

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

EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

7:00 p.m.

**September 12, 2007
reconvened from September 5, 2007**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Sandra Dika, Vice-Chairman John F. Golumb; Richard Katz, John Wyckoff, Tracy Kozak; Planning Board Representative Jerry Hejtmanek, City Council Representative Edward Reynolds; Alternates Elena Maltese, Joseph Almeida

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

ALSO PRESENT: Roger Clum, Assistant Building Inspector

I. OLD BUSINESS

5. Petition of **Kelly W. Warren Revocable Trust and Michael J. and Martha A. Mulhern, owners**, for property located at **132 Chapel Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace front steps with granite steps and add iron rails, remove existing fencing, install iron rail fencing with gate along cement wall) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 106 as Lot 6 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts. (*This item was postponed at the September 5, 2007 meeting.*)

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Mike Mulhern spoke to the petition. He gave the Commission additional materials. He reminded the Commission that they have already received approval for the window, doors, and roof. They are now seeking approval for the gate, fence, and railing. Mr. Mulhern explained that they would like to match their fence and railings with the fence and railings across the street at St. John's Episcopal Church. The fence will be constructed of 7/8" round steel and will be a three foot fence about 36 feet in length. He added that the gate will be a double gate with a lock on it. Mr. Mulhern stated that they were also proposing to replace the concrete steps with two, three foot granite steps with a granite slab top as well.

Vice Chairman Golumb asked if the fence design had changed from last week's presentation. Mr. Mulhern replied yes, they would like to go with a simple style that closely matches St. John's fence.

Ms. Kozak asked about the fence posts and where they would be located. Mr. Mulhern showed a sample of the fence and said that the post would look similar to it except that the points of the

fence would be rounded for safety purposes. He said that at the gate opening, it would be 7/8" steel gate post. He added that the gate would match the fence with a flat top.

Mr. Almeida asked if the railings on the steps would be of the same design. Mr. Mulhern replied yes.

Chairman Dika had a concern that the drawing did not depict exactly what they were proposing. Mr. Mulhern said that the only thing that had changed was the simple design for the fence with a straight run. Mr. Clum said that he would make the notes on the drawing for the file.

Chairman Dika asked if there were any more questions for the applicant. Hearing none, she asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, she declared the public hearing closed and awaited a motion.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Katz made a motion to approve the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hejtmanek. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

Mr. Katz stated that they were very familiar with the site particularly with the prior work session. He felt that he had a good understand of what the applicant wanted to do and he would support the motion.

Vice Chairman Golumb added that he felt the new fence design was more suited to the house.

Mr. Wyckoff agreed that matching the fence to the properties within close proximity of it was a good idea. He thought however that the posts were on the thin side and could possibly fail in the future but he would not base his decision on that. He felt that the architectural details were appropriate.

Chairman Dika stated that the new design was more appropriate to the site as well.

Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion to approve the application as presented passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS

8. Petition of **Elizabeth G. Fichera Revocable Living Trust, owner**, for property located at **47 Howard Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow an amendment to a previously approved design (front elevation window trim will remain as is, sides and rear of house will remain clapboard) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 103 as Lot 84 and lies within General Residence B and Historic A Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Mark Fichera spoke to the application. He said that he was proposing two changes to a previously approved design. He said that both changes were to keep the current design in place.

He explained that the front windows would remain recessed into the house. Mr. Fichera said that the second change was to maintain the wood clapboards on the sides and the rear of the house. He added that a vertical board will show the difference between the old addition and the new addition.

Mr. Almeida asked for clarification on the window trim. He said that the photo showed a different sill. He asked if he would be matching the sill condition as well. Mr. Fichera replied that he will be using a heavy sill.

Chairman Dika asked if there were any more questions for the applicant. Hearing none, she asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, she declared the public hearing closed and awaited a motion.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to approve the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Katz. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that he felt that the clapboarding would be appropriate with the character of the properties within the proximity of the applicant's house. He said that there was a mix of designs in the neighborhood where the windows were concerned but the changes were appropriate.

Mr. Katz said that either application was acceptable to him.

Chairman Dika stated that she would like to support the applicant.

Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion to approve the application as presented passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Request for Re-hearing – 47 Howard Street – submitted by David Adams
(This item was postponed at the September 5, 2007 at the request of the submitter.)

Chairman Dika stated that she would like to take the agenda out of order and skip to Old Business. She explained that a Request for Re-hearing of the 47 Howard Street application was submitted by Mr. David Adams of 210 Gates Street. It was postponed to this evening's meeting. Chairman Dika stated that the request for the re-hearing had been withdrawn so no further action needed to be taken.

- 9. Petition of **Glen E. and Mary Lou Graper, owners**, for property located at **591 Middle Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new free standing structures (install fencing, add 12' x 20' shed) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on

Assessor Plan 147 as Lot 16 and lies within the Mixed Residential Office and Historic A Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Mr. Glen Graper spoke to the application. He stated that he was seeking approval for a shed and fence to be located in his backyard. He said that the shed would be approximately in the same place where the old garage was located. The fence would surround the property.

Vice Chairman Golumb asked if the fence would be wood. Mr. Graper replied no, it would be vinyl. He pointed out that the house was vinyl sided. He said that the vinyl product would last longer, would be sturdier, and would require less maintenance. He added that it would be in his backyard. Mr. Graper informed the Commission that the shed would be vinyl as well.

Chairman Dika told Mr. Graper that the Commission does not have a history of approving vinyl products. Mr. Graper replied that he did not know that but that he was agreeable to changing the request to wood.

Mr. Almeida said that he would prefer wood construction. He added that he liked the design of the fence.

Ms. Maltese asked if the height of the fence would be six feet all the way around. Mr. Graper replied yes. Ms. Maltese asked if the fence would connect to the back of the house. Mr. Graper replied yes.

Mr. Graper explained that he would put the fence about 2 feet in from the property line.

Ms. Kozak asked if the shed would be vinyl as well. Mr. Graper replied yes. Ms. Kozak said that she was surprised to see that the applicant chose a gambrel roof form since the house has a gable roof. Chairman Dika asked if the applicant would be willing to change the roof form to a gable roof instead. Mr. Graper said that he was agreeable to that.

Mr. Katz commented that in Article X of the ordinance, the Commission is encouraged to consider the use of new materials. He said that vinyl is not a new material. He pointed out that more and more people are stripping the vinyl siding from their homes and exposing the clapboards underneath. He said it was a nice appearance.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that if the shed company charges the applicant more for a vinyl shed than a wood shed, then something was wrong. He said that he would support a wood fence and a wood shed with wood clapboards with a 4" exposure and a peak roof. Mr. Graper replied that he was agreeable to that.

Chairman Dika asked if there were any more questions for the applicant. Hearing none, she asked if anyone from the public wished to speak to, for, or against the application. Seeing no one rise, she declared the public hearing closed and awaited a motion.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Councilor Raynolds made a motion to approve the application with the following stipulations:

- 1) That the shed and fence be of wood construction.
- 2) That the shed roof be a gable roof.

The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Golumb. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that the wood siding would match the architectural details of the properties in proximity of the house.

Chairman Dika called for the vote. The motion to approve the application with the following stipulations passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote:

- 1) That the shed and fence be of wood construction.
- 2) That the shed roof be a gable roof.

10. Petition of **Harbor Place, LLC, owner, and Two International Construction Co., LLC**, for property located at **2 Harbor Place**, wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace front doors with wood and glass doors) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 105 as Lot 2 and lies within the Central Business A, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Ms. Dawn David, representative of Two International Construction Company was present to speak to the application. She stated that the applicant would like to change the front door from glass doors to wood and glass doors. She felt it was a more appropriate design for the building. She added that they were proposing to use brushed nickel hardware that was similar to what was on the building already. She concluded by saying that the doors would be painted the same color as the existing trim.

Councilor Raynolds stated that he was confused by the plans. He asked if the replacement door would be a single door or a double door. Ms. David replied that it would be two single doors acting as a double door.

Mr. Clum stated that the plans submitted were of the two doors on the interior of the building and that was causing the confusion.

Mr. Wyckoff said that they needed to see the door in detail. He was not sure how the height of the doors worked with the height of the proposed doors. He said they would need a drawing of the elevation showing how the doors will fit in the space with trim details. Ms. Kozak added that they would need to know what the material of the outside walls was as well.

Chairman Dika stated that the project will be a benefit to the building. She asked the Commission if they needed a site walk for this project. Mr. Katz did not think that was necessary.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Vice Chairman Golumb made a motion to postpone the application to the October 3, 2007 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hejtmanek. Chairman Dika asked for discussion.

Councilor Reynolds said that historically it would be an improvement to the building.

The motion to postpone the application to the October 3, 2007 meeting passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

11. Petition of **68 State Street, LLC, owner**, for property located at **68 State Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow an amendment to a previously approved design (change garage door style and window configurations on Court Street elevation, invert dormer and add transom windows over French doors) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 105 as Lot 13 and lies within the Central Business B and Historic A Districts.

Chairman Dika recused herself from the discussion and vote.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

Ms. Jenn Ramsey, representing the applicant, spoke to the application. She reminded the Commission that the last time she was before them they had concern about the size of the garage door and the windows above it on the Court Street elevation.

Ms. Ramsey said that they were presenting two options. The garage door in both options would be 16 feet. The first option, on page 2 of the plans showed a garage designed to look like small residential doors that opened like a carriage house. Above the door would be two double hung windows and above that a French balcony. The second option show a garage door where the doors swing in. Above that would be four stacked double hung windows.

The second part of the application showed changes to the top floor. Ms. Ramsey explained that they would like to recess the center dormer into the building to create a 9 foot deck. Ms. Maltese asked if the deck would be viewed from the street. Ms. Ramsey replied that it would be difficult to see it from the street. One would really have to look to see it.

Mr. Wyckoff asked if the dormers on the fourth floor had been previously approved. Ms. Ramsey replied that dormers in that area were approved but the style has changed. She clarified that on page one, dormers two and three were approved and dormer one was up for consideration. Mr. Wyckoff asked if the garage doors would be made of wood. Ms. Ramsey replied yes.

Councilor Reynolds stated that he preferred the garage door and dormer configuration in option two. Vice Chairman Golumb agreed that he preferred option two. He felt it was a cleaner look and fit into the site better.

Ms. Kozak said that she did not mind the garage door in option one but she too was leaning toward option two. She asked how far out the balcony projected out in option two. Ms. Ramsey said that it projected out one foot, six inches.

Mr. Almeida said that his preference was option two. He felt that the garage door on option one was trying to hard to do too many things.

Vice Chairman Golumb asked if anyone had any problems with the setback dormer on page seven of the plans. Mr. Katz replied that he might if it could be seen. He said that this was a situation where the applicant was seeking more patio space. He stated that he did not have any problem with it.

Vice Chairman Golumb 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 and awaited a motion.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Mr. Wyckoff made a motion to approve the application as presented with the stipulation that option two on page three of the plans be used. The motion was seconded by Ms. Maltese. Vice Chairman Golumb asked for discussion.

Mr. Wyckoff stated that the architectural details matched the surrounding buildings on Court Street.

Ms. Maltese said that even though she did not love the recessed center dormer, she felt it was a detail that was hidden and achieves some nice deck space for the occupant. She would not like to see the Commission set precedence with it though. Vice Chairman Golumb agreed.

Vice Chairman Golumb called for the vote. The motion to approve the application as presented with the stipulation that option two on page three be used passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

12. Petition of **B. Allen and Barbara B. Rowland, owners, and Bruce Oronte, applicant,** for property located **33-35 Richmond Street,** wherein permission was requested to allow exterior renovations to an existing structure (replace entrance gates) as per plans on file in the Planning Department. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 108 as Lot 17 and lies within the Mixed Residential Office and Historic A Districts.

SPEAKING TO THE PETITION

There was no one present to speak to the application.

DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

Vice Chairman Golumb made a motion to postpone the application to the end of the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hejtmanek. The motion to postpone the application to the end of the meeting passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

III. WORK SESSIONS

A. Work Session requested by **Deer Street Associates, owner**, and **Public Service of New Hampshire, applicant**, for property located at **157 Deer Street**, wherein permission was requested to allow new free standing structures (install manhole and above ground switch cabinets). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lot 17 and lies within the Central Business B, Historic A, and Downtown Overlay Districts.

- Mr. Mike Coffey, representative of Public Service of New Hampshire was present to speak to the project. He said that the owners of the property were gracious enough to grant PSNH an easement for a 25 square foot parcel on their property to place the above ground cabinets. He said that he was before the Commission this evening for guidance concerning screening around the devices. He pointed out that the Board of Adjustment placed one restriction on their approval and that was that the device would not exceed 50 inches in height. Mr. Coffey explained that the BOA was concerned that the devices not impede site access in and out of the property. He pointed out that the entrance to the site in that area is an entrance only area.
- Mr. Coffey said that they placed a similar switch device on the site of the Hilton Garden Inn. He showed pictures of the screening around that device. He added that it was important that the device be accessed from all sides so any type of screening cannot be permanent. If foliage were to be used, it cannot be allowed to overgrow. He also pointed that there was a device by the Sheraton as well.
- Mr. Almeida asked Mr. Coffey why they are not putting the device in a vault. Mr. Coffey replied that OSHA requirements and PSNH safety practices does not allow these types of devices in an enclosed space. Mr. Almeida pointed out that by code, they are allowed to be placed underground. Mr. Coffey said that that was correct, however, there were many restrictions associated with that.
- Mr. Wyckoff asked if these devices would benefit the proposed development in that area. Mr. Coffey said that they are rebuilding the system to accommodate it.
- Ms. Maltese said that it was important that one be able to see into the screened area to discourage people from using it as a place of shelter. She thought that the Sheraton solution was simple and plain. Mr. Coffey said that shrubbery could be added as well. Vice Chairman Golumb did not like the look of a picket fence and preferred a capped fence.
- Ms. Kozak talked about the context of the area, citing that the North Cemetery abuts the property and she thought there was a fence there. She wondered if there was a way to recall some of the essence of that fence in this site.
- Mr. Almeida cautioned the Commission that they would not want to draw too much attention to screening. He felt it should be something dark and nondescript in color so that your eye passes right over it.
- Ms. Kozak felt that a metal or iron fence would work best. She thought that since most traffic is car traffic and not walkers, she felt it would not be that visible. She said that if the fence was similar to the cemetery fence, it might blend in and not be as conspicuous. Ms. Maltese reminded that Commission that there is a lot of development to come in that area so foot traffic will be increasing.
- Mr. Wyckoff said that he preferred a wooden fence and recommending that it be painted a dark color, like dark green.

- Mr. Coffey said that the setback would be 5 feet from the side and about 9 feet from the rear. He added that they could push the screen back about two feet from the sidewalk.
- Mr. Katz asked what the dimensions of the fenced area would be. Mr. Coffey replied that it would be about 24 square feet; it would take up the whole easement.
- Councilor Raynolds asked if shrubbery could be placed between the sidewalk and the screening enclosure.
- Mr. Wyckoff asked who would maintain the easement. Mr. Coffey replied that they have an obligation to the property owner. He said that he would have to pass the Commission's recommendation on to them for their comments. He added that PSNH will have to maintain the screening.
- Vice Chairman Golumb asked the dimensions of the switch box and the terminal box. Mr. Coffey replied that the terminal box was 36 inches high and the switch box was 50 inches high.
- Mr. Almeida thought that they were creating a huge box around small fixtures. He wondered if they were making too big of an impact with the screening. He asked if it could be treated with landscaping. Chairman Dika asked if they needed to keep people away from the devices. Mr. Coffey replied no. He said that they are completely insulated and safe.
- Ms. Maltese asked if they really needed to put up a fence. Mr. Almeida said that the goal should be to make them as invisible as possible.
- Ms. Maltese asked if a site walk could be scheduled after the devices are installed to determine whether there needs to be screening. Mr. Almeida and Mr. Wyckoff said that they liked the idea.
- Vice Chairman Golumb asked Mr. Clum if the Commission could give the applicant direction for landscaping. Mr. Clum replied that landscaping is certainly a screening option and would be within the Commission's purview.
- Chairman Dika felt that the site walk was a good solution to the situation. Mr. Coffey said that he did not know when the devices would be installed. He said that it could be put in in the spring. Mr. Clum suggested that Mr. Coffey schedule another work session to include a site walk a month after the switch is installed. Mr. Coffey said that it was possible that the switch could be in place by the end of November.

B. Work Session requested by **Cristina Galli and Martin F. Kurowski, owners**, for property located at **111 New Castle Avenue**, wherein permission is requested to allow new construction to an existing one and a half story building (addition over an existing one story). Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 101 as Ld 53 and lies within the General Residence B and Historic A Districts.

Vice Chairman Golumb made a motion to postpone the application to the October 3, 2007 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hejtmanek. The motion to postpone the application to the October 3, 2007 meeting passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

Chairman Dika stated that the applicant for 33-35 Richmond Street did not show up. Councilor Raynolds made a motion to postpone the application to a time indefinite. The motion was

seconded by Vice Chairman Golumb. The motion to postpone the application to a time indefinite passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

V. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:50 p.m., it was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Good
HDC Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Historic District Commission Meeting on October 10, 2007.