

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

CONFERENCE ROOM "A"

7:00 p.m.

**May 9, 2007
reconvened from May 2, 2007**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Sandra Dika, Vice-Chairman John Golumb; David Adams, Ellen Fineberg; Planning Board Representative Jerry Hejtmanek; and Alternate John Wyckoff

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Richard Katz, City Council Representative Edward Raynolds; Elena Maltese

ALSO PRESENT: Roger Clum, Assistant Building Inspector

I. OLD BUSINESS

1. April 11, 2007

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously (6-0) to approve the minutes as presented.

II. WORK SESSIONS

A) Petition of **Andrea Lefebvre, owner**, and **Bradlee Kirkpatrick, applicant**, for property located at 7 Brackett Lane, wherein permission was requested to allow a new free standing structure (install fencing) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 111 as Lot 13 and lies within the Single Residence B and Historic A Districts. *(This item was tabled to a work session at the May 2, 2007 meeting.)*

- Mr. Bradlee Kirkpatrick was present to speak to the application. Chairman Dika asked him if he brought other ideas with him for the Commission to review. Mr. Kirkpatrick replied that he brought photos of other fence designs. He also pointed out that the height was a problem at the last meeting and so he was proposing a 4 foot high fence. He added that the reasons he wanted a solid fence was shield the house from car lights and so that his dogs would not be able to see out.
- Mr. Adams stated that he had a problem with the original height that was proposed because it would mask the house. He pointed out that there are many houses around Portsmouth with 6 foot high fences but that they were houses with two and three stories. His fear was that the one story Brackett Lane house would disappear behind a tall fence. Mr. Adams suggested that he might consider a fence that was solid up to four feet with an

additional two feet of lattice on top. He felt that seemed to have openness to it and would accomplish the applicant's objectives.

- Mr. Wyckoff asked Mr. Kirkpatrick which fence style he preferred from the photos he showed the Commission. Mr. Kirkpatrick said that he did not have a preference. Ms. Fineberg pointed out that it should be up to the applicant to pick, from the Commission's recommendations, the style and height he preferred. Mr. Kirkpatrick asked if he had to choose it now. Chairman Dika replied no, but when he came back to a public hearing, he would have to submit new plans.
- Mr. Adams asked if Mr. Kirkpatrick owned the house. He replied no. Chairman Dika said that he could rest assured that they would work with him on a different design.
- Mr. Adams stated that he would be comfortable supporting an application like this one. Chairman Dika asked if anyone from the public had a problem with the proposed designs. No one spoke in opposition.

B) Work Session requested by **Parade Office, LLC**, for property located **195 Hanover Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow demolition of an existing structure (demolish building) and allow new free standing structures (mixed use buildings of retail, hotel, office, and residential units). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 1 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

- Ms. Lisa DeStefano of DeStefano Architects, Mr. David Manfredi and Mr. Tom Kinslow of Elkus Manfredi Architects, and Mr. Jeff Johnston, project developer were present to speak to the application.
- Chairman Dika stated that the applicant might be ready for a public hearing in June so it was important that the Commission voice all of their comments this evening.
- Ms. DeStefano commented that this was their fifth work session with the Commission. She confirmed that their goal was to go for a public hearing in June. She said that she wanted to start their discussion with the changes to the hotel. She also pointed out that they had a model for them to view as well.
- Ms. DeStefano pointed out that they have made some changes to the corner of the hotel building to accommodate The Hill development.
- Mr. Manfredi stated that he learned a lot from the three dimensional model and he hoped that it would reinforce the sense of the appropriateness of the scale the buildings and the view corridor between them.
- Mr. Manfredi said that they hoped that they have created a hotel with civic presence, importance, and calmness to it. He added that the buildings should reflect what is happening inside them. They should have a sense of presence and substance.
- Mr. Manfredi pointed out that the broad walk and Deer Street elevations are very similar to what they looked like before. There was a defined base to the building and it would be clad in Ariscraft and stone at the base, the middle of the building would be red brick with precast limestone colored belt coursing and cornice. The entrance is set back from the street wall and is clad in white aluminum and panelized with a different fenestration. Mr. Manfredi pointed out that the Commission was uncomfortable with the irregular nature of the entry pieces. He said that they have now created a very simple and clearly defined façade with an underlying rhythm.

- On the Deer Street elevation, Mr. Manfredi stated that they were not trying to mask the scale of the building. He said that it will probably be perceived as the biggest building on the site but it is not the biggest building. They are not trying to mask the building but make it appropriate to the street. He pointed out that the corner was defined by the two entrance bays. On the corner, they have made a slight change to the massing. They have pulled down another line of precast belt course decoration. Mr. Manfredi showed the brick detailing on the corners of the hotel building.
- Mr. Wyckoff stated that he appreciated what they have done to bring the building into the same reference as the “pumpkin” building on The Hill.
- Mr. Manfredi said that the last elevation to view was the one facing The Hill.
- Ms. Fineberg asked about the windows on the ground floor. She asked him about the choice of fenestration.
- Mr. Manfredi said that a piece of it was the pool area for the hotel. Another area was the back side of retail. He pointed out that the buildings do not have back sides.
- Ms. DeStefano added that they were going to make them clear glass in that area.
- Mr. Adams asked how large the openings would be.
- Mr. Kinslow said that they are in the realm of 9 feet wide and 9 feet tall.
- Ms. Fineberg stated that there was something disturbing about that fenestration. She felt that it stood out too much. She thought that less glass or dividing the glass would make a difference. Mr. Wyckoff thought that the problem was that the windows were coming right down to grade. Mr. Manfredi said that it was possible to break down the scale of the glazed opening. He suggested both a horizontal and a vertical transom. Mr. Adams wondered if it was the expanse of sidewall instead of the expanse of glass.
- Mr. Adams thought that the hotel changes have improved the overall design. He commented on the break where the storefronts are expressed on the new street side of the hotel. He felt that it looked good. He added that he would like to have a conversation about the sash.
- Mr. Hejtmanek stated that he felt the design was much improved from the last time they met and that he is happy with it.
- Mr. Wyckoff asked if everyone was happy with chains being used for the projecting awnings. Ms. Fineberg felt that it was a standard, big city detail. Mr. Wyckoff wondered about the repetition of them on the buildings.
- Vice Chairman Golumb asked if they were going to add some keystones to the hotel. He thought it might break up some of the expanse of brick on the broad walk. He added that the changes were a big improvement.
- Chairman Dika asked why they could not cut away from the “pumpkin” building. Mr. Manfredi replied that it would be inappropriate to the mass. He said that hotels want to stack vertically. He added that it would feel odd to cut away the building on the corner.
- Chairman Dika asked how far back the building was from the front steps from the “pumpkin” building. Ms. DeStefano replied that it was 35 feet.
- Chairman Dika asked the design team if they wanted to hear public comment at this point, just on the hotel. Ms. DeStefano suggested that they wait and entertain comments at the end of the presentation.
- Ms. DeStefano asked the Commission for comments on the residential building which would be located next to the hotel.

- Ms. DeStefano pointed out that they have not made any changes to this elevation.
- Ms. Fineberg asked the team to refresh her memory about the materials that are being proposed on the residential building. Mr. Manfredi replied that the base of the building would be the Ariscraft material, the center of the building would be red brick, and then the attic storage would be defined by the zinc panels. Ms. Fineberg asked if the recessed portion would be zinc. Mr. Manfredi replied yes, it would help to define the tower.
- Ms. Fineberg asked about the roof. Mr. Manfredi replied that they wanted a very soft and simple roof shape. Chairman Dika thought that was a successful solution.
- Mr. Adams wondered why the window openings were larger on the top floor than anywhere else on the building. Mr. Manfredi replied that they wanted to take advantage of the opportunity to create higher ceilings on the top floor. He said that they are trying to get more daylight into the units to make them more attractive.
- Ms. Fineberg said that the two brick piers with the wider windows were difficult to accept. She said that she liked them in the tower. Mr. Wyckoff said that he was okay with the differing window sizes.
- Vice Chairman Golumb agreed with Ms. Fineberg and said that he was bothered by the width of the glass and the amount of glass.
- Ms. Fineberg felt that the canopy over the entry way could use some detail. Mr. Manfredi said that that was possible.
- Ms. DeStefano asked the Commission for their comments on the office buildings.
- Mr. Manfredi pointed out a couple discrepancies between the model and the buildings. He said that there would not be a trellis between the two office buildings. Instead, they would be giving the brick parapet more scale. On the Maplewood Avenue and Deer Street intersection, they made the corner broader to open it up. Mr. Wyckoff said that his concern with that corner was the giant controller for the traffic lights. Mr. Kinslow explained in detail the sidewalk dimensions in this area.
- Ms. Fineberg asked about the materials to be used on the corner piece. Mr. Manfredi replied that it would be painted metal panels. He explained that the panels are painted in the factory with a two coat process, similar to an automobile painting process.
- Ms. Fineberg asked about the solid canopy. Mr. Manfredi said that they were trying to create differences between the building and the canopy was a way of doing that.
- Ms. Fineberg said that on the Maplewood elevation, it feels like the building stops. She felt like it needed something more. Mr. Wyckoff commented that he can see why it is there. He said that they have done a good job of opening up the building.
- Chairman Dika stated that it was much improved over last time and that she was happy with it.
- Ms. Fineberg asked about the cornice along the roof line. Mr. Manfredi said that the goal was to find different ways to finish the buildings. Mr. Adams asked why the frieze was set back from the masonry wall below it. Mr. Kinslow replied because it was thinner. Mr. Adams pointed out the cornice of the Odd Fellows home. He said that it was metal and it was set out at the edge of the masonry. Mr. Manfredi added that their design was in the tradition of a channel.
- Discussion moved to the Deer Street office building.
- Ms. Fineberg asked Mr. Manfredi to explain how the brick fades into the rounded portion of the structure. Mr. Manfredi replied that they did not want them to meet at a tangent.

Ms. DeStefano pointed out that you can see the same application on the Alie's Jewelers building.

- Mr. Wyckoff said that the stair tower seemed to have a plainness to it. Given its location on a main corner, he felt there should be more to it. Ms. DeStefano said that the tower would have a screen around it for the mechanicals.
- Ms. Fineberg pointed out the cloth awning rather than a metal canopy. She felt that maybe switching to a metal canopy would give the tower more presence. Mr. Manfredi thought that was a good point.
- The discussion moved to the last elevation.
- Mr. Manfredi pointed out that the acute angle on the broad walk elevation was too long. He said that they originally placed it parallel to the hotel and now he thinks it does not need to be.
- Mr. Wyckoff said that he was finding the windows going around the corner were all of the same style and he found that tiring. He felt that it dated the whole project. Mr. Adams said that he felt the windows at 100 Market Street were like to ones being proposed. He said that the windows seemed to be of a lighter gage of the same kind of material that storefronts are made out of. He pointed out that he liked the windows in the Jardinere building. When you compared the two, he said that there was no question as to which one was more appropriate to the community. Mr. Adams also stated that the storefront glazing on the Jardinere building was very interesting. He said that he would like to suggest that the design team move in that direction.
- Chairman Dika asked if those changes made a big difference in expense. Ms. DeStefano replied yes but she did not feel that they wanted all of the storefronts and all of the windows to look the same. Mr. Wyckoff asked about changing the plane of the glass. Mr. Manfredi replied that he would think about that.
- Ms. Fineberg asked if the windows in the residential units would open. Mr. Manfredi replied yes.
- Vice Chairman Golumb agreed with Mr. Adams about the Jardinere storefronts. He said that he would like to see it on some of these storefronts. He added that with all of the awnings, he cannot see the details of the storefronts and wondered if they would be seeing that at some point. Ms. DeStefano replied that they could give them those details.
- Ms. Fineberg commented that the model has been helpful to see the scale of the Westin and the buildings on The Hill.
- Vice Chairman Golumb stated that he was concerned with how the proposed hotel dwarfed The Hill. He wondered if there was anyway to bring that end of the building back to give The Hill more space.
- Mr. Jeff Johnston, developer of the project, said that they have made the sidewalks bigger to try to create a gateway to bring people from The Hill area to this new development.
- Chairman Dika agreed with Vice Chairman Golumb that the proposed hotel should be pulled back from the "pumpkin" building on The Hill.
- Mr. Adams stated some of the details that he had trouble with – the spandrel panels on the broad walk, the sash openings, the storefront glazing, the overall store heights, the recessed frieze in the corner, the first floor wall done in the ash stone, metal corners, the large windows on the 5th floors, the expressed storefront on the broad walk, and the stone on the residential building.

- Mr. Wyckoff stated that he had concern with the material proposed for the corner office building. He also suggested that he would like to see more of a traditional window sill on at least one of the buildings. Mr. Kinslow pointed out that they did do that on the Maplewood elevation. Mr. Wyckoff concluded by saying he was 95% happy with the project.
- Mr. Hejtmanek stated that he did not have many issues with the project and would approve it.
- Chairman Dika asked if anyone from the public wished to speak.
- Attorney Sharon Somers, representing The Hill Condominium Association spoke. She said that she had a concern that the proposed hotel would dwarf The Hill. She mentioned that she had some preliminary discussion with the developer about their need for some level of distance and comfort. She said that there was a suggestion of having some landscaping between the two areas which would also encourage travel between the two properties. She felt that this would require the attention and review of a number of city boards.
- Mr. Adams asked if there were mature trees in the area she was talking about. Attorney Somers replied yes and that they would like to maintain those trees to the extent possible.
- Attorney Somers stated that she had concern with the windows on exhibits 10 and 14 as they will face The Hill. She pointed out that exhibit 9 showed windows of varying types. She suggested that maybe that type of window pattern could be incorporated into the sides of the building that face The Hill. Mr. Adams asked what would be the benefit to her client to have more glazing on that side of the building. Attorney Somers replied that function follows form. She said that the more you set up those to look and feel like spaces, the less likely store owners will place their trash receptacles there. She added that she was pleased with the progress on the project.
- Mr. Dan Rawling stated that the design team should be commended for the amount of work they have done. He said that the overall sense of the project has a renovated warehouse theme to it. He encouraged the Commission to open themselves up to letting the design team add some unique elements to it, such as fenestration patterns and detailing to canopies and cornices. He added however, that he did not see any beauty in the tower on the apartment building.
- Chairman Dika thanked the public for their input.
- Ms. DeStefano stated that their next step was to come before the Commission for a public hearing in June.
- Vice Chairman Golumb stated that he thought that was a little ambitious and felt they needed another work session.
- Chairman Dika said that it was up to the applicant as to how they wished to proceed.

III. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Discussion on Draft HDC Rules and Regulations document

Mr. Clum explained to the Commission that the changes made by the Planning Department were simply housekeeping in nature.

Vice Chairman Golumb suggested that on page 6, 1. (f) and page 7, 2. (g) of the document, it should read that the ¼”=1’ be required for residential projects and that 3/16”=1’ be required for large commercial projects.

Mr. Adams made a motion to amend the dimension requirements as discussed. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Golumb. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Mr. Wyckoff noted that the Commission was getting a lot of applications that did not include the proper information. Mr. Clum suggested that it could be a front desk problem but also pointed out that individuals are reluctant in applying. Mr. Adams said that in the end, the Commission can say that when you come back with this information, the Commission can vote on it. Mr. Wyckoff said that other officials are looking at the applications as well. Mr. Clum reminded the Commission that there is a checklist for applicants to follow and sometimes you get the information and sometimes you don’t.

Ms. Fineberg made a suggestion that on page 6, 1. (d) of the document, that photos of all facades be added. She felt they should be part of the record.

Ms. Fineberg made a motion to include on page 6, 1. (d) of the document, that photos of all facades be submitted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Adams. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Chairman Dika pointed out that in the ordinance it says that officers should be elected the first meeting of July. She said that that supersedes the rules that they have before them and the rules state on page 2 that it should be in January. Mr. Clum responded and said that the city will need to make sure that the ordinance matches the rules. Chairman Dika stated that July should be the month to elect officers.

Ms. Fineberg pointed out that on page 9, 1. it states that applicants are encouraged to schedule a work session. She thought it would be helpful to add “that multiple work session might be necessary for large projects.”

Ms. Fineberg made a motion to add on page 9, 1. “that multiple work sessions might be necessary for large projects.” The motion was seconded by Mr. Adams. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Ms. Fineberg also asked if on page 6, E. 1. (3) the word “model” should be included. Mr. Clum said that the Commission has been good to suggest a model later in the process.

Ms. Fineberg asked if it is carefully checked that an applicant has received Board of Adjustment approval if they need it prior to coming before the Historic District Commission. Mr. Clum replied that the Planning Department will not allow an applicant before the Commission without a variance if they need a variance. He noted that there have been special instances where it was not determined that a variance was needed until after work had begun.

2. Additional business

There was no additional business to come before the Commission.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:00 p.m., it was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Good
HDC Secretary