how he planned on treating the frieze board and how it interacts with the cornice, corner boards, and fascia board that wraps around the house.

Mr. Emerson said it is simple a frieze board with enough overlapping void above it and will have a piece of cornice coming out to meet it. Mr. Wyckoff asked if the frieze board would have any treatment on the edge. Mr. Emerson said no, it is going vertically over the top of the window heads and will have cornice details above the window heads. Mr. Wyckoff said that he is much happier with the second floor design. Chairman Rice agreed.

Mr. Golumb asked if the second floor portico was going to be rounded. Mr. Emerson replied yes. Mr. Golumb said that he saw a couple examples on Middle Street whose porticos weren't as pronounced. He said they were tucked back a bit. He felt the Mr. Emerson's design of the portico was overpowering the entrance. Mr. Emerson said the one to compare his with would be the Lyman-Borden House which is the same configuration. He said that the portico on the Lyman-Borden House steps out further and is wider. He said that his design is the same except the radius of the circle is smaller.

Chairman Rice asked if there were any more questions for the applicant. Hearing none, he asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application.

SPEAKING TO, FOR, AND AGAINST THE PETITION

Mr. Jerry Thayer, of 21 Richmond Street spoke to the petition. He said that he owns the house that abuts the parcel. He said that he is not for or against the project. He said that he is not objecting to a house on the lot but he has some concerns related to the proposed design. He said that he submitted a letter to the Board stating his concerns. The first issue for him is that the surrounding houses are mansions or manor houses. He stated that they are large houses on large lots. He pointed out a table that he submitted with his letter showing the lots sizes and lot coverage. Mr. Thayer said that it is the job of the Historic District Commission to make sure these houses represent the other houses in the neighborhood.

Chairman Rice pointed out that lot coverage is not within their purview. Mr. Thayer pointed out that the McCracken House which is over 200 years old is on the same size lot and is 1,280 sq. feet. He said that the proposed house will be 2,916 sq. feet. It is twice the size on the same size lot. He said he felt fairly sure that a privacy fence would probably be erected at some point. He said a fence would be reasonable but he would not like to see a row of arborvitae.

Chairman Rice pointed out that these are things that are not on the table right now.

Mr. Adams said he would like to hear what Mr. Thayer has to say about density. Mr. Thayer said that he grew up in that neighborhood. He said that when the existing houses were built, they were built so as to not interfere with the amount of sun or the views. He said that a 36 foot wide house on that lot makes sense. He said that his objection is the size of the footprint.

Mr. Adams asked if he was adding the house and the garage together to get the 36 feet. Mr. Thayer said yes. Mr. Thayer added that someone could add a second story over the garage at some point. Mr. Adams asked if Mr. Thayer's concern was that the proposed house has mass that is not comparable to the manor homes that flank it on either side. Mr. Thayer replied yes and mentioned the Haven-White House whose dimensions are 1,750 sq. feet. The proposed house would add another 1,200 sq. foot of lot coverage. The Haven-White House is almost twice the lot size of the proposed lot. Mr. Adams said that he lives on Gates Street where the houses almost touch each other. He said they weren't built that way but they are that way now. He said that he recognizes his point that these properties were stately manors that sat by themselves.

Ms. Jen McCracken spoke next. She lives across the street from the proposed house. She said that she would like to thank Mr. Golumb for taking the time to go down Middle Street and look at the circular rooms on top of porticos. She said that from the beginning of this proposal, this was one of her concerns. She felt it overweighed the house. She said that she also sent a letter to the Commission stating this concern. Ms. McCracken said she is concerned with mass and she is just hoping that it will be something compatible with Pleasant Street.

Mr. Blair McCracken spoke to the siding that was proposed. He said that it was supposed to be a concrete siding and he was not sure that would meet the Commission's need for it to be tapered.

Mr. Emerson said they found out since the last meeting that they can not make the radius of the room on the second floor with the fiber cement siding so they are going with wood siding.

Another interested party spoke about the aesthetics of the neighborhood. She said that she just does not see how it fits in. She would like to see it smaller. She also pointed out that there are beautiful trees on the property as well and she would like to see them preserved.

Chairman Rice asked if there was anyone else who would like to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, he declared the public hearing closed.

DECISION OF THE BOARD

Mr. Adams made a motion, for the purposes of discussion, that they approve the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Katz.

Mr. Adams said that there is a pattern of design and style with some of the houses on that section of the street that carries a theme that eventually gets lost the further out you go on Pleasant Street. He said that the design is properly before them in terms of style and design. He said that because of the street on one side and the driveway on the other, he feels that there is space around the house. He added that it may not be as grand as the other houses around it.

Ms. Dika stated that she thought Mr. Thayer's numbers were interesting. It gave her a sense of the massing in the area. She felt that it would be too large of a building on that space.

Mr. Wyckoff said he was pleased with the changes to the second floor. He is more concerned with the bay window on the side of the house than he is of the rounded portico. He said that he had no problem with the massing. He felt the house was very appropriate for the area. He felt people would not be happy with a basic two story colonial. He thought the design was very grand and has made good improvements over time. He pointed out that the two front trees are being saved as well.

Mr. Katz said that one of the objections was that the house was too big for the lot size. He said if you put a house of comparable lot density, it would look ridiculous. It would be completely out of character with the neighborhood. He said that he did not see anything that would cause harm to the neighborhood.

Ms. Fineberg asked Mr. Emerson about a particular drawing he had displayed and asked if it was drawn to scale. Mr. Emerson said yes. She pointed out that it gives them a sense of how it will look if you are facing it and whether it looks proportional to the other houses.

Mr. Adams asked Ms. Fineberg what her feeling was about it.

Ms. Fineberg said that if the drawing is accurate, then it looks like it fits in with the neighborhood. She agreed with Mr. Adams that with the street on the building's right and the driveway on the left, it seems to be on a larger piece of property than it is. She also felt that the revisions to the design addressed the Commission's concern.

Ms. Dika said that she went back for a second look after the site walk. She said she was having a hard time believing that the drawing was to scale.

Ms. Fineberg said that if they are having concerns about the measurements, then maybe they should table the petition.

Mr. Emerson said he physically measured the four buildings around the site and inserted a CAD drawing that resulted in that drawing. He also used the City's topography map to get grade.

Mr. Wyckoff pointed out that on the side elevation, the front of the house would be 30 inches above grade but on the side elevation, when you get to where the garage starts, the foundation shrinks down to zero.

Mr. Golumb said that he walked that area and he feels that the view from Pleasant Street seems appropriate but he felt that the massing going up the street will overwhelm the site that it is on. He said that he still feels that the portico overpowers the entrance.

Chairman Rice appreciated everyone weighing, particularly the neighborhood. He said that the Commission has to make decisions that are lawful. When it appears that the applicant has made a better than good effort to design something that fits into a space, then it is an application that meets the majority of the scope of review. He added that no application is perfect. He felt in this case, he could approve it but he respects those in opposition.

Chairman Rice said the Commission could put it up for a vote or table it. Ms. Fineberg asked why they would table it. Chairman Rice said it would be because of massing and the portico design. He pointed out that they have had one work session and a tabled public hearing.

Chairman Rice called for the vote – Mr. Katz voted yes, Ms. Fineberg voted yes, Mr. Golumb voted no, Mr. Adams voted yes, Ms. Dika voted no, Mr. Wyckoff voted yes, and Chairman Rice voted yes. The motion carried by a vote of 5 in favor and 2 opposed.

9. Petition of **Harbour Place Condominium Association, owner**, for property located at **135 Bow Street** wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace wood siding of dormer areas with vinyl siding) as per plans on file with the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 105 as Lot 2-1-00 and lies within the Central Business A, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Chairman Rice stated that the applicant has requested that the petition be tabled to the October 4 meeting.

DECISION OF THE BOARD

Mr. Golumb made a motion to table the petition to the October 4, 2006 meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Fineberg. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

II. WORK SESSIONS

D) Work Session requested by **Temple Israel, owner**, for property located at **200 State Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (new entrance and canopy, new window, and new brick siding).

Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 107 as Lots 65, 66, and 75 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

- Mr. Tom Emerson said that he was presenting the project on behalf of Temple Israel. He said that Temple Israel would like to do three things. He spoke to the 1967 addition, on the corner of Washington and State Street. He said that a portion of the building is brick and a portion is concrete block. They would like to cover the concrete block portion with brick. He said that they would also like to place a new entrance addition. Mr. Emerson said that currently, everyone enters through the fire stairway. He also said that they would like to put in a handicap elevator. In addition, they would like to place a shed adjacent to the current trash barrel.
- Mr. Emerson spoke in more detail to the addition. He said that on the Court Street side, they would be taking off the arched entry piece at the existing entrance and putting a simple shed over the top of what will be a single door. He said they would be maintaining the same rhythm of the existing windows. There are a couple places where they have contemplated closing existing openings and would be introducing a detail where they would drop the brick back 1 ½ inches.
- Mr. Adams asked how he could do that in a single wide.
- Mr. Emerson that once the building is faced with brick; it will be out 6” to the face of the brick with a 2” air space and then push it back in.
- Mr. Wyckoff asked if they would be the same bays that the windows are in now.
- Mr. Emerson said yes. He said there is detail over the second floor windows and places where they have closed existing windows. He added that on the second floor, they are reducing the size of two of the windows and the space underneath those will be the same detail.
- Mr. Emerson said they would be breaking up the mass as you enter. There will be a portico that will allow people to come up to a covered entry. He said they would also change out the doors of the existing entry.
- Mr. Emerson said that the existing brick is failing. They are thinking about using a traditional denticulated brick. They want to create more presence.
- Mr. Wyckoff asked what is happening with the print shop next door.
- Mr. Emerson replied that it is going to be painted.
- Mr. Adams asked if Temple Israel’s brick will butt into the area where it intersects.
- Mr. Emerson said that it would come back at a 45 degree angle.
- Mr. Wyckoff asked if anything would be happening to the arches in the back of the building.
- Mr. Emerson replied they will remain.
- Mr. Adams said that he had concerns with the flat roof. He said that he knows that they are not creating a new flat roof. He said he wondered how it will appear as a brick building because it is a modern form. He pointed out the First National Bank. He felt there was a tension there.

- Mr. Adams asked about the elevator. He asked if the elevator misses the last arched window in the existing building. Mr. Emerson replied that the elevator stays under the eave. The elevator will open into a vestibule outside of the sanctuary.
- Mr. Adams suggested a technique when working with the denticulated brick.
- Mr. Adams said he wondered about the impact of the angular entranceway. He said that it was very interesting and space saving but he felt the angle looked like modern architecture.
- Chairman Rice said that it was a handsome project.
- Mr. Katz said the main structure is a very austere structure. He said that he could see nothing that would keep him from judging the design favorably.

E) Work Session requested by **Cristina J. Ljungberg, owner**, for property located at **180 Newcastle Avenue**, wherein permission was requested to allow new construction to an existing structure (one story side addition with deck, two story rear addition, and front entry porch). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 101 as Lot 23 and lies within the Single Residence B and Historic A Districts.

- Ms. Anne Whitney presented the proposed project. She presented a site plan to the Commissioners. The property is near the corner of Newcastle Ave. and Marcy Street. She said that they are proposing three additions – pushing out the entry porch, a one story right side addition, and a rear two story addition.
- Starting with the west side elevation, Ms. Whitney said that it showed the existing salt box addition. She said they would be adding an 18' by 7' porch addition, double hung fenestration, and above that a porch with a single entry door where there is currently a window. They are also bringing a two story addition out from the ridge and would expand 3' into the back yard. She said that on the Ball Street side, they plan to get rid of the salt box and keep the first floor and add a simple shed roof.
- Ms. Whitney said they would be extending out from the porch with columns, a small hip roof with a porch over that.
- Mr. Wyckoff asked if the columns would be square.
- Ms. Whitney said yes and that they would be made up and tapered to match the trim.
- Ms. Whitney showed the rear elevation. The rear addition will house a bathroom, an extra bedroom and a kitchen expansion on the first floor.
- Ms. Fineberg asked if the chimneys were staying.
- Ms. Whitney said yes, and added that they may need to come up a little higher. She added that they were in need of repointing and additional repair.
- Mr. Katz asked if the chimneys would be on the original roof and not the new roof.
- Ms. Whitney replied yes. She said they would intersect so there will be a cricket on two sides.
- Mr. Adams asked the date of the shed addition on the back of the house.
- Ms. Whitney replied and said from the looks of the framing, it might have been done in 1960's.

- Mr. Adams said he was surprised because extending the shed on one side in the vernacular is referred to as a Beverly jog and those have been done for a long time.
- Ms. Whitney said that the windows are in bad shape and they will probably be replacing windows. They are proposing to go with a clad with a wood sill and trim, simulated divided light.
- Chairman Rice suggested looking at the project from all sides. He asked for questions or comments on the front.
- Mr. Adams said that he is unsure about the tapered columns. He said that he knows that it's possible; he has just never seen it. He added, concerning the addition, that he is concerned with the house size window and the balustrade on top. He doesn't find that an appropriate addition to the house.
- Ms. Whitney said that what she was trying to accomplish was making it look like an in filled porch. She also said that she was trying to be consistent with the window sizes in the rest of the house.
- Ms. Fineberg said that the addition makes it look like a cottage whereas the rest of the house looks to be around 1950's.
- Chairman Rice said the he was not comfortable with that look as well.
- Mr. Adams said that maybe dressing the exterior will make it look more like the in filled porch.
- Mr. Wyckoff felt that it was important to have what looks like an outside window sill nosing that is continued around the whole porch to make it look like an infill. He also suggested to not using clapboards underneath it and use panels or something similar instead.
- Ms. Whitney said that if she goes to circular columns then she will have to change what's happening on the face of the building.
- Chairman Rice pointed out a skylight. Ms. Whitney said that it was not visible from any street.
- Chairman Rice asked if there were questions or comments about the east elevation. Hearing none, he moved to the rear elevation.
- Mr. Adams asked if there was a fair amount of space between the rear of the addition and the next abutter. Ms. Whitney replied yes. She said that the lot is tight but there is a bit of land before this addition.

F) Work Session requested by **Barbara S. Miller Trust 1999, owner**, for property located at **287 Marcy Street** wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 103 as Lot 46 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic A Districts.

G) Work Session requested by **Barbara S. Miller Trust 1999, owner**, for property located at **277 Marcy Street** wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (relocated bulkhead, add new deck, doors, arbor, fence and gate). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 103 as Lot 45 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic A Districts.

- Chairman Rice suggested combining 287 and 277 Marcy Street for their discussion.
- Ms. Dika stated that she needed to recuse herself from the discussion.
- Mr. Tom Emerson spoke to the project. He said that the project involves two separate lots and the owner would like to combine them. He said there a number of issues why the owners want to demolish the one structure. There is only 18” between the two structures. Mr. Emerson said that for many years it was a rental and has a bad reputation. The house has asbestos floors, lead paint, mold, rotted windows, and metal siding. He said that the house would have to be stripped down and it would not be economically feasible to repair. Also, he said that this is one of only two buildings on Marcy Street that does not have off site parking. He felt that limited the users of the property. And he felt that potential buyers might be scared off by the history of the property as well.
- Mr. Emerson pointed out that from Marcy Street to the water; there are a lot of houses that are close together. He said there is ample open space as well. He added that there are pocket gardens, openings, and parking. He said that that was the character of the neighborhood. And that is what the owners want to do, extend the character of the neighborhood. He felt that by removing the building, it would not alter the nature of the area but would improve the property values on either side of it.
- Mr. Emerson said that once the area is opened up, the owners would extend their living space into the new lot. They would like to add decks, a fence, an arbor, a pocket garden, and a bricked area for parking.
- Chairman Rice asked how the Commission felt about the demolition of the existing New Englander.
- Mr. Wyckoff asked if there were any plans to renovate the existing house, 277 Marcy Street. Mr. Emerson replied no. Mr. Wyckoff felt that once 287 Marcy Street property is gone, the existing house will look out of proportion.
- Mr. Adams said that they will have a larger view of a building that has grown out of proportion.
- Ms. Fineberg stated that she would need to do a site walk of the properties. She said that it may not be appropriate to go inside the structure since it is not within their purview.
- Mr. Adams said that it might give them a chance to make an assessment of its economic impact. Even though they can’t make comments about the interior, they still recognize that they have interiors.
- Mr. Golumb said that they did that on State Street.
- Chairman Rice asked what would be the criteria for approving a demolition at the site.
- Mr. Katz stated that he would approach it as a quality of life issue. He said that by removing the house and drawing attention to the larger building and making it more evident is on tenuous grounds for making a decision.
- Mr. Wyckoff asked if this would fall under streetscape or scope of review.
- Mr. Katz said that they are here to determine its historical relevance and not making an aesthetic judgment.

- Mr. Adams said that they are also to control the impact on individuals from changes to the streetscape. He felt that they were having an impact to the neighborhood by exposing more of the other building and removing a building that has genuine context both in materials and in design.
- Mr. Katz said that that was a valid consideration but he asked them to balance that with the addition of the pocket garden and green space.
- Ms. Fineberg stated that the Historic District Commission's job is not to promote green space but to promote architectural integrity.
- Mr. Katz reminded them that they had a lecture on sustainability.
- Mr. Adams said that there is language in their ordinance that describes the public opportunities for viewing and scope of review.
- Mr. Wyckoff stated that sustainability might also include demolishing a building that might not need to be demolished in that it would waste material and require land filling. Mr. Wyckoff also quoted Section 10-1003, (B) 1. and addendum 22. He said that what he and Mr. Adams said is that as you look up the street at this house, demolishing it would knock a hole in the streetscape.
- Mr. Katz asked if there were not other holes on the street.
- Mr. Wyckoff said there are holes.
- Ms. Dika asked if she could ask a question.
- Chairman Rice said yes.
- Ms. Dika asked if they have done any structural studies on the building.
- Mr. Emerson said they did do some studies and found that there are some issues with the foundation. There is rot on the third floor and in the roof members. He said they haven't done a full report, just a walk through.
- Ms. Dika said that there was a sewage problem in the basement over a long period of time.
- Mr. Emerson said there was infestation as well.
- Ms. Fineberg asked when the owners took possession of the property.
- Ms. Barbara Miller said she bought the first condo at 277 Marcy Street in 2000 and she bought the other condos over the next five years. She bought 287 Marcy Street in May of this year.
- Mr. Wyckoff strongly suggested that work be done on the front of the 277 Marcy Street project.
- Chairman Rice said that it doesn't work that way.
- Mr. Adams said that the most important thing was to decide how they will judge that. According to pocket gardens, he quoted from the Zoning Ordinance Section 10-1001 (B) "promoting the use of the district for education, pleasure and welfare of our citizens and visitors". He felt that spoke to pocket gardens.
- Chairman Rice said it was appropriate to have a site walk and work session in October.

H) Work Session requested by **Strawbery Banke, Inc., owners**, for property located at **Washington Street** wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (new 5000 sq. foot building). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 104 as Lot 7 and lies within the Mixed Residential Office and Historic A Districts.

- Mr. Larry Yerdon, President of Strawberry Banke, Mr. Rodney Rowland, head of Special Projects, and Mr. Nick Issak, of JSA Architects for the project presented the proposal. The plans that they presented were for the new Carter Center.
- Mr. Yerdon stated that the current collection center is in a building that stretches from State Street to Court Street and is inadequate for their needs. They received a grant to study the use of the building and how better to house the collection. He said that there are 25,000 objects in the collection. He added that the architects have sought the views of members of the community, staff, volunteer leaders, and focus groups and determined from that the current building would not be advantageous to renovate. It would be far too expensive so it was decided that the current site be sold and the income from the sale be used to build a purpose built structure. The new structure would provide a secure and climate controlled environment for the collection, workspaces and offices for the collection staff and for the staff that work with the archeology collection and also a small gallery with two purposes – an exhibition space and also as a meeting space for forums and educational programs.
- Mr. Yerdon said the site was chosen for certain reasons – accessibility and archeological issues. He said that the site has been surveyed by archeologists and has been cleared for a building of this size and type. He also said that they have met with the Portsmouth Advocates, Friends of the South End, a representative of Historic New England, and Peter Loughlin, who owns the two properties directly across Washington Street. He said that the responses have been very positive.
- Mr. Issak spoke to the plans. He pointed out pictures of Washington Street in 1900. It showed that the edge of that street was fairly complete with structures.
- Mr. Issak said that they are trying to pick up on the architectural details of the adjacent buildings. One side of the house has a residential use and looks like two smaller structures. He said that they were before the Board of Adjustment and were approved to bring the side out flush with Penhallow Street. He said that they are trying to scale down the rear side of the building with a small “L” entryway. He said that the primary entrance is at the rear of the building but they still want to maintain the formal façade.
- Ms. Fineberg asked about the door on the front of the buildings. She asked if they would open. Mr. Issak said they are to appear to be functional but they are not. Because it is primarily a storage building, they don’t want natural light coming in. He said that the door on that side would be operational. He pointed out that the primary door will be at the covered entryway.
- Chairman Rice said they would need to provide them with cut sheets and provide them with more details for the public hearing.
- Ms. Fineberg said that she would like to see the street perspective to understand how the building is going to sit on the lot. She would like to see that it works with everything around it.
- Mr. Rowland said that that was their concern as well since the building is very large.

- Mr. Wyckoff asked if the windows on the second floor of the carriage house are close to the floor. Mr. Issak replied that there is two feet from floor to the bottom of the window.
- Chairman Rice asked about the roofing material. Mr. Issak replied they are proposing an asphalt shingle.
- Ms. Fineberg asked if the barn like structure had shakes on it. Mr. Issak said yes, it would have cedar shakes.
- Mr. Adams asked if they would have traditional framed windows with a jamb and sill. Mr. Issak replied that he is planning to match the details.
- Mr. Adams stated that this project is a good move to get the space they are looking for and put it in a place that is appropriate. He said that he likes the alignment on the street and was pleased that they got their variance. He felt everything was falling into place. Mr. Adams said that he felt the garage doors were too uniform. He suggested square, workman like doors, similar to what they have as some of their other doors. He felt these doors looked too modern.
- Mr. Rowland said they looked at a variety of garage doors in the area. He asked if dressing the doors down would be appropriate.
- Mr. Adams said yes, and then the proposal would be a winner.
- Mr. Wyckoff suggested a door that would slide, with hardware above the door.
- Mr. Rowland asked if it would work if they reduced the number of doors to two.
- Mr. Adams and Mr. Wyckoff said that was a good option.
- The Commission thanked them for their efforts and looked forward to seeing the finished product.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Petition of **North Church of Portsmouth, owner, and City of Portsmouth, applicant**, for property located at **2 Congress Street** wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (remove steel and glass clock faces, replace with painted wood faces) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 107 as Lot 83 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic District A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Peter Kinner, the head of the Restoration Committee for North Church, Mr. David Baer, general contractor of Milestone Engineering, and Dawn Shippee, pastor of North Church spoke to the project.

Mr. Kinner said they would like to withdraw their petition as they feel that they can repair the clock as is. He said they could repair the faces and perform the proper procedures to waterproof the area.

2. Petition of **North Church of Portsmouth, owner, and Milestone Engineering and Construction, Inc. applicant**, for property located at **2 Congress Street** wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (remove

slate roof, replace with architectural asphalt shingle roof) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 107 as Lot 83 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic District A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Peter Kinner spoke to the petition. He said that a structural engineer has recommended that they reduce the weight load on the church roof. Mr. David Baer, general contractor for the project put a mock up on the roof for the Commissioners to look at.

Mr. Baer stated that the slate roof has failed and is leaking. He said that the structure has not been damaged. There is no significant rot and the trusses, purlins, and the rafters all look good, however, it was recommended to not reload the roof with a slate shingle. He said that they are proposing the Certain Teed Centennial Slate architectural asphalt shingle. He added that it a top of the line shingle. Mr. Baer said that this was the best slate look-a- like he could find. He felt that the mock up blended in nicely with the roof.

Mr. Kinner pointed out that in their packets they were given a set of pictures taken from the roof showing the other roofs on the buildings around the church.

Mr. Adams asked how the asphalt shingles compare in size to the existing slate. Mr. Baer said that the tab size is slightly smaller. Mr. Adams asked about the coursing. Mr. Baer said the coursing is very similar.

Mr. Wyckoff asked about the relative weight per square. Mr. Baer said that their shingle is a 355 pound shingle. He said that slate can go 700-1000 pounds per square. Mr. Wyckoff said that it was the heaviest asphalt shingle he has seen.

Mr. Baer said they were not going with the asphalt shingle to cut corners. He said that it was a lifetime shingle. Mr. Adams said that it is a once-in-a-lifetime building. Mr. Baer said that the shingle has a 110 mph wind rating. He said that all of the ratings are the highest you can get in a shingle.

Mr. Baer stated that they looked into the Tamko Lamerite synthetic slates and they have a general distrust with the quality.

Mr. Golumb asked how much of the slate roof has failed. Mr. Baer replied about half of it. Mr. Golumb asked about the warranty on the Tamko. Mr. Baer said that it has a 50 year warranty. He asked about the lifetime warranty of the Certainteed shingle. He said he is uncertain as to how long it will last. Mr. Adams guessed that maybe it might last 60 years.

Mr. Adams pointed out the line on the current roof. He said with regard to repairs, that he thought someone lifted the roof, unfastened it, replaced the fasteners and rather than

try to match and blend it in, they shingled up to as far as they could get, with the shingles that were on roof and then capped it with a new product to make up the difference.

Mr. Adams asked if Option Three in their proposal was the cost for a whole new slate roof. Mr. Baer replied that that option was to replace the failed areas because the top is still in good condition.

Ms. Fineberg asked for clarification of the three options. The Tamko product is what they saw on the roof at Popovers and the Certainteed sample was what was on the church roof. Ms. Fineberg asked about snow guards. Mr. Baer said that there are no pictures of snow guards in the packet.

Mr. Katz asked why the dollar amount between Option One and Option Two is a 20% difference. He asked if it was purely cost consideration or did he have reservations about synthetic slate. Mr. Baer replied both. He said he did some research and there have been roofs in other parts of the company, one in particular, where a tile roof got damaged by hailstones. That roof was replaced with a synthetic slate the failed in less than ten years.

Mr. Katz asked what the purpose was of the black shadow coursing on the shingle. Mr. Baer replied that it was just trying to simulate the slate roof from a distance.

Ms. Fineberg asked what color they were considering. Mr. Baer replied Fieldstone.

Ms. Dika commented that she has had experience with GAF fiberglass that failed prematurely and had to replace them within ten years, so she was very hesitant about new products that are untested.

Mr. Baer added that with the attic, the shingles are not going to bake because of ventilation. Mr. Baer said that a ventilation system is being put in as well as the open steeple.

Mr. Adams asked if there were any more questions for the applicant. Hearing none, he asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, he declared the public hearing closed.

DECISION OF THE BOARD

Mr. Katz made a motion to approve the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wyckoff.

Mr. Golumb applauded the work that is being done on the steeple. He said that he felt that the building warranted more that architectural shingles. He wondered if it was going to destroy its historic integrity. He said he understood the concerns with the Tamko product, but the church is an icon of the city. The roof can be seen from every angle. He felt it would compromise the building.

Ms. Fineberg said that she agreed with Mr. Golumb in principle. She pointed out that the weight of the slate may negatively impact the structure of the church. Putting slate on it may not be feasible. Mr. Golumb said that was why he was suggesting the Tamko product.

Ms. Fineberg said that she is a little concerned that they have no pictures of what the snow guards are going to look like. Mr. Adams replied that they are proposing Option One which had no snow guards in it.

Mr. Baer said that they would like to put snow guards on. It was suggested that they come back with an amended application for the snow guards.

Ms. Fineberg asked the other Commissioners what they thought about the look of the proposed asphalt shingles. She did not feel that the look would enhance the exterior appearance of the structure. She said that looking at the mock up, it looked fine, but they did not see it at the bottom edge of the building.

Mr. Adams said that he agreed, that the mock up was a good first attempt, but they did not see the impact of it at the bottom edge of the roof. He felt that the heavy shadow line that is created by the contrasting color of the shingle is overdone and he felt it would have an uncharacteristic look.

Ms. Fineberg said that it doesn't sound like they are comfortable with the options.

Mr. Golumb asked when Mr. Baer wanted to begin this project. Mr. Baer replied this year. Mr. Kinner said that they had other issues with the City wanting them to finish their work so that Church Street can open again.

Ms. Fineberg asked if it would be helpful to see the mock up at ground level. Mr. Baer said he would be willing to put the mock up near the eave. Mr. Wyckoff thought that would be a good idea.

Mr. Wyckoff pointed out that the Smoky Quartz color would be another choice. Mr. Adams said that personally he thought color, in this instance, would be in their purview.

Mr. Wyckoff mentioned that the line of copper at the eaves makes it look like an older roof. Mr. Baer said that all of the copper up there needed to be replaced.

Mr. Wyckoff said that it would be a good idea to table the motion.

DECISION OF THE BOARD

Mr. Golumb made a motion to table the application to the October 4 meeting with another site walk to view a mock up at the eave's edge. The motion was seconded by Ms. Fineberg. The motion passed with unanimous vote.

Ms. Fineberg would like to be able to see the mock up at various times of day and in different types of light.

Mr. Katz said that the Commission must also give some thought to where they go if this fails to meet the standards. Ms. Fineberg mentioned that they might want to have another example to look at if this product does not meet with approval.

Mr. Wyckoff mentioned that they approved the Old City Hall for a 30 year Certainteed shingle. He added that now they are saying that this one is not good enough and they don't know where to go if we don't like this. The church has to have a roof this winter.

Mr. Katz said that was what he was thinking too.

Mr. Adams said that he did not think that this was the time and place for that argument. He said that the application had already been tabled.

Mr. Golumb agreed with Mr. Katz and said that there should be a Tamko sample as well. Mr. Golumb pointed out that he didn't vote in favor of the Old City Hall roof. He said that there is not a more prominent roof than at North Church.

Mr. Katz said that the builder has serious reservations about the Tamko's durability. Ms. Fineberg asked who proposed the Tamko.

Ms. Shippee said that the Tamko product came up when they had original discussion on the church restoration project

Mr. Adams said that he is not going to watch the Commission make a mistake on this building.

Chairman Rice said that the way he is hearing it, they have an issue with the color. Mr. Adams said that Mr. Wyckoff had an issue with color and Ms. Fineberg had an issue with the dark outlining.

Chairman Rice said they would see them next month.

At this point in the meeting, a discussion ensued among the Commissioners concerning work sessions, how to make them more effective and productive, as well as how to improve communication among themselves in the work session process.

The Commission decided to contact staff and set up meeting times to discuss their concerns and gather useful feedback.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:15 p.m., it was moved, seconded, and passed to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Good
HDC Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission Meeting on October 11, 2006.